

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 904
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23rd JULY, 2018

IMPORT OF BLACK PEPPER

904. SHRI BHAGWANTH KHUBA:

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE & INDUSTRY** (वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री) be pleased to state:

- whether the Government is importing black pepper from Vietnam and if so, the details thereof;
- whether the local farmers are suffering from rate down from Rs. 700 to Rs. 380 in the last six months and if so, the details thereof;
- whether the imported black pepper is of low quality as compared to our market and it is mixed with many other things;
- if so, the details thereof along with the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- whether the Union Government has received any requests from certain States like Karnataka, Goa and Kerala or from public representatives/ NGOs to stop import of pepper and rise the prices for local farmers and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सी. आर. चौधरी)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)

(a): No Madam. The Government is not importing black pepper from Vietnam. However, pepper is imported from Vietnam and other countries by Indian processors for value addition and re-export. The import of pepper from Vietnam into India during the last three years is given below:

Year	Quantity (MT)	Value (Rs.Crore)
2014-15	10,845	520.33
2015-16	6,780	404.20
2016-17	9,500	477.85
2017-18 (Provisional)	10,825	367.56

(b) to (e): The domestic prices of pepper have fallen primarily due to decline in international prices owing to higher production and supply of pepper in the international market and due to import of cheap pepper from other origins into India. The average domestic price of pepper was reduced from Rs. 694.77 per kg in the year 2016-17 to Rs. 473.73 per kg. in the year 2017-18, which was further reduced to Rs. 359 per kg. in June, 2018.

Several representations have been received from State Governments, public representatives, growers associations etc regarding the drastic fall in price of pepper. The various steps taken up by the Government to address the concerns raised includes inter-alia, the following:

- (i) Vide DGFT Notification dated 6/12/2017, Union Government fixed Rs.500/- per kg as Minimum Import Price for Black Pepper.
- (ii) Subsequently, amendment was brought out in the Minimum Import Price (MIP) Notification by making import of pepper over & above Rs.500/- per kilogram free and import below Rs.500/ per kg. - prohibited vide DGFT Notification dated 21/3/2018.
- (iii) To prevent import of cheap pepper from other countries taking advantage of the provisions of India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISLFTA) and Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), Sri Lankan Authorities have been requested to exercise extreme care and diligence in issuing the Certificates of Origin.
- (iv) Instruction has been issued to authorized officers of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and field formations of Customs to be vigilant at the point of entry in the ports in order to stop the possibility of entry of inferior quality pepper from other countries.
