

prices has been observed in case of vegetables (including onion) during the last few months.

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Prices of fruits and vegetables sometimes increase on account of crop seasonality and unfavourable weather conditions.

(c) & (d): As per the First advance estimates,2017-18, the production of onion is likely to decline as compared to 2016-17 on account of 33% less sowing of onions during kharif season due to drought in Karnataka and heavy rains in Maharashtra, at the time of kharif sowing. However, the total production of vegetables is likely to increase as compared to the last year. Details are given below:

Crop	Production (in '000 MT)	
	2016-17	2017-18 (I Adv. Est.)
Onion	22427.42	21401.86
Total Vegetables	155744.99	159282.29

(e): No, Madam.

(f): Steps taken by government to control the prices of fruits and vegetables are as follows:

- The Govt. is implementing the scheme called electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) to lower transaction costs to buyers and stable prices and availability to consumers.
- Farmers are mobilized into Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) for aggregation and economies of scale. Efforts are being made to link FPOs to market by way of direct marketing farmer consumer markets/ Apni Mandi and e-markets.
- Assistance is provided for development of post harvest management and marketing infrastructure such as cold storages, ripening chamber, pack houses, reefer vehicles, primary and wholesale markets, Kisan Mandies, etc.
- Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of horticultural commodities which are perishable in nature and are not covered under Price Support Scheme.

Recently, considering the rise in prices of onions, Government has taken the following steps:

1. Minimum Export Price (MEP) of USD \$850 per MT imposed on onions to restrict export and improve domestic availability. MEP was subsequently brought down to USD \$700 per MT with the reduction in prices and improved availability of onion.

2. Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) has enabled States to impose stock limit on onions till 31.12.2017. Producing States were advised to take action against hoarders/traders engaging in illegal practices and facilitate adequate availability of onions in the markets at reasonable prices to the consumers.

3. National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) and Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) were directed to procure onion from producing regions for supplying in the consuming areas.

4. State governments were requested to indicate their requirement for imported onions, if any. Government of NCT of Delhi was requested to facilitate the distribution of onions through their channels to ensure availability at reasonable prices.

(g): Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), a centrally sponsored scheme is implemented for the holistic development of horticulture sector in the country covering fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and bamboo through various interventions.

Under MIDH, for promotion of horticulture throughout the country, financial & technical assistance is provided to States/UTs for following major interventions/activities:

- Setting up of nurseries, tissue culture units for production of quality seed and planting material.
- Area expansion i.e. Establishment of new orchards and gardens for fruits, vegetables, and flowers.
- Rejuvenation of unproductive, old, and senile orchards.
- Protected cultivation, i.e. poly-house, green-house, etc, to improve the productivity & grow off season high value vegetables and flowers.
- Organic farming and certification.
- Creation of water resources structures and watershed management.
- Bee-keeping for pollination.
- Horticulture Mechanization.
- Creation of Post Harvest Management and Marketing infrastructure.
