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‘Take up cotton, red gram on 95 lakh acres’

Make cotton seed packets ready, officials told

The State government is planning encourage farmers to take up cultivation of cotton on about 75 lakh acres and red gram on 20 lakh acres as major crops during the next kharif (vanakalam) season so that there is no uncertainty over the demand for their produce.

‘Focus on oilseeds’

The farmers could also focus on raising oilseeds as there was a huge demand for edible oils in the country and huge foreign exchange was being spent on import of edible oils, Minister for Agriculture S. Niranjan Reddy said at a virtual meeting with District Agriculture Officers on Saturday.

Suggesting that farmers bring down paddy cultivation in kharif as much as possible, the Minister asked the Agriculture Department to create awareness among farmers about it during the two-month period before the commencement of the next farming season.

The department officials could educate farmers on the demand for cotton, pulses and oilseeds in national and international markets, he said.

The Minister instructed the officials to keep about cotton seed packets (about 76,500 quintals) from 57 seed companies and 80,000 quintals of red gram seed ready before the commencement of the season, by May 15, by keeping strict vigil on spurious seed companies.

As the State government was going to introduce QR code system for traceability of seed from the kharif season, the problem of spurious seed could be under check to a large extent, he said.

The Agriculture Minister asked the officials to activate task force teams to control the spurious seed menace.