

Business Standard

Small tea growers seek sops to boost growth

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Small tea growers association CISTA has asked the government to take steps like extending financial assistance and crop insurance scheme to all small cultivators to give a boost to the sector.

In a letter to Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Confederation of Indian Small Tea Grower Associations (CISTA) has urged her to ensure fair price for their produce, implementation of universal social security and health coverage for the workers.

It has also asked for not delaying the declared subsidies to small growers, including for leaf collection shed, leaf weighing machines, pruning machines, irrigation equipment and computers.

"We, the small farmers, though having on an average less than 2 acres of land, are proud to contribute 33.85 per cent in 2015-16 of tea produced in India," it said.

It said that small farmers' production is almost twice the quantity of tea exported by India.

During 2015-16, India exported 232.92 million kgs of tea, which was valued at Rs 4,493.10 crore.

"We want central and state governments to recognise our contribution to the economy...In this context, we strongly urge government of India to ensure that we get a fair price for our produce by extending crop insurance scheme to all small growers without any delay and extending financial assistance as is available for big factories," it added.