

Peanut Blog

An ounce of information



Bikaner farmers raise alarm over groundnut procurement

Farmers from the Kisan Mahapanchayat have raised concerns about irregularities and fraudulent practices in groundnut procurement at Bikaner district

A memorandum in this regard was sent to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union home and cooperatives minister Amit Shah and chief minister Bhajan Lal Sharma.

Bikaner district contributes 35.9% to the state's total groundnut production, with almost half of the district's production in Sri Dungargarh tehsil. They point out that while the standard weight per sack is fixed at 35.7 kg, the actual weight at procurement centres vary between 33.8 and 36.5 kg. The sacks containing lower weights reportedly have inferior quality groundnuts, sourced from mills and traders at prices ranging from Rs 3,800 to 5,200 per quintal. The procurement centre staff allegedly profit by paying farmers for only 35 kg when the actual weight is 36.5 kg.

Farmers allege that purchase centres are authorised to be operated by cooperative societies, but their officials and employees remain in the background, handing over the operation to contractors responsible for handling and transportation. These contractors then act as a protective wall for the officials and employees.

"At procurement centres, sellers are charged up to Rs 6,000 per quintal to prepare their ground sale slips. Then, the amount is transferred to their account at Rs 6,783 per quintal. This results in a saving of Rs 1,783 per quintal, and groundnuts purchased from mills cost between Rs 3,800 and Rs 5,200 per quintal. Even at the maximum amount of Rs 5,200, a saving of Rs 800 is achieved. Thus, a profit of Rs 2,583 per quintal is made, and the same bags are used for that purchase. Consequently, farmers who have paid Rs 1,000 per quintal to procurement centre staff also stand in line for purchase," said Kisan Mahapanchayat president Rampal Jat.

Despite an agreement in 2019 between farmers and the govt to establish a purchase centre in every village service cooperative society, only 292 groundnut purchase centres exist compared to over 7,500 village service cooperative societies," he added.

"To ensure purchase of every grain, restriction of purchasing more than 25% of the state's production should be removed from the guidelines of the Prime Minister's Annadata Income Protection Campaign," said Jat.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/bikaner-farmers-raise-alarm-over-groundnut-procurement/articleshow/118824197.cms>