

Farmers to get district-specific agro-weather advisory

Millions of Indian farmers will soon get district specific agro-weather advisories to boost agricultural produce and reduce losses due to the vagaries of nature.

'This will be done by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) in collaboration with agricultural universities across the country. We have devised a model through which farmers will get specific advisories about their crops,' IMD deputy director general R.C. Bhatia told IANS.

He said farmers were currently provided only weather forecasts. The agro advisory will include inputs like which crop is good at what time and what farmers of a district should do according to the weather pattern.

'Currently, we are providing information from over 40 stations but soon the information will be disseminated from 127 centres. This will cut down the error margin and benefit the farmer most,' he added.

Authorities said the information would be disseminated through advisory centres, Kisan Vikas Kendras and agricultural universities.

Farmers would be contacted in person as well as through radio.

Agricultural universities will conduct certain extension programmes and educate farmers about agro-advisory techniques through mass media such as TV, radio, print media, and also through farmers' fairs.

Millions of farmers in rural India depend on monsoon for their agricultural produce. The lack of enough information about the progress of erratic rains often spoils the farm output and damages crops.

Nearly 70 percent of the Indian population depend on agriculture and any damage to crops leads to several complications - from debt to farmers' suicide.

Authorities said that out of over 600 districts in the country, nearly 150 districts across states would get the facility in the first phase beginning Wednesday.

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