

NEW INDEX TO CHECK EASE OF DOING AGRIBUSINESS

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States may soon start receiving extra funding for the Agriculture Ministry's flagship schemes on the basis of their performance in encouraging agri-business, especially with regard to marketing, land and governance reforms.

The Centre expects to roll out a new Ease of Doing Agri-Business Index early next year, which will rank the States on the basis of such reforms, as well as their investment in agriculture, increased productivity, reduction of input costs, and risk mitigation measures. "In future, the Ministry may consider rewarding the higher performing States [both in absolute and incremental terms] by linking the performance with allocation from flexi funds made available in various flagship schemes of this Ministry," says a recent concept note for the Index.

NITI Aayog already brings out a Agricultural Marketing and Farm Friendly Reforms Index, rating States on their implementation of such reforms. In the initial edition of that Index in 2016, Maharashtra stood first in the rankings, followed by Gujarat.

The proposed index has a wider ambit, but the focus is still on reforms, with marketing reforms (25%) and governance and land reforms (20%) carrying almost half of the weight of the parameters in its scoring system.

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