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National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing: Draft Proposals, Kidwai Committee and Facts

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The draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing, released by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in November 2024, was prepared by a committee chaired by Faiz Ahmed Kidwai. It proposes a vibrant marketing ecosystem in which farmers of every category can sell their produce in a marketplace of their choice - through an integrated national market, digital mandis, warehouse-based selling and price insurance - while leaving agricultural marketing a state subject.

What the Draft Proposes

- **Empowered Agricultural Marketing Reform Committee** of state agriculture ministers, chaired by a state minister by rotation like the GST Council model, to build consensus on an integrated national market with a **single licence or registration and one fee** across states.
- **Farmer-market linkages:** declare warehouses and cold storages as **sub-market yards**, and extend **eNAM** beyond APMC mandis to these yards and to private markets.
- **APMC reform:** push APMCs to earn from new services - notifying fruits and vegetables, supporting aggregation and processing - instead of high market fees and cesses.
- **Value-chain infrastructure** with private participation, using AI, blockchain and traceability.
- A **Price Insurance Scheme** so that farmers get an assured income known at the time of sowing.
- **Ease of doing agri-trade:** digital mandi processes and online licences for traders and private market operators; a state agri-marketing reform index.

Why Marketing Reform Is Hard

- Agricultural marketing is a **State subject** - Entry 28 of List II of the Seventh Schedule, under Article 246 - so the Centre can only frame model laws and incentives.
- The three 2020 farm laws that tried a central route were repealed in 2021 after the farmers' protest; the draft framework therefore works through a consensus committee and model rules.
- Punjab rejected the draft in early 2025 and farmer unions saw it as the farm laws by another name, arguing it would weaken APMCs and the MSP-based procurement system; consultations with states continued through 2025.

The Problems the Draft Targets

- Fragmented and inefficient supply chains with many intermediaries.
- Poor market access for small farmers and weak infrastructure - storage, grading, cold chains.
- Complex regulation, multiple licences and fees across state borders.

What Already Exists

- **eNAM (2016):** the electronic National Agriculture Market linking more than 1,300 mandis.
- **10,000 FPOs** scheme (2020) to aggregate small farmers.
- **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund** (Rs 1 lakh crore, 2020) for post-harvest assets, and the Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure sub-scheme for Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs).
- The Model APMC Act 2003, the Model APLM Act 2017 and the Model Contract Farming Act 2018 as earlier reform templates.

Important Facts for Exams

- Draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing released November 2024 by DA&FW; committee chaired by Faiz Ahmed Kidwai.
- Key proposals: Empowered Agricultural Marketing Reform Committee of state ministers, single licence and one fee, warehouses as sub-market yards, eNAM expansion, price insurance, digital mandi processes.
- Agricultural marketing is a State subject: Entry 28, List II, Seventh Schedule.
- eNAM launched 14 April 2016; Model APLM Act 2017; farm laws of 2020 repealed in 2021.

FAQs

Does the draft framework abolish APMCs?

No. It seeks to reform them and open competition from private markets and warehouse-based selling, while keeping APMCs as one option.

What is a sub-market yard?

A warehouse, cold storage or collection centre notified as an extension of a regulated market, so that produce can be sold there under the same rules.

Why is agricultural marketing asked in NABARD Grade A?

It is a core ARD topic; the Kidwai committee, the state-subject entry, eNAM and the draft's proposals are the standard questions.

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