

THE HINDU BusinessLine

Karnataka woos traders from other States to its online agri platform

VISHWANATH KULKARNI

BENGALURU, JULY 10:

After connecting a majority of the agriculture markets across the State, Karnataka is now reaching out to traders and large buyers from other States to join its electronic commodity trading platform.

Karnataka, an early mover in implementing agriculture market reforms, since 2013, has already connected about 157 of the 162 agriculture markets across 29 districts in the state through the Unified Markets Platform (UMP), where bidding takes place online.

Rashtriya e-Market Services (ReMS), the joint venture between the Karnataka Government and NCDEX Spot Exchange Ltd, which rolled out the UMP, has launched a multi-lingual campaign to attract traders from others States aggressively.

Single licence

A trader or buyer from any State can buy a single trading licence for a fee of ₹200 and can purchase commodities from any of the 157 markets in the State either in person or through the online mode. About 298 lakh tonnes of commodities, valued at ₹56,696 crore, have been traded through the UMP platform.

Besides a multi-lingual audio-visual campaign in television channels, REMS has also taken to the social media route through YouTube to reach out to traders in other States.

“We also plan to conduct roadshows in major consuming centres of commodities such as dry chilli, copra, arecanut, tur, tamarind and turmeric, among others, to attract the traders from those States,” said Manoj Rajan, MD and CEO of ReMS.

About 32,000 traders are already enrolled on the ReMS platform through the unified trader licence, including several from States such as Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Haryana, West Bengal and Delhi.

Bulk buyers sign up

In addition, bulk buyers such as ADM, Cargill, ITC, Reliance, Metro Cash & Carry, Godrej Agro, Pepsico India, Max Hypermarket and Trinetra Super Retail have been participating in these markets.

“We want more traders from the other States to purchase the commodities traded at APMCs here,” Rajan said.

States such as Bihar, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Delhi and Chennai are the major destinations for the ball copra or edible copra produced in Karnataka.

Similarly, for arecanut produced in the State, the major consuming markets are Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

Further, ReMS has recently started assaying services in 40 major markets to cover a minimum of 25 per cent of the market arrivals and has partnered with entities such as National Collateral Management Services (NCML) and Star Agri for this purpose, Rajan said.

The agricultural marketing department has already started installing automatic cleaning and grading machines so that the farmers’ produce, when offered for online sale, is properly graded, cleaned and packed.

“We have already installed these machines in about nine markets,” Rajan said. Besides, orientation centres have been established for information dissemination to around 42 lakh farmers registered on the UMP.

(This article was published on July 10, 2017)