

Andhra Pradesh sets sights on oil palm cultivation

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AMARAVATI: State government has decided to increase the oil cultivation by replacing the paddy under borewells, tobacco, subabul, and eucalyptus to benefit the farmers. Cultivation of palm will be encouraged in all the dry lands to bring additional area into agriculture activity. The government is of the view that the oil palm is the best suitable alternative for the struggling after cultivating non-profitable eucalyptus, subabul and even tobacco.



Agriculture minister K Kannababu directed the officials to promote the oil palm on large scale particularly in the dry and upland areas. (File photo)

State government is also facing trouble following protests from the farmers seeking intervention to get reasonable prices for subabul and eucalyptus sticks by the paper manufacturing factories. Farmers are unable to sell the sticks even after the intervention by the government on many occasions.

Viewing the situation seriously, agriculture minister K Kannababu directed the officials to promote the oil palm on large scale particularly in the dry and upland areas. He wanted the officials to encourage the farmers to make use of the revised Central scheme to promote the oil palm cultivation. "Andhra Pradesh stands first in oil palm cultivation with 1.32 lakh farmers cultivating it in 4.5 lakh acres in eight districts spreading over in 229 mandals. The average productivity of bearing plantations is 8 tonnes of Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFB) per acre. We wanted to take the total cultivation area to about 7.5 lakh acres by adding at least 2.8 lakh acres in next four years," Kannababu told 'TOI.' He said AP produced about 14.94 lakh MTs with 2.40 lakh MTs of crude palm oil (CPO) during 2020-21.

He said the Centre had introduced a new scheme in order to encourage oil palm on large scale which they wanted to fully tap for the benefit of farmers.

Minister said that they have planned to cover about 2.5 lakh acres under the oil palm mission.

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