

## Fortified rice ready in Trichy, to be distributed from Oct 1

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Trichy: With the state government launching the distribution of fortified rice to ration card holders to fight malnutrition, the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC) in Trichy has started moving 12,000 tonnes of rice added with the micronutrients to 1,224 ration shops in the district.

The scheme funded by the Union government is to be implemented for the first time in Trichy district as a pilot project. Distribution of the rice fortified with iron, folic acid, and Vitamin B12 will commence on October 1 across the district. Around 7.5 lakh cardholders in Trichy district in the 1,224 ration shops will be benefitted from the value-added rice, officials said.

TNCSC has commenced the process of transporting the fortified rice to the respective ration shops from September 21 onwards, senior regional manager of TNCSC, Trichy, G Chitrarasu told TOI. "A total 12,000 tonnes of rice is ready to distribute. We will complete the transportation within a week to facilitate the distribution from October 1," he said.

For rice fortification, the ministry of consumer affairs, food and public distribution is the nodal agency and has allocated Rs 10 crore for three years to follow up this process. The amount includes the cost for supplying fortified rice kernel, blending, lab work, and transportation. The cost of fortifying the rice will be shared between the center and the state governments in the ratio of 75:25, officials said.

The government has distributed the fortified rice kernels to Trichy separately. "We have assigned some rice mills to add the micronutrients to the regular rice. Fortified rice kernels will be added to the boiled and raw rice," the official further said.