



7,500 members & Rs 2,000cr in exports! NCEL tells remarkable growth story

NCEL enables small co-ops to export its product to foreign countries

by Amit Awana | May 29, 2024

The National Cooperative Export Limited (NCEL), a newly established cooperative society in India, is making waves in the export sector. According to a recent tweet by the Ministry of Cooperation, NCEL has rapidly expanded its membership to 7,500 and achieved an impressive Rs 2,000 crore in exports.

On May 8, the Ministry of Commerce & Industry issued a notification allowing the export of Non-Basmati White Rice to Mauritius through NCEL. The notification specified that the Central Government, under the Foreign Trade Policy of 2023, permits the export of 14,000 Metric Tons (MT) of Non-Basmati White Rice to Mauritius via NCEL.

In addition to Mauritius, NCEL is poised to export 1,600 tons of white rice to Singapore, marking a significant step in bilateral trade. Negotiations with Singapore's aggregator have already yielded this milestone, with further talks aimed at expanding exports. Despite challenges posed by customs duties, NCEL, backed by prominent cooperatives such as Amul, Kribhco, IFFCO, NAFED, and NCDC, remains committed to meeting international demand. This collaboration underscores the cooperative sector's prowess in global economic endeavours.

Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah informed the Rajya Sabha that NCEL has received permissions for exporting 14,92,800 MT of non-Basmati White rice to 16 countries, 8,98,804 MT of broken rice to five countries, 14,184 MT of Wheat Grain, 5326 MT of Wheat Flour, 15,226 MT of Maida/Semolina to one country, and 50,000 MT of sugar to two countries. NCEL has also received 2,581 membership applications from 22 States/UTs.

Union Minister Shah highlighted that NCEL aims to create an ecosystem to promote exports, particularly of agricultural commodities, benefiting farmers by accessing wider markets. Cooperative societies from primary to apex levels interested in exports are eligible for membership. This initiative focuses on exporting surpluses from the Indian cooperative sector, increasing global demand for Indian products and securing the best prices.

In a landmark move, NCEL secured government approval for exporting rice to Singapore, Mauritius, and Bhutan. Although the cooperative is yet to appoint a regular CEO, it has established a Secretariat with staff drawn from its member cooperatives.

The organization, chaired by NCDC MD Pankaj Bansal, has received a government order to export 1.43 lakh tonnes of white rice to these countries. Board members include Rakesh Kapur, Joint MD of IFFCO, Shamalbhai Patel, Chairman of GCMMF, Chandra Pal Singh Yadav, Chairman of Kribhco, and Bijendra Singh, Chairman of NAFED.

NCEL's efforts are geared towards linking farmers to export markets, addressing supply chain issues, securing export certifications, and ensuring smooth logistics. The cooperative currently operates from Amul's office in West Delhi, with plans to move to its own office in South Delhi soon.

The Cooperative Export Society provides vital support for aggregation, working capital, logistics, technical know-how, and training. Its responsibilities include assessing international market demand, tapping export potential, and ensuring direct participation of cooperatives in the country's exports. The Ministry officials are confident that this will boost exports of surplus goods produced by cooperatives, promote "Make in India," and contribute to Atmanirbhar Bharat, leading to increased employment in the cooperative sector.

Supported by relevant ministries, NCEL aims to leverage various government export schemes and policies, although some traders express concerns about NCEL's lack of experience in the export market. Nevertheless, NCEL's rapid growth and early successes suggest a promising future for India's cooperative export sector.