



# Uttar Pradesh Abolishes District-wise Quota under NFSA

## Why in News?

The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to **scrap the district-wise quota system** for beneficiary allocation under the [National Food Security Act \(NFSA\), 2013](#) to ensure more equitable coverage of eligible families, especially in backward and underserved districts.

## Key Points

- **Current Scenario in the State:**
  - The Central government determines the **food grain allocation for each state under the NFSA** based on a fixed population coverage of 64.46% in rural areas and 78.54% in urban areas.
- **Policy Change:**
  - **Removal of District-wise Quota:**
    - Uttar Pradesh **traditionally followed an additional district-wise cap**, allocating beneficiaries per district.
    - This **resulted in a disproportionate distribution** that favored relatively prosperous districts such as Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Nagar, leaving poorer districts **often unable to accommodate all eligible families**.
  - **Introduction of State-wide Allocation:**
    - The new system will use **state-wide population data** and **eligibility norms** to allocate benefits.
    - This is **expected to ensure that distribution aligns more closely** with the eligibility criteria set forth in the Act, **rather than being constrained by arbitrary administrative limits**.
- **Impact on Beneficiary Coverage:**
  - As part of the redistribution process, 5,000 new beneficiaries have been added in each of the districts of Sitapur, Barabanki, and Lalitpur.
  - These additions were made by reallocating the corresponding number of beneficiaries from **Ghaziabad** and **Gautam Buddha Nagar**.
  - In the **Bundelkhand region**, the NFSA coverage is being increased to **90%**.
  - In several **deserving districts in eastern Uttar Pradesh**, the coverage is being raised to **85%**.
- **Administrative Performance:**
  - According to the April report from the **Integrated Grievance Redressal System (IGRS)** portal, the **Department of Food and Civil Supplies** ranked **fourth** in resolving public complaints.
    - It was ranked just behind the [Khadi and Village Industries](#), [Cooperative Department](#), and [Excise Department](#).
  - Departments that ranked among the bottom four include **Industries and Infrastructure Development**, **Housing and Urban Planning**, [Environment and Climate Change](#), and **Women Welfare**.

## National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

#### ▪ **About NFSA:**

- It was enacted on **5th July 2013**, with the aim of ensuring food and nutritional security in India.
- It marked a shift from a welfare-based approach to a **rights-based approach** by legally entitling a significant portion of the population to receive subsidized food grains.

#### ▪ **Objectives:**

- The Act aims to provide **access to adequate quantities of quality food at affordable prices** to people to live a life with dignity.
- It seeks to ensure that **food security is a legal right** for eligible individuals.
- It also promotes **women empowerment** by designating the eldest woman (aged 18 years or above) as the head of the household for ration card purposes.

#### ▪ **Coverage and Entitlements:**

- The NFSA legally entitled up to **75% of the rural population** and **50% of the urban population** to receive food grains at subsidized rates.
  - This covers approximately **81.34 crore individuals** across India.

#### ▪ **Categories of Beneficiaries:**

- **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)** households, considered the poorest of the poor, are entitled to **35 kilograms of food grains per family per month**.
- **Priority households** are entitled to receive **5 kilograms of food grains per person per month**.

#### ▪ **Prices for Food Grains:**

- The Act specifies subsidized prices for food grains:
  - **Rice** is provided at ₹3 per kilogram.
  - **Wheat** is provided at ₹2 per kilogram.
  - **Coarse grains** are provided at ₹1 per kilogram.
- These prices were initially set for three years from the date of implementation but have been **extended periodically** by the central government.

#### ▪ **Responsibilities Under NFSA:**

##### ◦ **Central Government:**

- The central government is responsible for allocating food grains to States and Union Territories.
- It manages the transportation of food grains to designated depots and provides financial assistance for further distribution.
- It also holds the power to make rules for the implementation of the Act under **Section 39**.

##### ◦ **State and Union Territory Governments:**

- State/UT governments are responsible for **identifying eligible households, issuing ration cards, and distributing food grains** through **Fair Price Shops (FPS)**.
- They must also **monitor the FPS network**, issue licenses, and **establish grievance redressal systems**.

#### ▪ **Additional Provisions:**

- In case of **non-supply of entitled food grains or meals**, beneficiaries are entitled to a **Food Security Allowance**, which must be provided by the state government.
- A **"Tide Over Allocation"** is available to protect states whose NFSA allocation is lower than their previous TPDS allocation.
- The central government has notified several rules under the Act, including:
  - **Food Security Allowance Rules, 2015**
  - **Cash Transfer of Food Subsidy Rules, 2015**
  - **Assistance to State Governments Rules, 2015**

