

States procure only 2.6% of soya under PSS

HIGH MOISTURE WOES. Centre clears procurement of 32.24 lt at MSP; Telangana tops with 55 per cent while other States lag behind

Prabhudatta Mishra
New Delhi

Soyabean procurement this season, which became a political issue in Maharashtra and led to a last minute relaxation in the moisture norm, may increase at agriculture produce marketing committee (APMC) yards. The moisture level has reduced in the crop compared with last month.

According to agri cooperative Nafed's data, the procurement of soyabean under the price support scheme (PSS) from six States reached 82,650 tonnes as of November 18, which is 2.6 per cent of 32.24 lakh tonnes (lt) approved by the Centre. However, Telangana is the only State which already purchased 55 per cent of its approved quantity of 59,508 tonnes so far.

The procurement period

varies from State to State and overall it will conclude with Gujarat on February 9, 2025, after it first started on September 5 in Karnataka.

MEAGRE BUYS

Latest data show that the procurement in Karnataka was only 636 tonnes against 1.03 lakh tonnes (lt) approved by the Centre. Similarly, Madhya Pradesh reported 2.4 per cent or 32,930 tonnes out of 59,508 tonnes approved and Maharashtra 1 per cent or 13,402 tonnes out of 13.08 lt permitted for procurement.

Rajasthan and Gujarat, two other States where soyabean is grown, reported very low procurement at 2.892 tonnes and 197 tonnes respectively. The Centre had approved the purchase of 2.92 lt by Rajasthan and 92,045 tonnes for Gujarat.

Traders said the moisture level had come down to around 12 per cent now from

Soyabean procurement at MSP (in tonnes)

	Sanctioned qty	Procured qty	% of target	Procurement period
Karnataka	1,03,315	636.4	0.6	Sept 5 to Dec 3
Telangana	59,508	32,593.3	54.8	Sept 25 to Dec 23
Madhya Pradesh	13,68,045	32,929.62	2.4	Oct 21 to Dec 31
Maharashtra	13,08,238	13,402.28	1.0	Oct 15 to Jan 12
Rajasthan	2,92,465	2,892.25	1.0	Oct 18 to Jan 15
Gujarat	92,045	196.5	0.2	Nov 11 to Feb 9
All India	32,23,616	82,650.35	2.6	Sept 5 to Feb 9

Source: Nafed

around 15 per cent in October.

The decision of the Centre may not have an impact unless the State procuring agencies show higher moisture level and accordingly claim benefits, said a soyameal exporter. He said the decision on relaxation should have come at the beginning of the procurement period so that farmers could have benefited as private traders calculate the permissible maximum moisture limit at 10 per cent and buy at a reduced cost if the moisture is higher.

The current month's average mandi price is ₹4,152/quintal against its the minimum support price of ₹4,892/quintal.

Farmers in Maharashtra got even lower than the national average as they sold at ₹4,086/quintal during November 1-19, according to the Agmarknet portal.

In an office memorandum (OM) on November 15, Binod Giri, a Deputy Commissioner in the Union Agriculture Ministry, said based on the representations received (from States), it was decided that the Centre will

have no objection to allow the moisture content in soybean up to 15 per cent against up to 12 per cent prescribed for the fair average quality (FAQ) for procurement under PSS during the 2024-25 kharif season.

'CUT STORAGE LOSSES'

However, it has been highlighted that the relaxation is a one-time measure subject to the certain conditions. The OM said: "all the expenses/losses incurred on account of procurement of stocks with moisture content up to 15 per cent shall be borne by the respective State Government in the larger interests of farmers."

Giri also said Nafed and NCCF, which are the two central nodal agencies for procurement under PSS, have been directed to make the payment to State-level procuring agencies (SLAs) at the price after adjusting the value of relaxed percent-

age of moisture while the payment of MSP in full will be ensured by the State-level procuring agencies and the concerned State to the registered farmers for the procured soybean.

The Centre's guidelines also have made it clear that arrangements will have to be worked out between State agencies and Nafed/NCCF to ensure minimum storage losses by taking all necessary precautions during procurement and preservation of stocks.

The government has estimated this year's soyabean production at 133.6 lt which included 56.53 lt from Maharashtra, 52.86 lt from Madhya Pradesh, 11.77 lt from Rajasthan and 4.56 lt from Gujarat, 4.46 lt from Karnataka and 2.38 lt from Telangana. However, industry body The Soybean Processors Association of India has pegged the total output at 125.82 lt.