

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) As per the information provided by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; sub-regulation 2.3.5 of Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations, 2011 is related to "Prohibition of use of Calcium Carbide in ripening of fruits". According to this sub regulation, "No person shall sell or offer or expose for sale or have in his premises for the purpose of sale under any description, fruits which have been artificially ripened by use of acetylene gas, commonly known as carbide gas.

Flowever, ripening of fruits by using ethylene gas at a concentration upto 100 ppm (100µ/L) depending upon the crop, variety and maturity has been permitted. Ethylene is a safer alternative. It is also produced in the fruits naturally to stimulate their ripening in a natural way.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has developed a Guidance Note No.04/2018 on "ARTIFICIAL RIPENING OF FRUITS - Ethylene gas- A safe fruit ripener" and shared through its website *i.e.* www.fssai.gov.in and social media handles. The purpose of this guidance note is to create awareness related to different aspects of artificial ripening of fruits among food business operators/traders, consumers and food safety officials. It also includes Standard Operating Procedure detailing all facets of artificial ripening using ethylene gas.

Implementation and enforcement of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and Rules and Regulations made thereunder primarily lies with State/UT Governments. Regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection and sampling of food products, including fruits and vegetables, are being carried out by the Food Safety Officers of States/UTs and appropriate penal action is initiated as per the provisions of FSS Act, 2006 against the defaulting FBOs.

(b) FSSAI at present has a network of 264 laboratories across the country comprising of 246 laboratories for primary testing recognized & notified under section 43(1) of FSS act 2006; and, 18 laboratories for appellate (referral) testing recognized and notified under section 43(2) of FSS act 2006. Most of these laboratories have the facilities to check calcium carbide.

Making PMFBY more farmer-friendly

685. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) could

not become popular since land far less than the expected could only be covered under the scheme;

(b) whether Government has any plan to revisit the PMFBY to make it more friendly to the farmers, as per the climatic vagaries of each State;

(c) if so, the main features of PMFBY proposed to be revisited to make it meaningful and lucrative; and

(d) whether any time-line has been fixed to further augment the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) No Sir. Due to the improved features of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), coverage under the scheme has increased to 30% of the Gross Cropped Area (GCA) from 23% in 2015-16 under erstwhile schemes. Farmer applications have also increased from about 3.5 crore under erstwhile schemes to about 6 crore during the same period. Participation of non-loanee farmers, for whom the scheme was voluntary, have also increased from 5% under erstwhile schemes to 37% Kharif under PMFBY showing the voluntary acceptability of the scheme.

(b) to (d) The revisions/improvements in the crop insurance schemes is a continuous process and decisions on suggestions/representations is taken from time to time after consultation with various stakeholders. Accordingly, after detailed discussions with stakeholders, Government has recently approved the revamping of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) for implementation from Kharif 2020 season. Changes/improvements made in the provisions/parameters of these schemes are given in the Statement.

Statement

Changes/Improvements made in the provisions/parameters of PMFBY and RWBCIS w.e.f. Kharif 2020 season

- To address the demand of farmers, the scheme has been made voluntary for all farmers. However, there is no change in farmers' share of premium.
- The premium subsidy sharing pattern between Centre and North Eastern States has been changed from 50: 50 to 90:10. This has been done to allow more States to notify the scheme and existing States to notify more crops

and areas to facilitate greater coverage of farmers under the scheme. For remaining States, subsidy sharing pattern will continue as 50: 50.

- To address the issue of high premium rate for few crops/areas due to adverse selection, the requisite central share of premium subsidy (90: 10 for North Eastern States and 50: 50 for remaining States) will be provided for areas/crops upto gross premium rate of 25% for irrigated and 30% for un-irrigated areas/crops. Besides, alternate risk mitigation measures will be explored for these areas/crops.
- Insurance companies will now be selected by the States for 3 years in a go instead of one year thereby increasing their commitment and accountability to the farmers.
- Option has been given to the States to choose the notional value of average yield or the Scale of Finance as sum insured in the interest of the farming community.
- In view of the demand of many states, option has been given to states to choose additional risk covers besides shortfall in yield-based cover depending upon the local weather challenges and requirements of the farmers.
- The states delaying the release of subsidy beyond stipulated timelines can not participate in upcoming seasons.
- Two-step process of crop yield estimation using weather and satellite indicators etc. is adopted, which will help in early assessment of loss.
- Use of smart sampling technique through satellite data for crop cutting experiments by some states has shown increased efficiency in implementation. This will now be universalized.
- The delay by some States in submission of crop yield data will now be suitably addressed using technological solutions.
- Provision has been made for earmarked administrative expenses @ 3% for strengthening the infrastructure and technology usage for better delivery of the Scheme.
- Insurance companies have been asked to mandatorily utilize 0.5% of gross premium collected by them for IEC activities at grass root level to build overall insurance literacy of farmers to take informed decisions.

- Use of more technology for transparency and quick assessment of crop yield/loss for early settlement of claims.

Disposal of claims to the farmers under PMFBY during 2019-20

686. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the details of crop damage claims filed by the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) during 2019-20 because of climatic extremities experienced in Maharashtra and other States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the claims filed have been disposed of to the farmers including the total amount disbursed by the insurance companies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and also by when the pending claims would be settled?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) to (d) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) is being implemented on area approach basis for wide-spread calamities. As per provisions of the PMFBY, claims for wide spread calamities like flood, drought etc. or season end claims are worked out and settled by the concerned insurance company for notified crops on area approach basis, on receipt of yield data arrived through requisite number of Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs) at the end of the harvesting period, from the concerned State Government. Farmers have no need to file such claims.

However, losses due to localized risk of hailstorm, landslide, inundation, cloud burst and natural fire and post-harvest losses due to cyclone, unseasonal rains and hailstorms are calculated on individual insured farm level, based on the report of the joint committee comprising representatives of State Government and insurance company to survey the extent of loss. As per provisions of the scheme insured farmers are required to intimate the loss due to the aforesaid causes to the State Government, insurance company and financial institutions within prescribed time limits. Affected insured farmers can also lodge the crop damage/loss intimation on National Crop Insurance Portal or Android based mobile app "Crop Insurance App".

The detailed methodology and formula for calculation of claims/indemnity has been defined in the Operational Guidelines of the Scheme.