

UP cabinet paves way towards digital agri

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Lucknow: UP cabinet gave approval to 11 out of 12 proposals placed before it on Tuesday. The Agritech Policy was given clearance under which the state will move towards digital agriculture. Agriculture minister Surya Pratap Shahi said that collection and use of data would be crucial to implement the policy, under which farmers would be provided with the latest technological advancements, weather reports, technical advice etc.

"The first phase of digital crop survey in UP has been completed and a database has been prepared. We will also provide incentives to agritech start-ups and compa-

nies and give them an opportunity for agritech testing," the minister said.

The cabinet also cleared the UP Fodder Policy for 2024-2029 and the Poultry and Fish Feed Policy for 2024-2029. Under the Fodder policy, govt will work towards making UP self-sufficient in production of fodder, which currently is in short supply due to shortage of land on which fodder can be grown. Govt will identify land for production of fodder, then shortlist govt organisations and private companies with whom work can be done on PPP mode. Free seeds and plants will be provided to the shortlisted gram sabhas where land will be identified for fodder produc-

tion. Free seeds will also be provided to farmers who voluntarily switch from food crops to fodder production.

Farmers will be made aware of the use of agricultural waste like stubble, fruits, vegetables as food for animals. Compressed fodder blocks will be set up for storage and transportation of dry fodder.

Under the feed policy, mineral enriched fodder will be provided on priority to persons registered on the Pas-hudhan app for artificial insemination of cattle. Cooperative dairy committee members will also be given preference for fodder at subsidised rates.

Subsidy and rebate on interest will be offered to self-

help groups, joint liability groups, farmers producer organisations, cooperative dairy committees and companies for production of mineral enriched fodder.

In another decision, the cabinet approved a proposal to temporarily employ more than 2,200 teachers, who were removed from service in 2023 on the instructions of the Supreme Court. These teachers will be paid an honorarium and deputed in non-govt aided secondary schools.

Finance minister Suresh Khanna said there were several teaching vacancies in non-govt aided secondary schools, adversely impacting school functioning. It was therefore decided that

these 2,200 teachers will be temporarily reappointed. Those teaching in classes 9 and 10 will receive Rs 25,000, while those teaching in classes 11 and 12 will receive Rs 30,000 as honorarium, he said.

The cabinet also approved a proposal to sign an MOU between the India Trade Promotion Organization and the MSME department. Khanna said to promote MSME units, a large convention centre or multipurpose hall would be established in Lucknow and Varanasi where MSMEs could showcase their products, promoting both industrial investment and providing encouragement to those involved in MSMEs.