

BUSINESS LINE, MUMBAI 03 JANUARY 2024

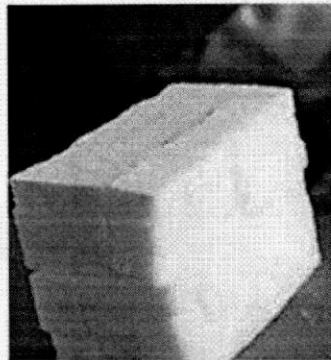
# Co-op body raises sugar production estimate, seeks easing of ethanol curbs

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi

Co-operative sugar industry body National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCSF) has raised the current season's sugar production estimate to 30.5 million tonnes (mt) from 29.15 mt it estimated earlier after the current season's production deficit narrowed to less than 8 per cent as of December 31.

Until December 15, the deficit was over 9 per cent. NFCSF expects further improvement in recovery.

Releasing the update on sugar production, Prakash Naiknavare, Managing Dir-



ector of NFCSF, said: "As the estimated 29 mt of sugar production at the beginning of the season is expected to increase by about 1.5 mt, the current restrictions on ethanol production may be relaxed to some extent."

He said NFCSF along

with Indian Sugar & Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) will jointly take up the issue with the Government.

## **YIELD MAY RISE**

According to NFCSF data, 511 factories have crushed 122.26 mt of sugarcane and produced 11.21 mt of sugar with the average sugar recovery at 9.17 per cent between October and December in the 2023-24 season.

In the corresponding period a year ago, 514 mills had crushed 132.06 mt of sugarcane and produced 12.14 mt of sugar with average sugar recovery at 9.19 per cent.

As the winter increases, sugar yield is expected to increase further, said Jaiprakash Dandegaonkar, president of NFCSF.

Since the Union Government has limited the production of ethanol from sugarcane juice, the total availability of sugar in the country for local consumption is expected to be higher than initial assessment, said Dandegaonkar.

According to NFCSF, Uttar Pradesh is expected to produce 11.5 mt of sugar (against 11 mt estimated earlier), Maharashtra 9 mt (8.5 mt), Karnataka 4.2 mt (3.8 mt), Tamil Nadu 1.2 mt (1.2 mt) and Gujarat 1 mt (1 mt).