

Tobacco Board reduces penalty for renewal of licences

Special Correspondent | MYSURU | MAY 04, 2022



The Tobacco Board has reduced the penalty levied for the renewal of licences of farmers who had sold less than 50 per cent of the authorised quota last year.

The Tobacco Board has cited “low yields attained during 2021-22 crop season” as the reason. While tobacco growers selling less than 50 per cent of the declared quantity will have to pay a penalty of ₹1,500 for every barn, tobacco farmers who had marketed less than 25 per cent of the declared quantity will have to pay a penalty of ₹ 2,500 for every barn to renew their registrations.

The Tobacco Board had fixed a crop size of 97 million kg for Karnataka during crop season 2021-22 and the quota fixed for each barn was 1,750 kg.

Mysuru MP Pratap Simha had written to the Tobacco Board and the Commerce Secretary, Government of India, to waive the penalty on the farmers for selling less than 50 per cent of the authorised quota. Though the crop size was 97 million kg, the region produced only 68 million kg due to adverse weather conditions, he said. Out of the 53,755 barns that had been renewed for the season, more than 30 per cent of the barns sold less than 50 per cent of the allotted quota on account of the “abnormal weather”.

President of Federation of Flue Cured Virginia (FCV) Tobacco Growers Associations of Karnataka Javare Gowda said the farmers had approached Mr. Simha last month and complained about the increase in the penalty for renewal of tobacco growers’ licence from this year.

“Whether the farmers grow excess or less, they are penalised”, lamented Mr. Gowda referring to the penalty levied on the farmers whenever they cultivate tobacco in excess of the authorised quantity. He said tobacco was a rain fed crop and the output is dependent on the weather conditions to a large extent. Besides, the Tobacco Board had doubled the penalty for renewal of licences of growers, who had sold less than 50 per cent of the authorised quota.

Meanwhile, Mr. Simha has pointed out that FCV tobacco, which was among the major commercial crops in Mysuru and was of export value, adds to the exchequer of Government of India. He said the tobacco farmers may not renew their licences and opt out of cultivating tobacco if the penalty was not waived.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/tobacco-board-reduces-penalty-for-renewal-of-licences/article65382294.ece>