

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5222
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27TH MARCH, 2018

RELAXATION IN PROCUREMENT NORMS OF
QUALITY OF FOODGRAINS

5222. SHRI RAHUL SHEWALE:
SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:
SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION उपभोक्ता मामले, खाद्य और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has relaxed the procurement norms of quality for procurement of foodgrains under central pool to provide relief to the farmers and protect them from distress sale on account of unseasonal rains during the last year and the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the quantum of foodgrains procured under the relaxed norms along with the number of farmers benefitted from such relaxation during the said period, State/UT-wise;

(c) the details of the schemes/ programmes in which such foodgrain stock is utilized so far, Scheme/Programme-wise;

(d) the number of complaints of irregularities in procurement of such foodgrain under relaxed norms have come to the notice of the Government during the said period, State/UT-wise along with action taken thereon so far; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to ensure remunerative prices for foodgrains to farmers and to ensure timely procurement of entire foodgrains stock by the Government agencies?

A N S W E R
MINISTER OF STATE FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) & (b). Yes Madam. Uniform specifications (Procurement norms) of foodgrains are formulated by the department. FCI and State Governments and their agencies procure the foodgrains for Central Pool conforming to

the Uniform Specifications on Minimum Support Price (MSP) from the farmers. Sometimes, due to natural calamities such as unseasonal rains, erratic rainfall, cyclone and adverse climatic conditions thereby affecting the quality of foodgrains, Government allows relaxation in the procurement norms on the request of concerned State Government to avoid distress sale for the benefit of farmers. The State-wise/ Commodity-wise details of the relaxation allowed alongwith the quantity of foodgrains purchased under relaxed specifications and the number of beneficiaries during the last year and current year are at Annexure-I.

(c): Question does not arise as no relaxation in procurement norms has been allowed for wheat and rice during 2016-17 & 2017-18. Paddy is not issued under PDS. Paddy is milled and resultant rice is issued under PDS.

(d): Since there is no procurement under relax procurement norms so far, therefore, question of irregularities does not arise.

(e): Commission of Agriculture Costs and Price (CACP) under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare is mandated to recommend the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the 22 agriculture commodities including foodgrains taking into consideration, the cost of production, overall demand-supply, domestic and international prices, crop price parity likely the effect of the price policy on the rest the economy and rational utilisation of land, water and other production resources to provide remunerative price to the farmers for their produce.

Steps taken by the Government to ensure remunerative prices for foodgrains and its timely procurement from farmers are at Annexure-II.

ANNEXURE-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) & (b) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5222 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 27.03.2018 IN LOK SABHA

Details on the State-wise and commodity wise relaxation allowed in procurement norms during last and current year.

Year	State	Name of Refraction	Uniform specifications limit	Relaxed specifications limit	Quantity procured under Relaxed Specification	Number of Beneficiaries
i. PADDY						
2016-17	Bihar	Moisture content	17 %	19%	Nil	Question does not arise
2017-18	Odisha	Damaged, discoloured, sprouted & weevilled grains	5%	12%	Nil*	Question does not arise *
		Immature, shriveled & shrunken grains	3%	5%	Nil*	Question does not arise *
	Bihar	Moisture grains	17%	19%	Nil	Question does not arise
ii. RICE	No relaxation in procurements norms has been allowed in rice during 2016-17 & 2017-18.					
iii. WHEAT	No relaxation in procurements norms has been allowed in wheat during 2016-17 & 2017-18.					

* As on 16.03.2018.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (e) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5222 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 27.03.2018 IN LOK SABHA.

Steps taken by the Government to ensure remunerative prices for foodgrains and its timely procurement from farmers are as under:

1. The Minimum Support Price (MSP) is announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season for crops and procures foodgrains at MSP.
2. MSP operations are given wide publicity through pamphlets, banners, sign boards, radio, TV and advertisements through print & electronic media.
3. Farmers are made aware of the quality specifications and purchase system etc. to facilitate the farmers to bring their produce conforming to the specifications.
4. Procurement centres are opened taking into account the production, marketable surplus, convenience of farmers and availability of other logistics / infrastructure such as storage and transportation etc. Large number of temporary purchase centres in addition to the existing regulated mandis and depots/godowns are also established at key points for the convenience of the farmers for timely purchase of their produces.
5. Farmers directly get the MSP announced by GOI and decided to do away with the levy system of procurement of rice with effect from KMS 2015-16, allowing the entire procurement of paddy to be done only by the State Agencies/FCI.
6. Payment to farmers is done largely through electronic mode or Account payee cheque by State Agencies/FCI other than in Punjab & Haryana where it is routed through the ARTHIYAS as per APMC Act of the State. Efforts are made to make the payments to the farmers within 48 hours of purchase.
