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Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers welfare

POLICY

Title of Policy: Policy for sending SMS Advisories using m-Kisan Portal of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers welfare

Preamble

Pervasive and extensive use of the ICT is an important tool of agricultural extension. Under the National e-Governance Plan – Agriculture (NeGP-A), various modes of delivery of e-enabled services have been envisaged. These include internet, touch screen kiosks, agri-clinics, private kiosks, mass media, Kisan Call Centre etc. However, mobile telephony (with or without internet) is the most potent and omnipresent tool of agricultural extension.

SMS Portal was inaugurated by the Hon'ble President of India on July 16, 2013 and since its inception nearly 3.25 lac advisories (equivalent to 325 Crore messages or more than 1025 crore SMSs) have been sent to the registered farmers throughout the length and breadth of the country.

The number of SMSs being sent by different users across country has since been rising and of late this rise has been exponential. In order to ensure that these messages are specific to farmers' specific needs & relevance at a particular point of time, it is proposed to formulate a policy for all Organizations/entities to ensure optimum utilisation of this facility.

1. Objective

To provide a policy framework for effective utilisation of the m-Kisan Portal.

2. Policy Statement

The m-Kisan SMS Policy of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers' Welfare has been formulated with a view to strategies in better targeting, avoiding redundancy and economizing the use of SMS facility to provide timely and need based information/advisory to the famers.

3. Applicability

The policy shall be applicable to all Organisations under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, States and all other Departments/organization that choose to use m-Kisan Portal for sending advisories to the farmers or in their other e- Governance projects related to Agriculture and allied sectors.

4. Implementation Mechanism

Following measures will be adopted to ensure optimum utilization of the resources available for effective targeting of SMSs:-

- (a) **Message Length:** The message length will be restricted to 262 characters in Unicode (4 SMS) and 305 characters (2 SMS) in English. Designation can also be added without changing the approved length of message.
- (b) **Service / User-Wise Quota.** Following measures will be applied to restrict the number of SMSs being sent:-
 - i. Every District level user like KVK and State Government officials of all departments - Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries will be allowed to send up to 3 advisories per week except AMFUs which send any number of advisories per week.

- ii.** At least two users at state level for each sector i.e. Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries may be allowed per state with 2 messages per user per week.
- iii.** One ATMA Nodal Officer may be allowed to send three advisories per week. ATMA Nodal officers should coordinate with District level officers before sending advisories.
- iv.** Regional level officers: users at block, zone/division and at sub division level will be allowed to send three advisories per week.
- v.** State Level organisations :
 - a. State Agriculture Universities can send three advisories per week,
 - b. State Directorates (Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Fisheries can send two advisories per week
 - c. Two users at State AgroMet Centers are allowed to send two advisories per user per week.
 - d. Two users at SAMETIs may be allowed to send two advisories per user per week.
- vi.** Zonal Level organisations like Zonal Project Directorate of ICAR and Regional Meteorological Centers are allowed to send 2 advisories per week.
- vii. Central level-** MOA and its organizations/Institutes (DACFW, DAHDF, DARE, ICAR , IMD(HQ))
 - a. ICAR institutes are allowed to send two advisories per week, which is confined to states/districts of their crop/theme.
 - b. Other institutes can send only one advisory per week.
- viii.** All officers should send advisories related to their subject area.
- ix.** No user (Except JS, AS and Secretary) can send SMS to all registered farmers in one go.
- x.** Number of Commodities and Markets for each farmer to be restricted to 4 and 3 respectively from present figure of 5 & 5 each.

- xi.** Only extreme weather alerts will be sent under Nowcast.
- xii.** Search and reference to past advisories will be mandatory.
- xiii.** The users should not send similar messages to the same set of farmers. This will be ensured by providing a popup window showing set of advisories sent by the user during last three months to the selected farmers.
- xiv.** Expenditure likely to be incurred by the department on the message being transmitted would be provided to every user as a caution.
- xv.** Few individual officers sending high number of SMS will be monitored and suitable necessary action will be taken to take corrective action
- xvi.** No organization will be allowed to send more than 10% of the total monthly quota.

(c). **Month wise SMS Quota for different States.** Based on past usage analyses and the budgetary allocations for current FY, following per month SMS quota for States has been fixed. This would however be regularly monitored at the DAC& FW, keeping in view the expenditure and efficacy of messages being sent by each of the states.

States	%age	Number of SMSs (in crore)
Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, J&K, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand	No restriction (But a cap of 17%)	9.21
A & N Islands - 0.42% Andhra Pradesh - 1.52% Bihar - 2.30% Chhattisgarh - 4.31% Delhi - 0.46% Goa - 0.47% Gujarat - 2.38% Haryana - 0.88% Jharkhand - 2.05% Karnataka - 1.25% Kerala - 1.92% Madhya Pradesh - 3.46% Maharashtra - 4.34% Odisha - 4.11% Punjab - 0.83% Rajasthan - 1.60% Tamil Nadu - 3.02%	43.48	23.5

Telangana - 0.68%		
Uttar Pradesh - 4.34%		
West Bengal - 0.95%		
Dadra & Nagar Haveli - 0.41%		
Daman & Diu - 0.41%		
Lakshadweep - 0.41%		
Puducherry - 0.41%		

These quotas will vary proportionately on the availability of funds in future.

5. Review of the Policy.

The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers' Welfare shall have the right to review the Policy as and when required.