

Land records to be checked before paddy procurement

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In a first, the Centre has decided to cross check land records before the procurement of paddy from next month in a bid to ensure the MSP reaches farmers and not traders, Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said on Monday.

Most procuring states, barring Assam and Uttarakhand as well as Jammu and Kashmir, are ready and have also integrated digital land records with the Centre's nodal procurement agency Food Corporation of India (FCI) for this purpose, he told reporters. Asserting that this new mechanism is in the interest of farmers, Pandey said the crop cultivated by farmers whether in their own land or in rented land will be procured by the government.

"It is not necessary for farmers to own the land or not. If farmers have cultivated any land, that will be procured," he said.

The whole idea is to cross check how much crop has been cultivated in what area and accordingly procure it, he said, adding this is where digital land records integrated centrally with FCI will help during the procurement process.

The main objective behind this mechanism is that the government procures the crop from genuine farmers and not from traders.



Meanwhile, Kharif foodgrain output is likely to touch a record 150 mn tonnes this year, said the agri secy

According to the Secretary, "most states including Punjab are in complete readiness." Every state wants farmers to benefit from the procurement process and not the traders. This mechanism will ensure the minimum support price (MSP) reaches farmers and not traders, he said.

Many states such as Uttar Pradesh and Odisha had already integrated their land records, while some states had not done and they are doing this year, he added.

Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agarwal, who was also present in the media briefing, said the government's intention is to ensure actual farmers get the benefit of MSP procurement.

Meanwhile, Kharif foodgrain output is likely to touch a record 150 million tonnes this year, he added.