

Uttarakhand becomes first state to implement agricultural land leasing policy

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Uttarakhand has become the first state in the country where the government has made a policy to lease agricultural land. In lieu of giving land on a 30-year lease, the concerned farmer will get the rent for the land.

In the hilly areas of the state, the obstacles of leasing land for farming, agriculture, horticulture, herbs, off-season vegetables, milk production, tea plantation, fruit hybridization and solar energy has been removed with this step.

After getting approval from the Raj Bhavan, the state government has issued its notification. Now any institution, company, firm or NGO can take farm land on lease in villages, leasing a maximum of 30 acres of land on lease for 30 years.

There is a provision to take more land in special circumstances. If there is government land around farm land, then it can be leased by paying the fee with the permission of the District Magistrate. The state government has made this policy in the wake of difficulties in the consolidation of land.

As per earlier reports by Rural Development and Migration Commission, about 734 revenue villages, including clusters of villages, have

been emptied out about eight years after the 2011 census was completed. Similarly, as many as 1, 18, 981 people have permanently relocated from 3,946 village Panchayats in the past 10 years.

Recently, the government tweaked its agriculture policy to make hill farming more remunerative to check forced migration. Its move to invite foreign investors to take up contract farming in the hills is aimed to achieve that objective only.

SOURCE: *Business Standard, Hindustan Times*