

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the existing Policy of food grains Procurement?**

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➤ The Central Government extends price support to paddy, coarse grains and wheat through the Food Corporation of India and the State Agencies. All the food grains conforming to the prescribed specifications i.e. Fair Average Quality norms offered for sale at specified centers are bought by the public procurement agencies. The producers have the option to sell their produce to FCI/State Agencies at support prices or in the open market as is advantageous to them. The procurement policy is open ended and no targets, as such, are fixed for the procurement of food grains.

### **How is the Procurement of rice undertaken under levy system?**

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➤ Rice is collected by way of statutory levy on rice millers and rice dealers. The percentage of levy rice is fixed by State Governments with the approval of Central Government taking into account requirements for the Central Pool, domestic consumption and marketable surplus. The levy percentage varies from State to State. Prices of levy rice are fixed before commencement of every Kharif Marketing Season.

### **What is the Scheme of Decentralized Procurement(DCP) of food grains?**

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➤ The scheme of Decentralized Procurement of food grains was introduced by the Government in 1997-98 with a view to enhancing the efficiency of procurement and PDS and encouraging local procurement to the maximum extent thereby extending the benefits of MSP to local farmers as well as to save on transit costs. This also enables procurement of food grains more suited to the local taste.

➤ Under the decentralized procurement scheme, the State Government itself undertakes direct purchase of paddy and wheat and procurement of levy rice on behalf of Government of India. Purchase centres are opened by the State Governments and their agencies as per their requirements. The State Governments procure, store and distribute food grains under TPDS and other welfare schemes. In the event of the total quantity of wheat and rice thus procured falling short of the total allocation made by the Central Government for meeting the requirement of TPDS and other schemes, the Central Government, through FCI, meets the deficit out of the Central Pool stocks.

➤ The Central Government undertakes to meet the entire expenditure incurred by the State Governments on the procurement operations as per the approved costing. The Central Government also monitors the quality of food grains procured under the scheme and reviews the arrangements made to ensure that the procurement operations are carried on smoothly.

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## **When the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) has come into force?**

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- Government has notified the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2013. It has deemed to have come into force on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2013, the date on which the National Food Security Ordinance, 2013 was promulgated.
- However, the NFSA provides for a period not exceeding one year, i.e. up to 04.07.2014, to the State Governments for identification of households to be covered under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).
- In Andhra Pradesh State, NFSA is being implemented from April, 2015 onwards.

## **What are the entitlements for food grains under NFSA?**

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- Every person belonging to identified eligible households is entitled to receive 5 Kg of food grains per person per month at subsidized prices under TPDS. The existing Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, will continue to receive 35 Kg of food grains per household per month.

## **What are the prices at which food grains will be provided to the entitled beneficiaries?**

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- Food grains under TPDS under the Act will be made available at subsidized prices of Rs. 3, 2 and 1 per Kg for rice, wheat and coarse grains respectively for a period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act. Thereafter prices will be suitably linked to Minimum Support Prices (MSPs).
- But in Andhra Pradesh state, Rice is being supplied at subsidized rate i.e., @ Rs.1 per Kg to the PHH and AAY card holders.

## **Whether the entire population of the country is covered under the Act to receive subsidized food grains?**

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- Upto 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population will be covered under TPDS under the Act, thus covering about two-thirds of the population of the country.

## **Whether the percentage coverage of 75%/50% for rural/urban population for subsidized food grains under TPDS is applicable uniformly to all States/UTs?**

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- No, coverage of 75%/50% for rural/urban population is at the all India level, corresponding to which, State-wise coverage has been determined by the Central Government for each State/UT.

**What is the basis for determining State-wise coverage under TPDS under the NFSA and what are the State-wise percentage coverage?**

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- Planning Commission has determined the State-wise coverage by using the NSSO Household Consumption Survey data for 2011-12. The State-wise percentage coverage of population under TPDS under NFSA.

**How and by whom the eligible households for coverage under TPDS will be identified?**

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- Within the coverage under TPDS determined for each State, the work of identification of eligible households is to be done by States/UTs. States will identify AAY households in accordance with the guidelines applicable to the AAY scheme and remaining households as priority households in accordance with their own guidelines. The identification is to be done by States/UTs within a period of 365 days from the commencement of the Act.

**How the food grains will be allocated to a State till it starts Implementation of the Act/identification of households under TPDS are complete?**

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- The Act provides that the State Govt. shall continue to receive the allocation of food grains from the Central Govt. under the existing TPDS till the identification of households for coverage under NFSA is complete.

**Whether based on the coverage and entitlements provided in the Act, food grains allocation for some States/UTs would be lower than their allocation under the existing TPDS? If so, what provision has been made in NFSA to protect the existing allocation of States/UTs?**

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- The Act provides that if annual allocation of food grains to any State under the Act is less than the average annual offtake of food grains for last three years, the same shall be protected. Accordingly, food grains allocation for each State/UT has been determined and specified in Schedule IV of the Act.

**What are the other entitlements for food security in NFSA?**

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- In addition to entitlement for subsidized food grains under TPDS, the Act provides for nutritional support to pregnant women and lactating mothers and children. Pregnant women and lactating mothers and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years will be entitled to meals as per prescribed nutritional norms under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Mid-Day Meal (MDM) schemes. Higher nutritional norms have been prescribed for malnourished children up to 6 years of age. Pregnant women and lactating mothers will also be entitled to receive maternity benefit of not less than Rs. 6,000.

- The entitlements for pregnant women and lactating mothers and children up to the age of 6 years, provided in the Act, will be implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The entitlements for children in the age group of 6 years to 14 years will be implemented by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of School Education and Literacy).

### **What will happen in case the entitled food grains or meals are not provided to the beneficiary?**

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- In case of non-supply of the entitled quantities of food grains or meals to entitled persons, such persons shall be entitled to receive food security allowance from the concerned State Government.

### **What is the mechanism for addressing the grievances in the Act?**

- The Act provides that every State Government shall put in place an internal grievance redressal mechanism which may include call centres, help lines, designation of nodal officers, or such other mechanism as may be prescribed.
- It is further provided that the State Government shall appoint or designate, for each district, an officer to be the District Grievance Redressal Officer (DGRO) for expeditious and effective redressal of grievances of the aggrieved persons in matters relating to distribution of entitled food grains or meals and to enforce the entitlements under the Act.
- There is also a provision that every State Government shall constitute a State Food Commission for the purpose of monitoring and review of implementation of the Act., States will have the flexibility to use the existing machinery or set up separate mechanism.

### **Where can appeal against an order of DGRO be filed?**

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- Any complainant or the officer or authority against whom any order has been passed by a DGRO, who is not satisfied with the redressal of grievance, may file an appeal against such order before the State Food Commission.

### **Whether there is any provision for levying a penalty for not complying with the provisions of the Act?**

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- The Act provides that any public servant or authority found guilty, by the State Commission at the time of deciding any complaint or appeal, of failing to provide the relief recommended by the District Grievance Redressal Officer, without reasonable cause, or wilfully ignoring such recommendation, shall be liable to penalty not exceeding five thousand rupees.

## **Who is responsible for delivery of entitlements to the beneficiaries?**

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- The main responsibility of the Central Government is to allocate from the central pool the required quantity of food grains to the State Governments under TPDS and in respect of other entitlements, at the prices specified in Schedule I of the Act. The Central Government is also responsible to provide for transportation of food grains, as per allocation, to the depots designated by the Central Government in each State.
- It is the responsibility of State Governments to take delivery of food grains from the designated depots of the Central Government, organize intra-State allocation for delivery of food grains at the doorstep of each fair price shop and ensure actual delivery or supply of food grains to entitled persons under TPDS.
- Similarly, in respect of entitlements for meals to women and children, it is the responsibility of State Governments to take delivery of food grains from the designated depots and ensure actual delivery of entitled benefits to the beneficiaries.

## **What is the role of local authorities like panchayats, municipal authorities etc. in implementation of NFSA?**

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- NFSA provides that the local authorities shall be responsible for proper implementation of the Act in their respective areas and the State Government may assign, by notification, additional responsibilities for implementation of the TPDS to the local authority.
- It is further provided that in implementing different schemes of the Ministries and Departments of the Central Government and the State Governments, prepared to implement provisions of this Act, the local authorities shall be responsible for discharging such duties and responsibilities as may be assigned to them, by notification, by the respective State Governments.

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