

## Punjab approves high yielding maize varieties

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The Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal recently approved a proposal from the State agriculture department, which shortlisted Monsanto and two other companies to provide high yielding varieties (HYV) of maize seeds to farmers at subsidised rates during the current Kharif season.

As per the state government, after thorough research and a detailed exercise in collaboration with the Punjab Agriculture University (PAU), it has agreed to subsidise the seeds of these companies, which had reported yields of 8.5 tonnes per hectare during the trials.

To ensure their easy availability, the State government has also decided to make these HYV seeds available at all the block level offices of the Agriculture department. The government has also directed the three shortlisted companies to provide all relevant technical support to the farmers for sowing the seeds for their better results.

HYV maize was identified as a major alternative crop under the crop diversification program of the State government, which proposes to replace about five lakh acres under water guzzling paddy cultivation that began in second week of June.