

**Wastage of agricultural/horticultural products in
Jammu and Kashmir**

3285. SHRI G.N. RATANPURI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it is comparatively more difficult for the farmers of Kashmir to get better returns for their agricultural and horticultural produce due to distance from market and undependable transportation;

(b) how much quantity of this produce is lost every year which could be brought to market by quality storage, transportation and preservation;

(c) the steps taken in this regard and whether any incentives are contemplated to encourage investment in quality food storage, transportation and preservation sectors specifically for Jammu and Kashmir; and

(d) the investments made and envisaged in food processing and preservation sector in that State?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has not conducted any study/survey specific to Jammu and Kashmir pertaining to difficulties faced by farmers of Jammu and Kashmir to get better returns for their agricultural and horticultural produced due to distance from market and transportation.

(b) The data on losses of agricultural and horticultural produced is not centrally maintained by the MFPI. However, the level of wastage of agricultural food items is estimated to be 30-35% amounting to about Rs. 50,000/- crores in the country as a whole, occurring at various stages of handling after harvesting due to fragmented farming, provisions in Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act, lack of adequate post-harvest infrastructure such as lack of cold chain facilities, transportation, proper storage facilities etc. The loss due to wastages could be reduced by promoting the development of food processing industries, strengthening of post-harvest infrastructure and filling the gaps in the supply chain.

(c) In order to increase level of processing and to promote food processing industries to exploit both the domestic and international market potential for processed food products, Vision 2015 Document has been finalized by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI), which envisages tripling the size of the processed food sector by increasing the level of processing of perishables from 6% to 20% value addition from 20% 35% and share in global food trade from 1.5% to 3% by 2015. An integrated strategy for promotion of agribusiness-Vision, Strategy and Action Plan for the Food Processing Sector has also been approved by the Government.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has been implementing various schemes for promotion and development of food processing industries in the country. MFPI through its various schemes for financial assistance and other promotional measures, facilitates creation of

food related infrastructure including processing facilities aimed at reducing wastages, enhancing value addition and increasing shelf life.

To encourage setting up of cold chain facilities in the country, Government is operating several Plan Schemes under which financial assistance is provided for setting up of cold storages/cold chain facilities. Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has also a Plan Scheme for Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure during the Eleventh Plan to provide financial assistance to project proposals received from public/private organizations for cold chain infrastructure development. The scheme envisages financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid @ 50% of the total cost of plant and machinery and technical civil works in general areas and 75% for North Eastern Region and difficult areas subject to a maximum of Rs. 10.00 crore including Jammu and Kashmir. The initiatives are aimed at filling the gaps in the supply chain, strengthening of cold chain infrastructure, establishing value addition with infrastructural facilities like sorting, grading, packaging and processing for horticulture including organic produce, marine, dairy, poultry, etc. Other agencies of the Government like National Horticulture Board (NHB), Agricultural and Processing Food Products Development Authority (APEDA), National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) and State Government also provide assistance for cold storages under their respective schemes.

Under the Scheme for Technology Upgradation/Modernization/Establishment of Food Processing Industries, MFPI extends financial assistance to food processing industries including fruit and vegetable processing units in the form of grant-in-aid @ 25% of the cost of plant and machinery and technical civil, works subject to a maximum of Rs. 50.00 lakh in general area or 33.33% subject to maximum of Rs. 75.00 lakh in difficult areas such as Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and North Eastern States, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep and ITDP areas.

(d) Under the Scheme for Technology Upgradation/Modernization/Establishment of Food Processing Industries, MFPI extends financial assistance to food processing units including preservation units in Jammu and Kashmir, total 19 units has been assisted and Rs. 191.635 lakhs has been released. Apart from this during Eleventh Plan Period 3 Food Parks has been approved and Rs. 1146.00 lakh has been approved for creation of infrastructure facilities in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. M/s Yes Bank has been awarded study for preparation of action plan for development of food processing industries in Leh — Ladakh and Kargil Regions of Jammu and Kashmir, has informed that they have visited Leh — Ladakh and Kargil Regions of Jammu and Kashmir from 31.05.2009 to 06.06.2009. In the preliminary visit, officials of Yes Bank has had meeting with the officials of Horticulture Department, Khadi and Village Industries Board etc. It has been mentioned that the region was found to be viable for setting up of food processing units for processing of apricots and seabuckthorne from a production perspective and also due to the competitive advantage region in these crops. Due to inclement weather conditions, final report is pending. M/s Yes Bank has requested this ministry to give extension of some more time for finalization of the study.