

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2306
ANSWERED ON 19TH DECEMBER, 2025

INCENTIVES FOR STEAM STERILIZATION IN SPICE INDUSTRY

2306. SHRI HARIS BEERAN:

Will the Minister of **FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government acknowledges that the surge in EU rejections of Indian spices is driven by industry reliance on Ethylene Oxide (EtO), a direct consequence of the prohibitive capital costs of Steam Sterilization;
- (b) whether the Ministry has formulated a targeted "Technology Upgradation Mission"— distinct from general Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) grants to specifically subsidize the transition from EtO to Steam Sterilization for MSMEs;
- (c) if so, the quantum of funds earmarked for this transition in 2025-26; and
- (d) if not, the reasons for failing to incentivize this critical safety compliance to prevent the loss of global market share?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
(SHRI RAVNEET SINGH)

(a): The subject matter of the question administratively pertains to Department of Commerce (DoC) under Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Accordingly, based on the inputs furnished by DoC, the Spice Board, has been undertaking quality evaluation of export consignments of select spices to select destinations based on regulations of the importing countries. Under the Board's quality evaluation system for export of spices, the export consignments are subjected to mandatory pre-shipment sampling, testing and clearance for food safety and quality parameters, including effective check on use of Ethylene Oxide for export consignments to the European Union. In line with relevant guidelines, exporters of spices are encouraged to use alternate methods of sterilization namely Steam Sterilization, Irradiation (except for organic products under NPOP) and methods approved by FSSAI. In the year 2025, around 99.5% of consignments of spices and spice products exported from India to EU were accepted.

(b) to (d): No sir.

However, assistance for modernization, technology up gradation and adoption of hygienic processing practices, including steam sterilization equipment, is available under the schemes of Ministry of Food Processing Industries such as the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) and Prime Minister Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme. The Government ensures food safety and export compliance through regulatory oversight, testing infrastructure, capacity building and adoption of good manufacturing practices.