

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3130
TO BE ANSWERED ON 9TH AUGUST, 2024**

ARTIFICIAL RIPENING OF FOOD

3130. SMT. JYOTSNA CHARANDAS MAHANT:

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any initiative to stop the artificial ripening of food in the country, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government during the last three years; and
- (c) the details of the quantum of artificial ripening of food during the last three years, year-wise and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a) to (c): Artificial ripening of fruits by using acetylene gas, commonly known as carbide gas, is prohibited under sub-regulation 2.3.5 of Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction to Sales) Regulations, 2011 due to potential health hazards. However, under the said sub-regulation, ripening of fruits using ethylene gas at a concentration upto 100 ppm depending upon crop, variety and maturity is permitted. It may be noted that ethylene is a hormone naturally produced within the fruits which facilitates ripening. Also, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) detailing all aspects of the artificial ripening of fruits by ethylene gas has been issued by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

The FSSAI through its regional offices and State/UTs conducts regular surveillance, monitoring, inspection, and random sampling of food products, including fruits and

vegetables. In cases where food samples are found to be non- conforming, penal action is taken against the defaulting Food Business Operators as per the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, Rules, and Regulations.

Further, FSSAI has conducted special drive for building awareness among the Food Business Operators (FBOs) about the usage of ethylene gas as a ripening agent in an approved manner. FSSAI has also taken various measures to spread awareness about stopping the artificial ripening of fruits through press releases, social media campaigns and exhibitions/ events.

As per the information available with FSSAI, details of number of sample cases where use of chemicals/ artificial ripening agents/pesticides was found are as under:

Year	Sample found
2021-22	131
2022-23	31
2023-24	60
