

## Centre revises Guidelines for procurement, allocation, distribution and disposal of coarse grains

Distribution period of Jowar and Ragi is increased to 6 & 7 months respectively from the earlier period of 3 months

New guidelines would increase procurement/consumption of coarse grains through Public Distribution System (PDS)

Marginal and poor farmers who are also PDS beneficiaries will gain due to procurement and then distribution of millets at Rs.1 per kg

Posted On: 09 DEC 2021 3:32PM by PIB Delhi

Procurement of coarse grains was regulated by guidelines for procurement, allocation, distribution and disposal of coarse grains dated 21.3.2014/26.12.2014. Under these guidelines States were allowed to procure coarse grains from farmers at Minimum Support Price (MSP) under Central Pool subject to the prior approval of Government of India on the detailed procurement plan prepared by State Government in consultation with Food Corporation of India (FCI). The whole quantity was to be distributed within 3 months from the end of procurement period.

These guidelines have served the purpose of encouraging the procurement of coarse grains by the States. This was reported in the increasing trend in procurement of coarse grains during last 3 years. However, it was observed that several difficulties were being faced by some State Governments with respect to distribution period of coarse grain which was 3 months each for procurement and distribution activity, irrespective of the shelf life of the commodity.

To obviate difficulties being faced by some States in procurement/distribution of coarse grains and to increase procurement of coarse grains under Central Pool, discussions were held with various stakeholders.

Based on the discussion with stakeholders', Government of India has amended the guidelines for procurement, allocation, distribution and disposal of coarse grains dated 21.3.2014/26.12.2014.

**Highlights of revised guidelines dated 7.12.2021** are as under:

- i. Distribution period of Jowar and Ragi has been increased to 6 & 7 months respectively from the earlier period of 3 months. This would increase procurement and consumption of these commodities as the State would have more time to distribute these commodities in Target Public Distribution System/ Other Welfare Scheme.
- ii. Provision of inter-state transportation of surplus coarse grains through FCI is incorporated to cater for advance demand placed by consuming state before the start of procurement.
- iii. New guidelines would increase procurement/consumption of coarse grains through Public Distribution System (PDS). As these crops are normally grown on marginal and un-irrigated land, therefore, enhanced cropping of these would encourage sustainable agriculture and crop diversification. With the increased procurement, number of farmers benefitting from the procurement of these crops, would also increase.
- iv. Marginal and poor farmers who are also PDS beneficiaries will gain due to procurement and then distribution of millets at Rs.1 per kg. Region specific coarse grains can be distributed for local consumption saving transportation cost of wheat/rice.
- v. Coarse grains are highly nutritive, non-acid-forming, gluten-free and having dietary properties. Besides, to strengthen our fight against malnutrition in children and adolescents, consumption of coarse grains would help to foster immunity and health.

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(Release ID: 1779711)