

During 2007-08 the State Government of Tamil Nadu approved the project 'Establishment of Automatic Weather Station' in its State Level Sanctioning Committee Meeting held on 15.12.2007. Out of the total allocation of Rs.188.21 crore a sum of Rs.153.60 crore was released to the State Government under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) which includes Rs.17.31 crore for Establishment of the proposed Automatic Weather Stations.

The State Government has not approved any project regarding Automatic weather stations in Tamil Nadu during 2008-09.

The State Government of Tamil Nadu has reported that upto March, 2009, they have established 224 Automatic Weather Stations in the State.

Agricultural growth

1489. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether agriculture growth during February to April 2009 nose-dived compared to that during corresponding period of last year 2008, inspite of several steps taken by Government; and

(b) if so, the comparative Agricultural growth figures during these quarters of 2009 and 2008 and the reasons for the fall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Percentage growth in Agriculture and Allied sector during IVth quarter (January to March) in 2008-09 has increased to 2.7 from 2.2 during the same quarter in previous year. The quarterly growth rate in Agriculture and Allied sector at constant prices (1999-2000) according to data released in the month of May, 2009 by Central Statistical Organization are given below:

Year	Percentage growth rate			
	Ist quarter (April-June)	IInd quarter (July-September)	IIIrd quarter (October-December)	IVth quarter (January-March)
2007-08	4.3	3.9	8.1	2.2
2008-09	3.0	2.7	-0.8	2.7

However, the overall decline in growth rate from 4.9% in 2007-08 to 1.6% in 2008-09 is mainly due to decline in production of wheat, coarse cereals, pulses, oilseeds and sugarcane.

Adverse effect on sale of coconut oil due to subsidy and custom duty relaxation given to palm oil

1490. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI K.E. ISMAIL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how much customs duty relaxation was given to palm oil during the last three years;