

National Food Security Act, 2013

September 16, 2020

The enactment of the National Food Security Act, (NFSA) 2013 on July 5, 2013 marks a paradigm shift in the approach to food security from **welfare to rights based approach**. It is being implemented in all the States/ UTs, on an all India basis.

Provisions of the Act

- The Act legally entitles upto **75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population** to receive subsidized food grains under **Targeted Public Distribution System**.
- About two thirds of the population therefore is covered under the Act to receive highly subsidised food grains.
- Food grains under NFSA were to be made available at **subsidized prices of Rs. 3/2/1 per kg for rice, wheat and coarse grains respectively** for an initial period of three years from the date of commencement of the Act (July 13, 2013). Thereafter, prices were to be fixed by the Central Government from time to time, but **not exceeding MSP**.
- The **identification of beneficiaries by States/ UTs is a continuous process**, which involves exclusion of ineligible/ fake/ duplicate ration cards and also exclusion on account of death and migration and inclusion on account of birth as also that of genuine left-out households.

Responsibility of Center and States

- NFSA defines the joint responsibility of the Centre and States/ UTs.
- The Centre is responsible for:

- . allocation of required foodgrains to States/ UTs
- . transportation of foodgrains up to designated depots in each State/ UTs
- . providing central assistance to States/ UTs for delivery of foodgrains from designated FCI godowns to the doorstep of the FPSs
 - The States/ UTs are responsible for effective implementation of the Act, which inter-alia includes
- . identification of eligible households
- . issuing ration cards to them
- . distribution of foodgrain entitlements to eligible households through fair price shops (FPS)
- . issuance of **licenses to fair price shop dealers** and their monitoring
- . setting up effective **grievance redressal** mechanism
- . necessary **strengthening of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)**

Entitlement Under NFSA

- AAY households, which constitute the poorest of the poor are entitled to **35 kg of foodgrains per family per month**
- Priority households are entitled to **5 kg per person per month.**
- State-wise coverage under NFSA was determined by the erstwhile Planning Commission (now NITI Aayog) by using the **NSS Household Consumption Survey data for 2011-12.**
- Within the coverage under TPDS determined for each State, the work of identification of eligible households is to be done by States/ UTs. It is the responsibility of the State Governments/ UTs, to **evolve criteria for**

identification of priority households and their actual identification.

- **Section 10 of the Act** provides that within the number of persons determined for coverage under TPDS, the State Government shall **identify the households under AAY** as per guidelines applicable and the remaining households as priority households to be covered under TPDS.

Direct Benefit Transfer

- The Act **provides for reforms** in the TPDS including schemes such as cash transfers for provisioning of food entitlements.
- The DBT experiment aims to
 - . reduce the need for huge physical movement of food grains
 - . provide greater autonomy to beneficiaries to choose their consumption basket
 - . enhance dietary diversity
 - . reduce leakages
 - . facilitate better targeting
 - . promote financial inclusion