

Tobacco growers face distress as prices decline in Old Mysuru region

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Mysuru: The tobacco growers of the state are in distress following the decline in the average price for good quality tobacco falling from Rs 315 to Rs 320 to Rs 294 per kilo. This has raised concern among the growers across the Old Mysuru region, which is known for high quality tobacco production.



According to the tobacco growers, currently top grade tobacco is fetching Rs 314 per kilo, while the average price for good quality tobacco is Rs 294. The lowest quality tobacco is procured for Rs 200, while the average price for low quality tobacco is Rs 254.

However, growers said that compared to last year, the prices came down by nearly Rs 100 per kg. Ramegowda, general secretary of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, said in the previous season, he sold the high quality FCV tobacco for Rs 380 per kg. "This year, initially we were paid Rs 310 per kg, which came down to Rs 280," he added.

Ramegowda, who has been growing tobacco for the last 30 years, said that this year's tobacco quality is the best in the last five decades. "Unfortunately, prices are falling. Andhra farmers got up to Rs 450 per kg. But Karnataka's farmers are paying a price even though we are producing high quality tobacco," he added.

Former member of Tobacco Board Vikram Gowda said the rate fluctuation is the outcome of the increase in GST on tobacco products. He stated that big tobacco buyers are slashing the procurement quantity, fearing a drop in demand for tobacco products. This resulted in a price drop, he analysed.

Vikram Gowda said in Andhra Pradesh over 100 metric tons of excess tobacco was produced against the state's quota. "This excess production is affecting the growers in the state," he said. "For Karnataka, the Tobacco Board has fixed a quota of 100 metric tons. But our production is between 80 and 90 metric tons," he said.

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