



## Prakasam district farmers rejoice as they get good price in tobacco auctions

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**ONGOLE** : The tobacco growers of the district are in a jubilant mood as the produce of the season (2023-2024) has been fetching good earnings in the ongoing tobacco auctions conducted by the Tobacco Board in various auction platforms under the Tobacco Board's Southern Light Soils (SLS) and Southern Black Soils Regions (SBS) limits.

On April 27, the tobacco growers fetched Rs 294 per kg, the highest price ever recorded in the Southern regions of the board. In fact, prices have been gradually increasing from Rs 230 per kg since the beginning of this season's auctions, reaching its peak in the market.

Speaking to TNIE, a tobacco farmer from Maddipadu mandal named P Audishesha Rao said, "Due to the high demand in the international market, the competition among tobacco exporters and buyers is intense, resulting in the best-ever prices for growers. We have learned that tobacco growers at the Jangareddygudem-2 auction platform of the Northern Region (both Godavari districts of AP) received the highest price of Rs

341 per kg on Saturday, and we expect similar results here in our SLS and SBS region limits in the coming days.

For the current auction season, the Tobacco Board has permitted 88.61 million kgs of tobacco production under the SBS and SLS regions, with around 30,280 tobacco growers registering 24,4380 bales in the two regions. This year, growers cultivated a total of 72,000 hectares. As of now, around 32 million kgs of tobacco stocks have been purchased through the auction platforms by buyers, with the remaining stocks expected to be purchased in the coming days.

“This season, tobacco auctions began on February 29, and for the last 44 days, growers have been receiving good prices for their quality produce. We anticipate that auctions will continue until August, barring any fluctuations in the process. After receiving the best prices for their produce, farmers are considering increasing cultivation for the next season, which we believe is not wise. Our country’s tobacco purchases mainly depend on international tobacco markets and demand, which are dynamic and unpredictable. We advise tobacco growers not to expand cultivation in the next season, considering the present prices. It is better for all tobacco farmers to limit themselves to the current extent or even reduce tobacco cultivation in the next season,” explained M Lakshman Rao, Ongole Regional Manager (RM) of the SBS & SLS regions of the Tobacco Board.

In the recent auctions, tobacco growers from the SLS region auction platforms, including Podili-1, Kanigiri, Kandukur-1, Kandukur-2, Kaligiri, and DC Palli (both in SPSR Nellore district), witnessed the highest price of Rs 291 and Rs 294 per kg, the lowest price of Rs 216 and Rs 231 per kg, while brown colour quality bales fetched Rs 270 per kg and an average price of Rs 251 per kg. Meanwhile, in the SBS region limits, tobacco growers at Vellampalli-2, Ongole-1 and Ongole-2, Tangutur-1, and Kondapi platforms witnessed the highest price of Rs 290 and Rs 294 per kg, the lowest price of Rs 216 and Rs 231 per kg, with an average price of Rs 253.98 per kg.