

(b) if so, the total production and the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have fixed minimum support price for Ragi; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) According to advance estimates of production for 1999-2000, the production of Ragi in the country is expected to be 24.29 lakh tonnes. Out of this, Karnataka is likely to account for 14.75 lakh tonnes or 60.72%.

(c) and (d) The Minimum Support Price of Ragi for the crop year 2000-01 has been fixed at Rs. 445 per quintal.

#### **Decline in coconut prices**

1927. SHRI H. K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the coconut prices have come down substantially in recent months;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have made any arrangement to purchase coconut by providing minimum support price;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government propose to purchase coconut in Karnataka Jointly with Karnataka State Government; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The prices of coconut have shown a declining trend during the current season mainly due to increased production of coconut and falling prices of edible oils.

(c) and (d) In order to protect the interest of farmers, the Government has implemented the scheme of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for copra. The Government has fixed the MSP for milling copra of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) at Rs. 3250/-per qtl. and that

of ball copra (FAQ) at Rs. 3500/-per quintal for 2000 season. Since the market prices of milling copra have remained subdued during the current season, NAFED, a central nodal agency commenced price support operations and have procured a total quantity of 156,597 tonnes of milling copra as on date. Further procurement is still in progress.

(e) and (f) At present the prices of ball copra in Karnataka are ruling above MSP level and market intervention will be carried out if market prices touch MSP.

**Use of uncertified hybrid cotton seeds**

1928. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that in north India cotton crops have suffered due to use of uncertified hybrid cotton seeds procured through the private agencies as there was acute shortage of hybrid seeds with Government agencies;

(b) if so, why the sufficient quantities of hybrid seeds were not available with Government agencies; and

(c) who is responsible for this situation and what steps Government are taking to avoid recurrence of such a situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No complaint relating to loss of cotton crop due to use of uncertified hybrid cotton seeds has been received by the Government nor has any information on shortage of cotton seed been received by Government of India.

(b) and (c) Questions do not arise.