

Hikes in diesel price putting huge burden on crop cultivation

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📷 According to reports, the fuel price hike would put an additional financial burden of Rs5,000 crore on farmers in the Kharif and Rabi seasons in the 13 districts of AP. Rep picture (PTI)

two years

Vijayawada: The steady hike in diesel price is putting a huge financial burden on the farming community and increasing their hardships in these Covid times.

Farmers are already troubled with meagre prices for their produce and due to other farm-related issues in the 13 districts of AP. The diesel price rose to Rs 99.12 per litre and could touch Rs.100 any time.

The use of machinery in farming activities became inevitable — from land tilling to transportation — and the frequent hikes in diesel price are turning cultivation into a costly affair. The price was Rs.65.25 per litre in 2018 and it doubled by July 2021 to Rs. 99.12.

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According to reports, the fuel price hike would put an additional financial burden of Rs5,000 crore on farmers in the Kharif and Rabi seasons in the 13 districts of AP.

Cultivation of crops would be carried out on 1.5 crore acres in Kharif and Rabi seasons in these districts. Major crops are paddy, chilli, cotton, Bengal gram, cotton, maize, sunflower, tobacco, groundnut, sugarcane, vegetables and horticulture.

Farmers say the hike in diesel price is going to put an extra financial burden of Rs 300 to Rs 5,000 per acre for tilling, spraying of pesticides, harvest cutting and transportation of yields, depending on destinations near and far. The paddy cultivation needs an investment of Rs 7,000 per acre, Rs 15,000 for cotton, Rs 20,000 for chillies, Rs 12,000 for Bengal gram etc.

Agricultural works are set to start in the present Kharif season and farmers are worried over the extra burden on account of the fuel price hike.

Paddy is the major crop in the Kharif and Rabi seasons, which is cultivated on 80 lakh acres in the state. Paddy farmers Srinivas Raju and Ramakrishna said the tilling expenditure with tractor per acre was Rs 2,000 two years ago. This increased to Rs 3,000. Now it would cost Rs 4,000 to Rs 4,500 per acre due to the diesel price hike.

They said that earlier Rs 2,000 was the cost for paddy cutting by harvester for two hours. Now it rose to Rs 3,000. Pesticide-spraying and yield transportation expenditure etc would put an extra Rs 25,000 financial burden on a small farmer having five acres of land, they said.

The farmers urged the government to provide diesel on subsidy to farmers and offer remunerative prices to crops to save peasants from the present financial crises.

The Guntur red chilli is world-famous but the diesel price hike is impacting its cultivation too. Chilli farmer Ramana said a sum of Rs 2 lakh was investment for chilli cultivation per acre and it now rose to nearly Rs 25,000 due to the diesel price hike. Red chillies cannot be sold locally and it should be transported to the chilli yard in Guntur. The transportation charges also increased due to the hike in diesel price.

Leaders of the AP Rythu Sangham and other farmer organisations have urged the government to reduce the hike in diesel price and help farmers by providing them a good market price for their yields.

Source: <https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/040721/hikes-in-diesel-price-putting-huge-burden-on-crop-cultivation.html>