

# Plea to slash GST to 5% on copper sulphate used in arecanut farming

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Stakeholders in the arecanut sector have asked the government to bring down GST on copper sulphate, which is used as a fungicide in many plantation crops, to 5 per cent from the existing 18 per cent.

Mahesh Puchchappady, President of the All-India Arecanut Growers' Association, told *businessline* that the Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Cooperative (Campco) Ltd had made representations to the Central government on the need to bring down the GST rate on copper sulphate to 5 per cent.

The delegation of arecanut cooperatives and MPs, which recently met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, had highlighted the



need to reduce GST on copper sulphate.

## TRADITIONAL HEALER

A Kishore Kumar Kodgi, Campco President, told *businessline* that copper sulphate is a traditional proven treatment for many diseases affecting arecanut plants, besides being a soil health enhancer.

Technical grade copper sulphate, the main ingredient in Bordeaux mixture, is a vital fungicide, which remains the only proven defence against severe crop dis-

eases like fruit rot in arecanut and fungal infections in other plantation crops such as coffee, cardamom, rubber and pepper.

While copper sulphate (HSN 28332500) is taxed at 18 per cent, copper sulphate (when classified as micronutrient under Chapter 28) is taxed at 5 per cent GST.

## PAAN MASALA LEVY

Puchchappady said though the increase in GST on *paan masala* from 28 per cent to 40 per cent may not have an immediate impact, there is a likelihood that the consumers may reduce its consumption. The decline in consumption could impact the demand for arecanut.

Stating that the area under arecanut cultivation has increased in recent years, Puchchappady said the yield is low now due to factors such as diseases in arecanut plantations.

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