

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2448
ANSWERED ON 09TH MARCH, 2021

SALE OF PERISHABLE PRODUCTS AT LOW PRICES

**2448. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI;
SHRI KRUPAL BALAJI TUMANE;**

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

- (a) whether due to non-availability of the market during COVID period, the farmers were forced to sell the perishable fruits and vegetables at a low price which led to reduction in the price of the perishable fruits and vegetables especially at the farm level in Maharashtra;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has recently formulated any scheme under Operation Green to stop the sale at low prices and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the number of farmers likely to be benefited under this scheme especially in Maharashtra?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
(SHRI RAMESWAR TELI)

(a) & (b): During lockdown, APMC markets were opened with social distancing and sanitary protocols to avoid spread of novel corona virus. Further, in order to facilitate sale of agriculture produce including perishable produce during the Covid-19, the Government had issued advisories to States/Union Territories (UTs) to facilitate Direct Marketing and allow trade-transactions outside the mandi-yards by liberalizing regulations to decongest the mandis as well as to facilitate direct buying of farmers' produce from their farm gate at remunerative prices.

The Government also issued advisories to States/UTs to ensure inter-state and intrastate movement of vehicles carrying the agriculture produce in addition to setting up of monitoring cell to keep watch and extend immediate help for seamless movement of such vehicles including coordination for issue of permits to trucks. States also made various arrangements including nomination of nodal officer for coordination and setting up monitoring cell to facilitate free movement of vehicles carrying fruits, vegetables and other essential food items.

Further, to address the transportation issues of Farmers and other stake holders during Covid-19, the Government has launched the Kisan Rath Mobile App on 17.04.2020. The App facilitates the Farmers, FPOs and Traders to post their load requests which are sent to transport aggregators and individual transporters who can respond to the load requests.

To ensure the continuous supply of essential goods, hindrance free movement of transportation & real time monitoring of supply & prices, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare had created a Whatsapp group in coordination with senior officials from State Agriculture Marketing Boards (SAMBs) to monitor the functioning of APMCs, monitor supply & price of essential goods & facilitate inter-state transportation of essential goods during COVID-19 lockdown.

(c) & (d): Yes Sir, in pursuance of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, subsidy at the rate of 50% for transportation and storage under price stabilization measures has been extended from Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) crops to a total of 41 notified horticulture crops (TOTAL) for a period of six months, if prices fall below the average prices for last three years or 15% below of previous year's price. The timelines of the scheme were further extended upto 31.03.2021.

Further, transportation subsidy under the scheme is extended to all fruits and vegetables through Kisan Rail by way of charging 50% of their freight charges by Indian Railways.

Scheme guidelines also provide the transportation subsidy to all Fruits and Vegetables being transported by air from the NER and Himalayan Region States, by way of charging 50% freight by Airlines and to provide 50% subsidy to eligible entities through NAFED for transportation and/or storage of apple from Jammu and Kashmir.

From Maharashtra State, 117 number of production clusters for the different horticulture crops namely Bitter gourd, Brinjal, Capsicum, Cauliflower, Cucumber, Chilies (Green), Onion, Tomato, Beans, Okra, Orange, Lime, Banana, Guava, Mango, Papaya and Pomegranate crops have been notified in the "List of eligible crops, selected surplus production clusters & trigger price" for intervention under the extended Operation Greens Scheme. The farmers from Maharashtra can register on the online portal and can submit the claim for subsidy after meeting the eligibility criteria stipulated in the scheme guidelines. So far, 1002 persons from Maharashtra have registered on the portal. Out of 52 proposals received from the State of Maharashtra for transport/storage subsidy, 16 proposals have been approved.
