

Agri. & Commodities

Centre approves five private wholesale markets in Karnataka, Gujarat

New Delhi (PTI): The Centre for the first time has approved setting up of five wholesale markets for fruits and vegetables by private players -- four in Karnataka and one in Gujarat.

Delhi-based Premium Farm Fresh Produce Ltd (PFFPL) has received approval of the Agriculture Ministry for its four projects at Hassan, Belgaum, Mysore and Kolar in Karnataka while Amrut Lingeshwara Cold Storage got approval for Jamnagar market in Gujarat, sources said.

The wholesale markets are being set up by the private sector after many states amended the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act. The said amendments now allow farmers to sell their produce in the open market.

PFFP has received 16 licenses so far in five states to establish wholesale market, they added.

Under the modern wholesale market scheme, government wants to set up state-of-the-art facilities with an aim to reduce wastages in fruits and vegetables.

"The Centre's nod is required as these projects are coming up under the National Horticulture Mission's (NHM) subsidy scheme," a senior government official said, adding other clearances have to be obtained at the state level as agriculture is state subject.

The private sector has shown interest in the wholesale market scheme under the NHM as it has a direct subsidy component of 25 per cent while in the terminal market, both the Centre and State can be the equity partners in the project.