

# Early start to wheat procurement drive

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**THE GOVERNMENT'S WHEAT** procurement drive for 2024-25 rabi marketing season (April-June) has commenced with Food Corporation of India (FCI) purchasing grain from farmers in Rajasthan.

Officials said that this is the earliest ever commencement of MSP operations in any year where FCI purchased around 20 tonne of wheat in Jhalawar district, Rajasthan on Wednesday.

Although the wheat purchase usually commences from April 1 for the marketing season, this year the government had urged states to begin MSP operations of wheat early.

The grain procurement target for the 2024-25 season is around 30-32 million tonne (MT) against 26.2 MT purchased from the farmers under MSP operations last season.

Higher purchase is expected to bolster the FCI's stock. At present, FCI has a wheat stock of 8.62 MT, lowest since 2016.

"Wheat arrivals in mandis



would gradually pick up pace by the end of the month in Rajasthan and Mad-

## MSP OPS BEGIN

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hya Pradesh," a food ministry official said. Meanwhile, Madhya Pradesh, the second

biggest contributor to the central pool wheat stock after Punjab, will commence operations to buy grain at minimum support price (MSP) in Khargone and Ujjain districts from Friday. The state is aiming to purchase 10 MT of wheat this season from farmers.

"We have registered 1.5 million farmers for procurement so far and this number is bound to increase as we have extended farmers' registration till end of the month," Smita Bharadwaj, additional chief secretary, food, civil supplies and consumer affairs, told *FE*.