

SUGAR

Karnataka: Cane crop insurance a possibility: NITI Aayog CEO

Amitabh Kant, chief executive officer of NITI Aayog, has assured farmers of bringing more crops under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), including commercial crops such as sugarcane. But there is a rider — the quantum of water consumed in sugarcane cultivation will have to be reduced.

He was speaking at a State-level farmers' convention organised by the Karnataka State Sugarcane Cultivators' Association and the Federation of Farmers' Associations, here on Tuesday.

Responding to the farmers' demand of including sugarcane under PMFBY, Mr. Kant said he would discuss the issue with officials of the Ministry of Agriculture on a priority basis. However, he said sugarcane can be brought under the purview of PMFBY only if there is progressive decline in water usage.

Association president Kurubur Shanthakumar said 30 per cent of the sugarcane cultivators in the State have already switched to drip irrigation. He promised that this number would increase to 75 per cent over the next two years.

Mr. Kant responded that the government would extend all assistance to adopt new technology to conserve water. Banana cultivation and sericulture too would be considered for the crop insurance scheme, he added.

Attributing poor output to lack of access to modern technology and faulty inputs, Mr. Kant said the issue of poor remunerative prices given to farmers will have to be addressed.

Apart from over 400 farmers from across the State, Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) director Ram, Karnataka Agricultural Prices Commission chairman Prakash Kammaradi and others were present.

Kant says banana cultivation and sericulture too would be considered for the insurance scheme

(Source- <http://sugarnews.in/karnataka-cane-crop-insurance-a-possibility-niti-aayog-ceo/> published on 6th July, 2016)

Karnataka: Sugarcane growers stage protest

Sugarcane growers, who have been on an agitation path seeking payment of pending bills, staged a protest during a meeting convened by Regional Commissioner N. Jayaram here on Tuesday.

The growers stormed into the well of the meeting hall and closed both its doors demanding a promise from the district administration on the payment of dues by the sugar mills in the district.

Led by Karnataka Rajya Raith Sangha leader Basavaraj Mallali, the growers demanded that the State government cancel the licences of sugar factories which had failed to make the full payment to them as per the Fair and Remunerative Price fixed by the Centre. The government, however, could renew their licences after ensuring that all the dues were cleared.

They said that the government in Maharashtra had taken a decision to cancel the licences of factories for not making full payments to the growers. The Karnataka government should also take a similar step to tame the "arrogant" managements of sugar mills controlled by politicians, legislators and MPs belonging to major political parties.

The growers also sought action against those manufacturing illicit liquor and selling it in villages and towns in the district.

Mr. Jayaram said that he would convey their demands to the government.

[\(Source- sugarnews.in/sugarcane-growers-stage-protest/](http://sugarnews.in/sugarcane-growers-stage-protest/) published on 6th July, 2016)

Distillery/Ethanol

Higher ethanol mix fuels alarm among gas dealers

The Centre's plans to blend 22.5% ethanol with petrol has caused alarm among petroleum dealers in the city, who fear numerous problems in the mix caused because of Kolkata's high humidity. Already, the E10 Gasohol mix that is used (10% ethanol mixed with petrol or gasoline) causes multiple problems because of Kolkata's humidity, thanks to ethanol's hygroscopic (water absorbing) property, and experts and dealers fear the problems will worsen because of the higher percentage of ethanol mix that is being planned, unless remedial measures are adopted by oil marketing companies.

10 per cent ethanol is mixed with Petrol or Galsoline to produce to E10 Gasohol. This causes multiple problems in a humid city like Kolkata thanks to Ethanol's hygroscopic property (absorbing water). Now, the union government is aiming at blending 22.5 per cent ethanol with petrol. This blending, experts said, would cause greater problems in humid areas like Kolkata, if remedial measures are not adopted by oil marketing companies (OMCs).

Already, as reported by TOI on June 21, petroleum dealers found 'phase separation' in their tanks, almost in three distinct layers. "I checked only two days back, immediately after the fuel came to my gas station, and found specific gravity or density varying by 14 points. While the declared density of the fuel is 751.1cc, I found fuel density of 662.4cc at the middle layer of the tank, 766.2cc at the lower layer and 757cc at the upper layer.

When I questioned the oil marketing company (OMC) about the aberration, the company's representative asked me to make an average. The average comes to 765cc. So, there is a difference of 14cc," complained a south Kolkata petroleum dealer.

The petroleum dealer said the OMC cannot challenge him as the fuel is kept in a sealed fuel box given to him by the OMC. "If they accuse me of adulteration, I will ask them to compare the fuel of my tank with that of the 'company box'. They would not find any difference. So, clearly, something is wrong at their end," the dealer said.

"This happens because of absorption of water by the ethanol," said auto emission consultant Somendra Mohan Ghosh. "Phase separation describes what happens to Gasohol (ethanol-blended petrol or gasoline) when water is present. When gasoline containing even small amounts of ethanol comes in contact with water, either liquid or in the form of humidity, the ethanol will pick up and absorb some or all of that water. When it reaches a saturation point, the ethanol and water will 'phase separate', actually coming out of solution and forming two or three distinct layers in the tank, giving three distinct density levels," he explained.

Automobile expert and former NIT director Prabir Kumar Bose said: "OMCs need to mix certain additives with the gasoline so as to minimize the hygroscopic property of ethanol. Besides, the OMCs must maintain a dehydrated ambience so as not to allow ethanol to get exposed to water or humidity."

The variation of density is correlated with fuel consumption. While ethanol reduces carbon monoxide emission by 30%, phase separation causes more pollution and engine trouble. The problem will increase manifold if the blend goes up above 20%, said experts. Moreover, most car engines are not programmed to burn ethanol-blended fuel. Abroad, cars have branding on the basis of its engine's choice of fuel. Vehicles with flexi-fuel choice can burn ethanol-blended gasoline efficiently. However, in cities like Kolkata, the E10 Gasohol is being dispensed from unleaded petrol dispensers, Ghosh said.

However, proper bio ethanol plant is coming up in Assam. The plant will start making ethanol from bamboo in North-East. 40,000 litres of second generation ethanol could be produced there. He said boost to ethanol production could cut India's huge crude oil imports bill, which is pegged at Rs 7 lakh crore per annum. This Ethanol blended fuel of course will have additives to neutralize its hygroscopic property.

(Source- <http://sugarnews.in/higher-ethanol-mix-fuels-alarm-among-gas-dealers/published> on 6th July, 2016)

Talks on second-generation ethanol, coal-based urea

In a move that could ease the government's subsidy outgo of Rs 45,000 crore on urea, the ministry of road transport and highways has initiated talks with the ministries of power, coal, petroleum, and agriculture to formulate a coal-based urea policy. Sources said this

coal-based urea would cost \$60-75 per tonne as compared to \$160 per tonne for natural gas-based urea. Coal production is surplus in the country and that additional fuel can be used for producing urea.

The road ministry has proposed another policy for using resources other than molasses for producing ethanol, since there is a shortage of molasses. Ministries of renewable energy and science and technology will find a way to produce second-generation ethanol from biomass, bamboo, rice straw, wheat straw, and cotton straw, among others, to power vehicles.

Ethanol production could cut the country's crude oil import bill of about Rs 7 lakh crore per year.

This method is used in countries like China, South Africa, Spain etc for producing ethanol. Making ethanol from bamboo in the north-east can also create employment opportunities in the region.

The proposal, once formulated in consultation ministries of petroleum, agriculture, science and technology, will go to the Cabinet for its approval,

According to the official the proposal may go to the Cabinet as early as by the end of this month.

(Source- <http://sugarnews.in/talks-on-second-generation-ethanol-coal-based-urea/> published on 6th July, 2016)

Business quote of the day

"Going with the Flow is hard, especially when you find it hard to trust the flow--." -Anonymous