

[10 May, 2002]

RAJYA SABHA

The fertilizer nutrients produced domestically and the consumption of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers during the last three years is given below:—

(in Lakh MTs)

Year	Production			Consumption			
	N	P	Total	N	P	K	Total
1999-2000	108.90	33.99	142.89	115.92	47.98	16.78	180.69
2000-2001	109.61	37.43	147.04	109.20	42.15	15.67	167.02
2001-2002 (Prov)	107.68	38.60	146.28	114.16	44.16	17.07	175.39

Norms for pricing period of fertilizers

*656. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
DR.T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Group of Ministers (GoM) set up to go into Urea pricing for the Seventh and Eighth Pricing Periods has finalized the norms for the Seventh Pricing Period from mid-1997 to March, 2002;

(b) whether it also discussed the norms for the Eighth Pricing Period at its meeting held on 11th April, 2002;

(c) if so, what were the main decisions taken; and

(d) by when the steps are likely to be taken to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA): (a) to (d) A Group of Ministers (GoM) has been constituted on the direction of Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA) to examine the proposals for VII (1.7.1997 to 31.3.2000) and VIII (1.4.2000 to 31.3.2002 or till new pricing policy comes into existence, whichever is earlier) pricing periods under

Retention Price Scheme and give its recommendations. GoM has also been asked to consider the Expenditure Reforms Commission's report and give its recommendations. Finalisation of these policy parameters for urea units would be announced after approval by the competent authority.

Growth of Agricultural Sector

*657. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the Central Statistical Organisation, growth in the agricultural and allied sectors jumped to 7.1 per cent in 2001 -2002, compared to 0.8 per cent in the third quarter of the previous year; if so, what are the factors which helped to attain this growth rate;

(b) whether any steps have been taken by Government to stabilize the same trend and improve it further in the coming years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRIAJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. According to the estimates released by the Central Statistical Organization, the growth rate of the sector, "Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing" was 7.1 per cent in the third quarter of 2001 -02 as compared to (-) 0.8 per cent in the third quarter of the previous year.

Normal to excess rainfall which was well distributed spatially in major parts of the country during the year 2001, the switch over to macro management mode of implementation of plan schemes providing required flexibility to the States, and the effective management of making adequate availability of inputs to the farm sector contributed to the increase in production in the year 2001 -2002.

(c) Coverage of larger area under high yielding varieties, timely supply of inputs and adoption of strategy for diversification to high value crops like fruits and vegetables and to oilseeds and pulses are being stressed upon to maintain the agricultural growth in the coming years. Besides the Government is also implementing a scheme, "On