

Field Jazzed Up For Farm-to-Fork Voyage

A BRIGHT FUTURE Investments in upgraded storage, streamlined supply chains, will help enhance competitiveness of agri sector

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The emphasis on modernizing the farm sector through greater investments in upgraded storage, streamlined supply chains and branding will enhance overall efficiency and competitiveness, industry executives said, as a sizeable chunk of produce stored gets spoiled for lack of proper storage.

The budget offers a roadmap for empowering farmers, ensuring food security, and propelling the agricultural sector towards a brighter future, said Belram Singh Yadav, managing director, Godrej Agrovet. The measures pave the way for inclusive, sustainable growth in the agricultural sector.

According to several estimates, more than 40% of the produced food gets spoiled even before it reaches the consumers.

With India facing challenges of high prices of Diammonium-phosphate (DAP) and the need to import, the step to promote nano-DAP will help the government save on production and transportation costs and deliver environmental benefits.

"Initiatives such as National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) and Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) are empowering farmers with better market access and infrastructure,

FM Nirmala Sitharaman said the govt will promote private and public investment in post-harvest activities

while the focus on enhancing adoption of Nano-DAP clearly showcases the government's intent to handhold farmers amidst the continuously evolving weather conditions," Yadav said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that efforts for value addition in the agricultural sector and boosting farmers' income will be stepped up and that the sector is poised for inclusive and balanced growth and productivity.

"These are facilitated from farmer-centric policies, income support, coverage of risks through price and insurance support, promotion of technologies and innovations through startups," she added.

The finance minister has set the stage for policies that can substantially boost development in rural areas, said Simon Wietusch, president, Bayer South Asia. He added that the budget also shows the government's continued push to improve farmer incomes.

"Policies such as the PM Kisan Sampada Yojana and PM Fasal Bima Yojana, along with measures to promote private and public investment in post-harvest activities including modern storage, efficient supply chains, and marketing and branding, will not only ensure reduction in wastage, easier access to markets and remunerative prices for smallholder farmers but also help consumers access nutritious and quality produce at reasonable prices," Wietusch said.

"These foundational policies are primed to ignite fresh opportunities, spur demand, and trigger economic growth," said Simon George, President, Cargill India, and MD, Cargill Food Business, South Asia.

Sitharaman told lawmakers during her speech that for ensuring faster growth of the sector, the government will promote private and public investment in post-harvest activities. The robust social, physical and digital infrastructure will help India in meeting its aspirations of Viksit Bharat, said Dr KC Ravi, chief sustainability officer, Syngenta India. Some schemes to give a boost to the agro-chemical industry would have helped in laying a stronger foundation for the growth of the sector, he added.



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