

NAFED to procure 20 lakh tonne each of pulses, oilseeds from farmers at MSP rate

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NAFED already has a stock of 35 lakh tonne of pulses., Photo: Reuters

Co-operative NAFED is planning to buy 20 lakh tonne of mustard and 15-20 lakh tonne of pulses in the ongoing rabi (winter-sown) harvesting season at the minimum support price (MSP), its Managing Director Sanjeev Chaddha said Friday. NAFED will buy pulses and oilseeds on behalf of the government to provide MSP to farmers, he said, adding that the co-operative has made arrangements of funds to carry out this procurement operations. "We will be purchasing 15-20 lakh tonne of pulses and 20 lakh tonne of mustard in the ongoing rabi harvesting season," Chaddha told reporters on the sidelines of a conference organised by industry body Assocham on compressed bio-gas.

He said NAFED already has a stock of 35 lakh tonne of pulses. Asked about disposal of the pulses stock, Chaddha said the Centre provides pulses to states at a subsidised price for distribution through the ration shops. On the compressed bio-gas programme, Chaddha said NAFED and Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) are working with private entrepreneurs to set up bio-CNG manufacturing plants across the country using agri-wastes.

IOC Executive Director Subodh Kumar said about 200 letters of intent (LOIs) have been issued so far to set up plants, which would require an investment of Rs 25-40 crore each. He said oil marketing companies would buy compressed bio-gas from these plants for supply through their retail outlets at around Rs 50 per kg. Kumar said these projects should be treated under the priority sector lending so that the private companies get finance at cheaper rates.

Green energy company Clean Effentech (CEF) will provide technology to these proposed plants. "We expect that many plants will become operational by the end of this year in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab," CEF group Director (Business Development) Maninder Singh said, adding that the government is targeting 5,000 such plants by 2023.

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