

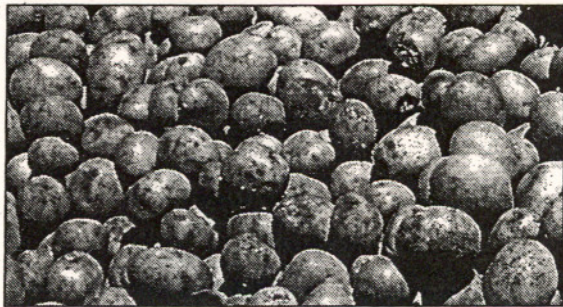
# Pepsi plans to cook potato deal with Jharkhand farmers

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**S**OFT drinks major Pepsi has assured the Jharkhand government that it will purchase the entire potato production from Jharkhand farmers. The state government will soon sign an MoU with Pepsi for this project, said Saryu Rai — vice-chairman of the state planning board — while taking to *ET*.

The new arrangement will entail the provision of quality seeds to the farmers for the production of the potatoes which will eventually be purchased by Pepsi. Mr Rai said the details of the project will be available once the state gov-



ernment enters into an agreement with Pepsi. Pepsi has selected a place called Mandar near Ranchi for the production of potatoes. The state government will act as a facilitator for the project as Pepsi will be dealing with the Jharkhand farm-

ers directly. The company will enter into a contract with the farmers once the MoU is signed. The purchase price has been decided at Rs 7 per kg.

Mr Rai said: "It will be a good source of income to farmers as they will be getting almost the

same price like the market. Moreover, the farmers will not have to look for marketing the produce as they will be having access to a confirmed buyer.

The local economy will definitely improve through this project." Earlier, chief minister of Jharkhand Arjun Munda said the state is committed to uplift the farmers. He was addressing a gathering during the foundation stone laying ceremony at the automobiles and auto components special economic zone on November 16. Mr Munda said: "Efforts are being made to invite private parties in Jharkhand to set up food processing units. The government is committed to improving the agricultural status."