

Proposed amendments to be included in Finance Bill 2020
28 April 2020

1. The Small Farmers Welfare Fund Act amended

The Small Farmers Welfare Fund Act is amended –

- (a) in section 2,
 - (i) in the definition of “small planter”, in paragraph (a), by inserting after the word "farming", the following words–

“or aquaponics”
 - (ii) in the definition of “small farmer”,
 - (i) in paragraph (a), by deleting the word “and”;
 - (ii) by inserting the following new paragraph –
 - (b) group of small farmers like farmers’ association, society, company or cooperative owned by a small farmer or a group of small farmers and having an annual turnover not exceeding 10 million rupees.
- (b) by inserting, after section 4, the following new section –

5. Registration of Small Farmers at the Fund

- (i) The Fund shall conduct the registration of farmers every two years.
- (ii) Every small farmer shall register himself and his plantation/s or animal/s or agro-processing enterprise/s with the Fund not later than two months after the start of each registration exercise and shall submit data and statistics on the sector to the Fund for informed decision making:
 - (a) the area of land which he has under crop cultivation and the crop details and the area which he intends to cultivate during the ensuing year and the crop details; or
 - (b) the number of animals he has in his possession and the number of animals he intends to rear during the ensuing year with details of the animals; or
 - (c) the turnover/s and number of employees of his agro-processing enterprise/s.

- (iii) Where the small farmer fails to register as given under subsection 5(ii), he may register himself and his plantation/s/animal/s/agro-processing enterprise/s with the Fund on payment of a late registration fee as would be determined by the Board for each registration period.
- (iv) Only small farmers registered with the Fund shall qualify for assistance under the Small Farmers Welfare Fund Act.
- (v) A waiting period shall apply, whereby only small farmers who have registered themselves one month before the announcement of a measure at the SFWF shall benefit from such measure.
- (vi) The Board may require the small farmer to furnish any such document in support of any declaration made by him under this section.
- (vii) Where a husband and wife, married under the system of community of goods and property, own plantations/animals/agro-processing enterprises, those units shall be registered in the joint names of the husband and wife.
- (viii) Plantations/animals owned by 2 or more farmers in undivided ownership or jointly leased by them shall be registered in their joint names.

(c) to insert, after section 14 , the following new section –

15. Duties of Officers

Officers of the Fund shall have the right to enter fields/farms/agro-processing enterprises of small farmers in the discharge of their duties under this Act.

(d) in the Schedule, in the second column, corresponding to item “poultry”, by deleting the figure “5,000” and replacing with the figure “25,000”;