

Government like Private Entrepreneurs Guarantee (PEG) Scheme/construction of steel silos and Private Warehousing Scheme (PWS).

In addition, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India implements a Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) for development of horticulture in the country, which includes assistance for development of Post Harvest Management (PHM). PHM component includes establishment of cold storages, cold rooms etc. As on 31.03.2019, a total number of 956 cold storages with capacity of 37.90 lakh MT for storing perishable horticulture produce has been sanctioned in Gujarat.

Demand and supply of vegetables and fruits

1358. SHRI KAMAKHYA PRASAD TASA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government agrees that the food mile, that is the distance covered from field to stomach, is large and expanding day-by-day, thereby increasing the prices of vegetables and fruits;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the steps taken or to be taken in this regard;

(c) whether Government proposes to set up any regulatory/monitoring agency to monitor and regulate the demand and supply of vegetables and fruits to keep their prices under control, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which such monitoring agency is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): (a) Price rise and fall of vegetables and fruits are influenced by their demand and supply which further depend on various factors like cost of inputs (fertilizers, rural wages), perishability and storability of the produce, transportation cost, loading/unloading expenses, grading/sorting, wholesaler's margin, losses during movement, cost and margin of retailers, supply chain constraints like lack of storage and cold chain facilities, artificial shortage created by hoarding and black marketing and adverse weather conditions etc.

(b) Government takes various measures from time to time to stabilize prices of essential food items which, *inter alia*, include appropriately utilizing trade and fiscal policy instruments like import duty, Minimum Export Price, export restrictions, etc. to regulate domestic availability and moderate prices; imposition of stock limits and advising States/UTs for effective action against hoarders and black marketers. Government is also implementing Schemes which, *inter alia*, include Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) for productivity enhancement of horticultural crops and Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) Scheme for price stabilization of agri-horticultural commodities like pulses, onion, and potato through appropriate interventions. Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) is implementing scheme "Operation Greens" for integrated development of Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) value chain which, *inter alia*, has the objective of price stabilization for producers and consumers through production planning in the TOP clusters and introduction of dual use varieties.

(c) and (d) Review meetings on price and availability situation of essential commodities, including selected vegetables *viz.* onion, potato and tomato, are held at the highest level including at the level of Ministers, Committee of Secretaries, Inter-Ministerial Committee, Price Stabilization Fund Management Committee and other Departmental level review meetings for taking appropriate price intervention decisions including possible market-intervention, if any.

Storage of foodgrains in silos

1359. SHRI JOSE K. MANI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's food silo are bulging with no space left for expected rice stocks when procurement season starts, with 71 million tonnes of wheat and rice (apart from 7 million tonnes of unmilled paddy), three times the minimum stock needed for running Government welfare schemes;

(b) whether there is urgent need to liquidate the surplus stock to Government welfare schemes and for auction to millers and biscuit manufacturers; and

(c) whether FCI has been spending huge amount on storage of foodgrains with the figure for 2019-20 expected to touch ₹5,200 crore as against ₹4,360 crore in 2018-2019?