

Palm Oil Industry Biggies Draw Up Plans to Expand Cultivation

Godrej Agrovet and 3F Oil Palm mull investment of about ₹500 cr each in next 5 years

Jayashree.Bhosle
@timesgroup.com

Pune: The big names in India's palm oil industry are chalking out plans for expansion of oil palm plantation and processing, encouraged by the government's move to boost oilseed production and reduce the country's reliance on imports for its cooking oil needs.

Of the four main companies in this sector, the leading two — God-

rej Agrovet and 3F Oil Palm — are considering investing about ₹500 crore each over the next five years for expansion of oil palm cultivation, after the government earlier this month said ₹11,000 crore will be invested under the National Edible Oil Mission — Oil Palm to boost oilseed production.

"Oil palm cultivation is a boutique industry in India due to entry barriers and long gestation period," Sanjay Goenka, president of Oil Palm Developers and Processors Associa-

tion, said. "The top firms having oil palm plantations include 3F Oil Palm Agrotech, Godrej Agrovet, Ruchi Soya and Navbharat, which together account for more than 80% of the oil palm cultivation in the country."

Goenka is also CEO of 3F Oil Palm, which now plans to expand the company's oil palm plantation. "Thanks to the new policy, 3F Oil Palm plans to invest about ₹500 crore during the next five years, with focus on Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh," he said.