

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Text of the D.O. letter dated 19.8.2020 of Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, addressed to Shri. Narendra Singh Tomar Hon'ble Union Minister of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare**

"As you are aware, Tamil Nadu is one of the major Coconut growing States in the country, with an area of around 4.40 lakh hectares. Every year, based on the recommendation of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), Government of India is declaring Minimum Support Price (MSP) for various agricultural crops, including Copra. For 2020 Copra season, **Government of India has declared Rs.99.60/- per Kg as MSP for Milling Copra.**

The Coconut plantations in Tamil Nadu in the past two years have faced many challenges like occurrence of Gaja cyclone in 2018 and incidence of Rugose Whitefly in 2019. Coconut growers incur substantial expenditure during harvesting, transportation and storage of harvested produce. Further, the lockdown due to Covid -19 pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the Coconut farmers, who have to incur additional cost due to scarcity of labour and challenges in transportation. The Government of Tamil Nadu, while communicating its views on the Price Policy for Copra 2020 season, had on 23.1.2020 suggested Rs.105/- per kg for Milling Copra. At present, market rate in Tamil Nadu and nearby States prevails between Rs.100/- to Rs.110/- per Kg. Hence, taking the above challenges into consideration, it is felt that the present MSP for Milling Copra of Rs.99.60 per kg will not be adequate to compensate their cost of production.

I would like to bring to your kind notice that, Government of India had fixed the Minimum Support Prices for crops like Paddy, Ragi and Pulses at 150% of the cost of cultivation. The coconut farmers also need to be given adequate price for their produce, in order to enable them to overcome the increasing costs of production in the background of seasonal adversities, pest attacks and rising input costs.

Hence, **I request you to kindly consider revision of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Milling Copra from Rs.99.60/- to at least Rs.125/- per kg for the current 2020 Copra season, for safeguarding the interest of Coconut growers in the country."**

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