Draft

# **Best Practice Meri Fasal Mera Byora**

# Meri Fasal Mera Byora



## **Challenge to Procure Crops in the Pandemic Crisis of COVID-19**

The COVID-19 Pandemic has necessitated many departments in the state to operate while maintaining Social-distancing. Rabi season 2020 was at the peak, during which lakhs of farmers from Haryana were ready to harvest their wheat and mustard crops. The challenge was to procure each and every grain of the harvested crops from farmers in the pandemic crisis due to COVID-19. The bigger problem was to manage thousands of farmers, arriving from each district of Haryana, in the markets with trollies full of grains and to maintain proper social-distancing amongst them. Another Herculean task was to take care of thousands of laborers involved in the activities like cleaning, sorting, packaging, loading, unloading etc. and also hundreds of traders/ commission agents working in the markets during the procurement period.

Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board has been striving to create a well-equipped statewide agricultural produce marketing infrastructure, comprising of various market yards, purchase centers, link roads etc. The Board aims at profit maximization for farmers by ensuring the best possible prices for their produce besides facilitating the procurement activities of organizations such as FCI, Warehousing Corporation, HAFED etc. at various

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markets/ mandis.

About 7.5 lakh wheat farmers and about 3.87 lakh mustard farmers registered their crops with Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board for procurement during Rabi 2020. With thousands of people working together in the grain markets, the impact could have been very serious in the form of the spread of COVID-19. The government took a serious note of the upcoming situation and initiated the best practice through the scheme 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora'. e-Procurement successfully managed and rendered exemplary results in combat against the ongoing pandemic outbreak during the Rabi season 2020.

"Meri Fasal Mera Byora" (MFMB) scheme was launched by the Hon'ble CM, Haryana on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019 with an objective to digitize the crop records of the cultivators/ farmers. It facilitated the crop-cultivators of the state to register their personal details of land, crops, banks, payment options etc. online. The scheme actually made the procurement process smooth for the farmers. This e-portal has also facilitated the government to provide various facilities, direct benefits and subsidies to farmers.



#### **Objectives of MFMB**

The main objectives of the online procurement were to protect the farmers, laborers, traders, commission agents and customers from the spread of COVID-19 and to successfully procure each and every grain of wheat and mustard from the cultivators of the state. This Digital platform provided:

- Direct connectivity of farmers with the government
- Crop identification for the future government planning
- Prioritize the crop purchase of farmer under MSP
- Information of traditional crop-sowing areas and yield prediction process
- Digital platform for the purpose of online procurement and direct MSP transfers into the accounts of farmers



#### **Evolution of the Scheme**

The scheme had started way back in 2017 and since then, every year certain evolutions were made to improvise it after learning from the experiences of farmers and the inputs of the government offices associated with it.



### **Registration Mode**

The farmers can register their crop-details themselves on the website <u>www.fasalhry.in</u> with their smart phones or computers, sitting at home. In addition to this facility, such farmers will also get Rs.10/-per acre by the Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board (HSAMB). This has uplifted the confidence level of the cultivators.

In case of the unavailability of such facility at home, the farmers can register at the offices of Marketing committee, HSAMB or the Agriculture department. An amount of Rs.20/- is put in the account of these farmers. This is done to verify the account numbers of the cultivators.

The registration can also be done by visiting the nearest Common Service Centre. The assistant who helps the farmers in the process at the service centre gets Rs.5/-per acre as a token of appreciation.

The eligibility criteria for a farmer to register are:

- 1. It is mandatory to have land and bank account details.
- 2. The farmer must provide information about his crop and the sowing process.
- 3. Registration under the scheme is opened for a particular period/ duration.

Ushering in an era of transparency, the government of Haryana has embarked on a revolutionary e-governance initiative through the "e-Kharid" portal to develop a clean system at all levels in the food grains procurement process. First of all, the basic information of a farmer is taken by verifying his Mobile number. Then sowing details of the crop and land/ area where it has been sown is uploaded on e-kharid portal. As of now, more than 9 lakh farmers and about 25 thousand commission agents/ traders throughout the state are registered on this portal. The bank-details of a farmer are essential for Direct Benefit Transfer.

Eventually, for Rabi-2020 season, the registration forms for wheat, mustard and other crops were filled-up by farmers of the state and all data has been uploaded online. This information was linked through e-kharid portal. The stepwise processes involved in procurement with the help of information uploaded on Meri Fasal Mera Byora portal:

- 1. Satellite Mapping and Girdawari are done by the department for confirmation of cropping pattern.
- 2. During the peak of the arrival season, planning is done by the market committee to allot days and time-slots to farmers for bringing crops in the market by sending SMS on

their mobile phones ..

- 3. When farmer brings his crop in mandi, an online Gate Pass is issued to him on showing the SMS.
- 4. Farmer then takes his produce to the assigned Commission agent to unload his crop in a heap on the allotted slot.
- 5. The quality and moisture of the crop is verified by the procurement agency to confirm the lot for purchase.
- 6. Simultaneously, cleaning and packing of the crop is done by the laborer for lifting.
- 7. After final weighing of the crop, a J- form is issued by the commission agent and an Iform is issued by the purchasing agency, after which the sale process is complete.
- 8. The produce is lifted by the procurement agency from the market platforms and eventually, the agency releases the payment of the produce within 72 hours of generating I-form, into the bank accounts of commission agents.
- 9. The commission agents further release the balance payments of farmers after deducting any dues, if any.
- 10. The payment of commission to the agents is made by the procurement agency and the market fee is collected by the market committee.
- 11. To make the process more transparent, a new model of payment gate-way has been adopted so that money can be directly transferred in the bank accounts of farmers and commission agents respectively.
- 12. Also to sort out the volume issues, a volume-cap has been fixed for the farmers regarding the quantity of wheat and mustard he can bring in the market. For wheat, 20 quintals per acre with 20% variations and 8 quintal per acre or 40 quintal per day for mustard has been fixed.
- 13. For Rabi 2020 season, focusing on Wheat procurement; HSAMB has registered about 7.5 lakh wheat farmers of Haryana having an area of about 42 lakh acres with estimated wheat production of 84.15 lakh MT. Similarly, 3.87 lakh farmers having total area of about 16.60 lakh acres with estimated production of 13.27 lakh MT have been registered for mustard procurement.

### Mandi-Farmer Activities during Sale Period

		e for Bajra- 24th	
District Name	City Name	Village Name	Mandi Name
Mahindergarh	Ateli	Tobra	Ateli
Mahindergarh	Ateli	Fatehpur	Ateli
Mahindergarh	Ateli	Sagarpur	Ateli
Mahindergarh	Kanina	Mori	Kanina
Mahindergarh	Kanina	Manpura	Kanina
Mahladaesarh	Kaolon	Mohmadour	Fanlos
Mahindergarh	Mahendragarh	Majra Khurd	Mohindergarh
Mahindergarh	Mahendragarh	Majra	Mohindergarh
Mahindergarh	Mahendragarh	SISOTH	Mohindergarh
Mahindergarh	Nangal Chowdhary	Akbarpur Sirohi	Nangal Chaudhari
Mahindergarh	Nangai Chowdhary	Sirohi bahali i	Nangal Chaudhari
Mahindergarh	Nangal Chowdhary	Ashrawas	Nangal Chaudhari
Mahindergarh	Narnaul	Lutafpur	Narnaul
Mahindergarh	Namaul	Kanwariawas	Namaul
Mahindergarh	Narnaul	Dhanota	Namaul
Mahindergarh	Satnali	Surehti pilaniya	Satnali

Registered Farmer receives the message<br/>on his mobile to bring his produceSchedule Date: 24-10-2019Farmer Name: SOMDUTTFather Name: RAM KUWARFarmer Village Name: MAJRA KHURDFarmer Tehsil: MohindergarhFarmer District Name: MohindergarhMobile No: 83071XXXXXRegistration No: Mah/2019/1430247

#### **Mandi-Farmer Activities during Sale Period Gatepass of Bajra** J-Form to the Farmer I-Form to the Purchaser I-Form HARYANA STATE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD J-Form 6 achindergerh Nete : 24-10-2019 1.00 me : HCM 4: Bit Manifi : Mohindergerh Austron Date : 24-10-3019 ee Name | MCMDH artis Date Total Farm No. - 20194 CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING WATETY, MARKETING acking Tetal Total Quintally Administ 46 50 KG 6.712 -----Famer Mitble Number Piece Midonbegark Dele 26-10-2019 Bank Account No. / IFSC of Farms New: Molinderpark Day: 35-15-2019 Barla Account Holder Name rectour is limited to to Gort: Agency \*\* in Agent Anterting

This online transparent process of disbursal of payment is helping the farmers to get the optimum price of their agricultural produce, since there is negligible scope of any leakage in the system.

# Farmer Receives his payment online

#### J –Form Payment to the Farmer

J-form Code: 20191026155805

J-form Date: 26-10-2019

J-form Amount: 46000/-

Payment Date: 30-10-2019

Payment received Date: 1-11-2019

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### Implementation

The main activities carried out to manage and smoothen the procurement process in this pandemic crisis due to COVID-19 were:

- e-procurement method was introduced, for the first time, by the government of Haryana to manage procurement and payments effortlessly in this pandemic situation. Also a revolutionary e-governance initiative was developed through "e-Kharid" portal for transparency at all levels in the food grains procurement process. This portal enabled ease of doing business for traders and empowered farmers by providing real time information and timely payment. The "e-Kharid" portal is a joint venture of the Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board (HSAMB) and the Department of Food & Supplies, Government of Haryana. As of now, more than 9 lakh farmers and about 25,000 commission agents/ traders throughout the state have registered their crops on this portal.
- 2) To provide consultancy and guidance to farmers during procurement season, an exclusive Toll free Helpline number 1800 180 2060 with sufficient lease lines was made operational at the head office of Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board (HSAMB), Panchkula.
- 3) e-portal 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora' is used for registration of farmers by taking information regarding the type, area, production and arrival estimates of the crops grown by them. Also, mobile numbers and bank details of farmers are updated on this portal. For Rabi 2020 season, focusing on Wheat procurement; HSAMB registered about 7.5 lakh wheat farmers of Haryana having an area of about 42 lakh acres with an estimated wheat production of 84.15 lakh MT. Similarly, for Mustard procurement HSAMB registered approx. 3.87 lakh farmers having an area of about 16.60 lakh acres with an estimated production of 13.27 lakh MT.
- 4) Keeping in view the pandemic situation, all the arrangements were made for maintaining proper social-distancing and sanitization activities. Meri Fasal Mera Byora and e-Kharid portals were used for planning and management of the procurement season. The data was used for finalizing district/ block/ village wise markets and also the number of mandis, sub yards and other purchase centers were fixed and allotted for procurement of the farmers produce. The manpower, machinery, equipments and facilities required for management and handling of the produce in all these purchase-centers are deployed and allotted on the basis of the estimations collected from these portals.
- 5) In this alarming pandemic situation of COVID -19, to maintain proper social-distancing in the markets, the number of purchase-centers for Wheat has been increased from 470, which existed in 2019, to about 1900 during Rabi 2020. Similarly, in case of Mustard, these purchase-centers have been increased from about 60, in Rabi 2019, to about 170 in Rabi 2020. The authority to grant Wheat & Mustard purchase licenses/ permissions have been

granted to Gram-Panchayats, Farmer Producer Organizations and various other reputed organizations to work as handling-agents and commission-agents for Rabi 2020. This has quickened the process and facilitated the farmers.

- 6) Proper social-distancing was maintained by regulating the number of farmers entering the markets. Shifts were created by limiting the number depending on the size of the market and the volume of the arrival of crops.
- 7) Proper sanitization of the areas was done and sanitizers and masks were provided to farmers, laborers, traders etc. right at the entrances of the markets.

These activities had begun during the lockdown period of April 2020 and will continue till the completion of the massive challenge to procure each and every grain of farmers produce.

#### **Implementers and Collaborators**

The key implementers were the officers and the officials of the market committee and head office of HSAMB and the key collaborators were the employees of the procurement agencies like HAFED, Department of Food & Supplies etc. Regular support and guidance was provided by the top authorities of the Government of Haryana.

Sufficient food-grain in the form of wheat and oil-seed in the form of mustard is being procured and stored by various government agencies with the help of HSAMB for maintaining stocks of central and state food-grain pool, to be used during the coming years. This procurement can be very useful in times of shortage and situations like COVID-19.

## **Utilization of Registered Farmers Data on MFMB**



#### **Results of the Practice**

Proper social-distancing has been maintained throughout the procurement season and the government is proud to announce that till date no COVID-19 infection has been noticed in any of the purchase-centers, sub yards, market yards and Principal yards throughout the state and the process is smoothly reaching at the closure.

Approximately, 64 lakh metric tons Wheat and about 6 lakh metric tons Mustard had been procured till 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 in the Purchase-centers in Haryana during Rabi 2020. The government needs to be congratulated for such a successful procurement despite going through tough times of lockdown due to COVID-19 in the country.

## **Bajra** Statistics (Comparative Analysis)







Amount Paid to Farmers (In Cr.)







# Wheat and Paddy Crop Statistics-2019

The scheme helped the government in:

- a) Identifying the sowing and tentative sale-period
- b) Seasonal registration of the crop
- c) Analysis of the crops and estimation of the produce
- d) Analysis on the storage and consumption

Currently, the number of farmer-registrations for the season Rabi 2020 stands at 1,074,737 with an area of 68.84 lakh acres against the projected cultivated area of 80.41 lakh acres, which is 85% of the area registered against the projected area. The details of Wheat, Sarson and Black Gram registrations are as under:

Сгор	Registered Farmers	Area (in Acres)
Wheat	8,01,506	51,15,705.00
Sarson	3,85,783	16,22,133.91
Black Grams	11,672	32,265.17

The complete assessment of the practice has not been carried out till date as the procurement process is still going on. It may be done at the end of the procurement season.

#### Limitations of the Scheme

Though the practice was planned and also executed with a high level of precision, yet it carried some flaws with it. A few beneficiaries were consulted and the managers involved in the process were questioned to understand how the system was functioning and how could it be made better. Decentralised procurement requires continuous monitoring at ground level which was a difficult task in these times of crisis. "Meri Fasal Mera Byora" portal allows registration by anyone irrespective of his status as a farmer, owner etc. and that further allows duplicate or even triplicate entries. Such frauds are later verified by patwaris but many a times, ignored also. Most of the farmers are illiterate and ignorant which leads to wrong verifications by patwaris.

It has also been found that a few farmers register khata number where no harvesting has been done in the season and which does not match with girdawari. They smartly purchase the crops of other farmers of Haryana or even neighbouring states from open market at a lower price and then with the availability of gate-pass sell it to the state government at a higher price.

There have been a few instances of distortion in the entries at CSCs, data of registrations and Girdawari after procurement.

Despite the government being very circumspect while formulating the system, the practice is still open-ended. There are ways of manipulation at various steps. Therefore, MFMB is still a few steps away from being authentic and entirely transparent.

#### **Lessons Learnt**

- Timely detailed planning and root-level management of all the activities was done in a perfect manner at every step. Implementation of the practice at all levels, right from the Head office, market committee, purchase center and micro level in the field was thoroughly monitored and all worked really well. Also the wonderful coordination between the state government, the procurement agencies and the facilitator agency like HSAMB, together made this Rabi procurement season a big success.
- 2) Initially, the traders/ commission agents unions had some inhibitions. They were not ready to cooperate with the new system and the novel pattern of procurement. They resisted to the increased number of purchase-centers, shift wise arrival of farmers with their produce, social-distancing norms, direct payment to farmers etc. but as the procurement season matured, the traders and the commission agents adapted these new practices in the

markets. They had understood the importance and the utility of these techniques in the pandemic crisis due to COVID-19.

- 3) Patwaris should register the farmers on "Meri Fasal Mera Byora" portal from girdawari to avoid duplicate entries and verification process.
- 4) Girdawari should be verified by SDMs and Tehsildars.
- 5) Whenever a policy is being framed by the government, the actual persons who shall be affected/ supposed to be the actual beneficiaries, must be a part of the initial meetings at least. At times, the ground realities are very different from the paper work.



### Conclusion

This scheme has benefitted lakhs of farmers of the state as the crops produced by them are being purchased by the Haryana Government on Minimum Support Prices (MSP) fixed by the Government of India i.e. MSP (in Rupees per Quintal) of Wheat @1925 and Mustard @ 4425.

#### Achievements of MFMB



MFMB can be rightly considered as a best practice as this procurement process sent cash in the hands of farmers which put direct impact on the state/ central economy. The entire system ran smoothly in a safe and protected environment. There has been no report of COVID-19 infection so far from any of the purchase-centers throughout the state. Also lakhs of laborers, traders, commission-agents, truck drivers and other workers are getting jobs in the grain markets during the lockdown period, which is very important for uplifting other economic activities.

The mandis never got overloaded since the farmers were reaching with their crops only on invitation through sms. Any other option, if was implemented in these times of crisis for procurement, could have resulted in massive disaster leading to spread of infection and crash of the system.



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### Recommendations

After all the inputs of the farmers and the officials associated with the process regarding the initiation of the new practice MFMB, a few things are strongly recommended:

- 1) There should be a fool proof plan upto micro level of each farmer, purchase center, block, market, district etc.
- 2) IT tools and portals are recommended to be used for collection and assessment of the data and each activity from top to bottom for monitoring.
- 3) All the guidelines issued by the Government of India, State Government and the WHO regarding COVID-19 should be strictly followed.
- 4) Power of manipulation should not be left in the hands of a few officials regarding the mapping of the arrival of farmers with their crops in mandis. An integrated system must be developed in which a time- table showing the names of villages, names of farmers and the dates of bringing their specific crops in mandis should be displayed on the website at least giving them 15 days to get ready for the process. Many a times, the sms reaches the farmer just a day prior to his turn. If he is out of station, unwell or is not able to get his crop loaded, on a specific evening, he misses out his turn and might have to again wait for a long time to reach mandi.
- 5) It is recommended that the system should not allow any modifications, in registrations and girdawari, once the initial verification has been done by the competent officers. Any alteration, if mandatory, should be made possible after consulting the concerned farmer and only after re-confirming the facts.
- 6) Human interference should be kept away as much as possible.

## Proposed updates for the upcoming season



Additional information on this best practice can be collected from the offices of the Market Committees in Haryana, offices of Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board and other procurement agencies.



The Helpdesk has also been set up in the HSAMB headquarter with Toll Free number 1800-180-2060 to solve the grievances of the farmers, commission agents and other market functionaries. In the current procurement season, this Toll Free number is working 24 X 7.



#### **References and acknowledgements**

More details, on the very popular and successful best practice, Meri Fasal Mera Byora can be collected from the offices of the Market Committees, Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board and other food procurement agencies.

DG HIPA Mrs Surina Rajan IAS (Retd) and Chief Marketing Enforcement Officer (HSAMB) Mr R K Beniwal guided and helped in providing all the literature and the data respectively. A few HCS Officers and Tehsildars , who are undergoing training at HIPA, attached in various mandis during the procurement season also added a lot by sharing their experiences and suggesting ideas for the improvisation of MFMB.