

during the last 3 years in the country is as follows :

Area = '000 Hectares, Production = '000 Tonnes, Yield = Kgs/ha.

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Area	24662	22543	23743
Production	14265	12015	13599
Yield	578	533	573

(b) and (c) The per capita net availability of pulses has gone down from 60.7 gms/day in 1951 to 36.6 gms/day (provisional) in 1993.

(d) The quantity and value of pulses imported during the last three years is as under :

Year	Quantity	Value
1990-91	1273433	481.17
1991-92	310604	254.24
1992-93	578799	325.98

(e) and (f) The major constraints in pulses' production are; cultivation on marginal and sub-marginal lands, dependence on rains, lack of application of production inputs, lack of genetic breakthrough and susceptibility to pests and diseases. In order to raise production of pulses to meet the domestic demand the centrally Sponsored National Pulses Development Project is under implementation in 24 States and Union Territories of Delhi and Andaman and Nicobar Islands in selected districts in major pulses producing States and in entire States in the minor pulses producing States.

Hike in prices of Essential Commodities

4077. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1596 given in the Rajya Sabha on 4th March, 1994 and state :

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of essential commodities in the country have increased by 30% to 70% since June, 1991; and

(b) whether Government propose to provide any relief to common man against the hike in price; and if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP

NATH RAI) (a) The percentage variations in indices of whole-sale prices of rice, wheat, pulses, sugar and edible oils as on 2-4-1994 compared with that on 1-6-1991 are as under :—

Item	2-4-1994 1-6-1991
Rice	+38.6
Wheat	+63.6
Pulses	+34.24
Sugar	+55.8
Edible Oils	—5.5

(b) In order to keep the open market prices of wheat and rice at reasonable level the Food Corporation of India have undertaken open sale of wheat and rice from the Central Pool. This has had a sobering effect on the open market prices of these commodities. To improve the availability of sugar in the open market and to maintain prices of sugar at reasonable level, the Government has permitted import of sugar under O.G.L.

The Government has been monitoring the prices and availability of essential commodities of mass consumption on regular basis. An Inter-Ministerial Committee under the Ministry of Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution reviews the prices, availability, shortage etc., if any, of the 12 selected essential commodities on a regular basis.

Letters written by Members of Parliament

4078. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) the number of letters written by the Members of Parliament to the Ministry during the period from 1st April, 1990 to 31st March, 1993 along-with year-wise details thereof;

(b) what is the number of letters acknowledged out of them;

(c) what is the number of letters in respect of which final replies were sent; and

(d) what is the break-up of final letters issued by the Ministry containing positive and negative replies respectively ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) to (c) The year-wise information in respect of letters received from Members of Parliament, the number of those letters that were acknowledged