Maharashtra Farmer Producer Companies get another target: 10,000 tonnes of onions

Farmer Producer Companies (FPC) in Maharashtra will have to create a buffer stock of 10,000 tonnes of onions. This is an additional quota given to FPCs by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) after they met an earlier target to procure 20,000 tonnes of onions by the end of May. Onion prices are again under the radar of the central and state governments because of their upward trend since the third week of May.

Retail prices in urban centres such as Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur and Delhi have neared Rs 20 per kg. Prices have increased by 10-12 per cent over the last month, as per data of the Price Monitoring Cell, Ministry of Consumer Affairs. At Lasalgaon's wholesale market in Niphad taluka, the average traded price is around Rs 1,000-1,100 per quintal. Over the last fortnight, prices have increased by Rs 200-250 per quintal, which has brought some cheer to growers.

Jaydutt Holkar, chairman of Lasalgaon's wholesale market, opined that the price rise was mostly due to a reduction in rabi onion acreage in the state. Main onion-growing districts such as Nashik, Pune Dhule and parts of Marathwada are in the throes of a severe drought, which has brought down area for cultivation of summer onions. Meanwhile, Yogesh Thorat, managing director of MAHA-FPC, the apex body of FPCs in the state, said they had met this previous procurement target of 20,000 tonnes in 45 days. As many as 39 FPCs, mostly in the districts of Ahmednagar, Pune, Nashik, Solapur and Osmanabad, were involved in the process. For the additional quota, 37 FPCs would be roped in who have storage space available. The procured onions, Thorat said, would be stored at either the farmers' lands or a common storage structure. "The procured onion will be offloaded in metro cities as and when required to stabilise prices," he said. The FPCs plan to finish their procurement by the end of June or before monsoon hits the state.

Source: Indian Express, June 06, 2019 (verbatim reproduced)