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Agriculture department cracks down on spurious paddy seeds in Odisha



BARGARH: As kharif cultivation picks up after phase of deficient rainfall, the district agriculture department has intensified its efforts to identify and curb the sale of spurious paddy seeds to protect farmers from further distress.

Over the past week, the department temporarily suspended the licences of two traders and canceled the licences of four others. With 514 authorised dealers across the 12 blocks of the district, 8,500 quintal of paddy seeds were brought in for the kharif season, and approximately 6,200 quintal have already been procured by farmers.

The department is currently working to determine how many farmers may have been sold spurious seeds.

Chief district agriculture officer Prasanna Kumar Mishra said it is important to ensure that farmers receive genuine seeds for a good yield. “Though farmers in the district are cautious and well aware of

the quality of seeds, it is our responsibility to ensure they get genuine seeds. Non-notified seeds sold for additional profit are less likely to yield good results. We have taken action against traders selling such seeds and samples have been sent for lab tests,” said Mishra.

Official sources revealed that the licences of Indian Seeds Centre and Bansal Traders have been temporarily suspended, while the licences of Hari Om Traders, Meher Pesticides, Shankar Shukla Traders and Indian Seeds Corporation have been cancelled.

The association of agri-traders has expressed discontent over these actions. “Non-notified seeds are not necessarily inferior. Many farmers request these seeds because of good yields in the past. Traders have also applied for permission to sell non-notified seeds but are unaware of their application status. Strict action should be based on lab germination reports,” said a trader.

Farmer leader Ramesh Mahapatra criticised the Agriculture department and said, “The district often faces shortages and delays in receiving seeds leading poor yields. Farmers have to buy whatever seeds available to keep up with seasonal activities.” The government’s notified list doesn’t always include the seeds farmers prefer, forcing them to buy elsewhere, he said adding, seeds distributed through societies have sometimes failed.

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/2024/Aug/04/agriculture-department-cracks-down-on-spurious-paddy-seeds-in-odisha>