

GPS-based crop survey from kharif '23

AGTECH FIRMS UPBEAT. IT-based objective yield calculation to make insurance, credit processes more robust

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New Delhi

Agri-tech firms may witness a boom in business after the Centre's directive to States to complete digitisation works such as geo-referencing of village maps by March 31 so that the proposed GIS/GPS-based crop survey can be rolled out from kharif 2023.

"Computer/IT-based objective yield calculation will make the insurance and credit process very efficient," said Jatin Singh, Managing Director of Skymet Weather, which has set up over 5,000 weather stations across the country. The government has been working on this for the last six years as it has been a very intense process, Singh said, adding this process has been concentrated on cereal crops on pilot basis, mainly



TARGETS SET. The geo-referencing of village maps is to be completed by March 31 so that the proposed GIS/GPS-based crop survey can be rolled out from kharif 2023

paddy and wheat. The Centre's AgriStack scheme was discussed in detail first during the national conference of chief secretaries of states in June and later at the governing council meeting of

Niti Aayog in August. After these deliberations, it was decided to undertake an "honest" crop survey which no one can challenge, the sources said. "The crop survey will be carried out

through a mobile app either by farmer or crop surveyors. Photos of each crop will be captured with latitude, longitude and time. Through geo-referencing of a plot, it will be electronically possible to make sure that the photo is indeed from the farmers' field," an official said. The Centre wants the crop survey to be completed in two months from the date of sowing so that by August it should have a fair idea of the likely kharif production, the official said.

NEED FOR SYNERGY

Stressing on the need for synergy between the government and industry in sharing information in the farm sector, Agriculture Secretary Manoj Ahuja in July had appealed to corporates to have a shared understanding and intention to improve the sec-

tor. "A lot of people are doing crop estimates, can we share this info so that we have stronger results," Ahuja had said at a conference organised by industry chamber FICCI.

The importance of correct estimates and timely forecasts can be gauged from the embarrassment the government had to face when the wheat export ban was notified a day after it was announced that a delegation would go to nine countries to boost the grain's export.

"When we say 'AgriStack', it must be comprised of different databases in terms of policies, data sharing frameworks, and rule based engines. In addition, it should be built on advance technological platforms," said Navneet Ravikar, managing director of Leads Connect Services, a Noida-based agri-tech firm.