

# Uttarakhand govt. to purchase millets, food grains directly from farmers

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The move would directly benefit the farmers as they would get adequate price for their farm produce.(HT File)

In a "maiden initiative" by the Uttarakhand government aimed to enhance farmers' income, the state-owned Mandi Parishad (whole sale market) will directly buy farm produce like millets and food grains from them.

"Farmers growing millets and food grains would not have to come to cities to sell their produce. The Mandi Parishad employees will now visit their (farmers) doorsteps to purchase the farm produce at minimum support price," agriculture minister Subodh Uniyal said.

"This is the first of its kind initiative in the state, for which it (mandi parishad) has already been allocated a revolving fund of ₹10 crore."

Uniyal said the move would directly benefit the farmers as they would get adequate price for their farm produce.

"The Mandi Parishad will purchase five types of millets and grains from farmers," he said referring to Chaulai (amaranth), Maduwa (Ragi), Jhingora (barnyard millet), Kuttu (buckwheat) and Koni (foxtail millet).

Uniyal said initially, the scheme had been launched in Almora and Chamoli.

"In the next phase, it will be extended to other districts before all the districts will be covered under the scheme," he said.

Uniyal said the scheme was aimed to ensure that farmers "get full benefits by selling their crops at minimum support price, which will soon be announced" by the government. "It will also motivate more and more farmers to produce millets and food grains."

The minister said apart from benefiting farmers, the scheme would also benefit thousands of school going children.

"Some of these nutritious food grains are proposed to be a part of the midday meal scheme meant for schools," Uniyal said. "As of now, they are provided rice and vegetables as part of a midday meal."

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