

**CIRCULAR**

**Sub :-** Agriculture Dept.- COVID-19 - Epidemic Disease Act -1897 –  
Lockdown Orders- Procurement, Processing and Movement of  
Seeds, Fertilizers and Pesticides- Certain guidelines issued – Reg.

- Ref :-**
1. Government of Maharashtra Notification  
No.DMU/2020/CR.92/DisM.1 dated 25 March 2020. Dept.of  
Revenue & Forest, Disaster Management (Revised lock down  
order)
  2. Fax Dt. 23-03-2020 in File No. 21-4/2020-FM, Dept. of  
Fertilizers, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Govt. of India,  
New Delhi.
  3. Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs Order No.40-3/2020-DM-  
I(A) Dated- 24 March 2020 & Amendment dated-25 March 2020

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The WHO has declared COVID-19 (Corona Virus) as a Global Pandemic. In the reference 1<sup>st</sup> cited, the Govt. of Maharashtra, has communicated multiple restrictions and social distancing as proactive measures and to observe State wide lockdown to prevent onset of community transmission of Corona virus. The Govt. of India has ordered for continuation of State lockdown across India for 21 days starting from 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 vide circular cited at sr. no. 3. The said notification states that, manufacturing units engaged in production of essential commodities may function and will also be permitted to operate. Shops/establishments providing essential goods and services shall be excluded from the above restrictions which include:

1. Supply chain and transport of essential commodities.
2. Exports and Import of agricultural goods and products and all commodities.

The Seed and Fertilizers are essential commodities within the meaning of the Provisions of Essential Commodities ACT, 1955. With the reference no.3 cited above, the Government of India has also included pesticide in the sub-clause (a) of Clause 4. In this connection, the following guidelines are issued in support of continuation of production, processing and supply chain and transportation of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides in the State of Maharashtra.

**A. Seeds :**

- The harvesting season of seed crops start from February to May months across all crops.
- The harvesting, post harvest operations, shipment of raw seeds and packing activities of all seed crops is in peak across the State and from other state/states.
- Presently Soybean, Hybrid Maize, Sorghum, Forage Crops, Pearl Millet, Cotton, Pulses, Rice, Groundnut, vegetable Seeds etc. are in

movement from production locations to processing plants across the State and from other states.

- Seed Storage, testing, processing, grading and packing, R&D etc., are now in full swing and going on across the State.
- State seed requirement is to be procured during the months of March, April, May and June and this period is very critical to do all back- end process to ensure timely supply of seed during Kharif 2020 season.
- Raw seed of major seed crops is to be lifted for storage, testing, processing, grading and packing. Processed seed is to be dispatched to stock points/godowns.
- Allied industries like packing material, seed treatment chemical suppliers and distributors and dealers are also very important in supplying the seeds to the State.
- All the Seed Companies are hereby directed to take all suitable measures and safe guards while handling the seed and see that seeds of all crops produced by the Seed Companies are supplied to farmers during Kharif, 2020. The Companies are further informed that no hoarding of the Seeds shall happen in the State. All the processed and packed seed must be made available to the farmers well before the onset of monsoon.
- The companies are directed to follow the below mentioned essential safeguards.
  - There shall be no congregation of more than 5 persons in any processing / storage units while performing their duties.
  - A social distance of at least 3 ft shall be maintained from person to person.
  - Proper sanitation shall be ensured in all premises where labour/persons/staff are working in seed processing/storage units.
  - Sufficient provision of masks/sanitizers/hand washers shall be made available.
  - All the seed companies shall make payment of wages /salaries fully to the workers,/employees during the lock down period.
  - The staff and workers working in the seed companies are permitted to move to the extent required for carrying out their job responsibilities. The identity cards issued by the company employing them can be used for ascertaining their identity.
- The vehicles carrying the seeds from farmers' fields to the processing plants and from one processing plant to other processing plant and to the distribution points (C&F agencies) or from distribution points to the retailers are permitted after due inspection based on the accompanying documents which clarify that they are nothing but seeds or the packing materials, leaflets, treating materials etc., required for packing the seeds.



## B. Fertilizers and Pesticides :

Keeping in view of Guidelines forwarded by the Govt. of India for ensuring continuous movement of fertilizers in the reference 2<sup>nd</sup> cited and fertilizer being an Essential Commodity, the following guidelines are issued in support of operations for timely warehousing and movements of fertilizer within the State and from other state.

- Fertilizer/Pesticide manufacturing units can be kept in operation by taking all precautions of social distancing of three feet, proper sanitization, sufficient provision of Mask/Handwash/Hand sanitizer etc. Also there shall be no congregation of more than five person at a single place while performing their duties.
- Fertilizer Manufactures/Companies are directed to take all suitable measures in placing the indents with the railways to ensure continuous supply of fertilizers required to the state for Kharif, 2020 and to monitor the supplies with reference to indents placed on real time basis.
- The Companies are further directed that necessary measures shall be taken up through their dealer networks for timely availability of fertilizers to farmers and not to resort for hoarding/black marketing.
- There shall not be any restrictions on the movement of fertilizers & Pesticides and their raw material required for production from one place to other place within the state and from other state which depends on crop season and local demand.
- All the stakeholders involved in the fertilizer rake operation hamals, lorry crew, labour hired for loading and unloading operations, etc. shall continue the operations following adequate safety measures to protect from Covid-19.
- Fertilizer & Pesticides dealer shops shall remain open and continue functioning. The buyers shall be advised to maintain 3 feet distance while purchasing the stocks.
- Dealers are requested to provide hand sanitizers and ensure hand sanitization by the buyers before and after Bio metric authentication.
- All goods vehicles carrying the Essential Commodities like fertilizers & Pesticides shall be allowed to ply during the lock down period in the state.

## C. Warehousing:

Warehousing Corporations are also part of storage and distribution of agriculture commodities such as seeds, fertilizers, manures, pesticides, agricultural implements and notified commodities. Hence, warehousing activities relating to seeds, fertilizers and Pesticides are permitted to continue in the state duly following the safety measures as detailed below during the lockdown period.

- All the Corporations shall make payment of wages /salaries fully to the workers,/employees during the lock down period.

- There shall be no congregation of more than 5 persons in any units while performing their duties. A social distance of at least 3 ft shall be maintained from person to person.
- Proper sanitation shall be ensured in all premises where labour/persons/staff are working in Warehousing units.
- Sufficient provision of masks/sanitizers/hand washers shall be made available.

All the Seed, Fertilizer and Pesticide companies are directed to follow the above mentioned directions/guidelines without any deviation otherwise suitable action as per existing laws / Government orders will be taken.

All the above activities including movement of seed, fertilizer and pesticides needed to be carried out by the institutions/functionaries including dealers concerned should be permitted to function during the lockdown period by concern district authorities as per guidelines of Government orders cited above.

In view of above, the Offices charged with Law and Order and Magisterial Duties are requested to implement the circular instructions for the welfare of farming community of the state.

  
 Commissioner of Agriculture, 27/3/22  
 Maharashtra State, Pune.

To,

- 1) All the District Collectors in the State.
- 2) All District Superintendent of Police in the State
- 3) All the Joint Directors of Agriculture in the State.
- 4) All District Superintending Agriculture Officer in the State.

Copy submitted to

- 1) The Chief Secretary to Government of Maharashtra, Mantralaya, Mumbai.
- 2) Secretary Agriculture, Government of Maharashtra, Mantralaya, Mumbai.
- 3) Commissioner Transport, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai.

For favour of information.

Copy for information & necessary action.

1. All the Seed, Fertilizer and Pesticide Companies in the State through the concerned Sections working in State
2. All Seed, Fertilizer and Pesticide Associations in the State.