

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 827
ANSWERED ON 04TH DECEMBER, 2025

MEASURES TO STABLIZE FOOD AVAILABILITY

827. SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B:

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

- (a) whether the Government is implementing immediate measures to stabilize food availability nationwide in view of persistent supply-chain failures causing price spikes, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government would introduce emergency price caps or subsidies to address rising food prices, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is protecting food-processing raw materials from climate shocks such as droughts and floods, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether there is a national policy to ensure sufficient skilled labour to address critical labour shortages and an ageing workforce in food processing, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government is promoting Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) and blockchain in food processing sector nationwide to enhance efficiency and safety, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for lagging behind global standards?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
(SHRI RAVNEET SINGH)

(a): As per the information provided by Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, in order to manage the overall food security and to prevent hoarding and unscrupulous speculation, the Government of India imposed stock limits on wheat applicable to Traders/Wholesalers, Retailers, Big Chain Retailers and Processors in all States and Union Territories. The Removal of Licensing Requirements, Stock Limits and Movement Restrictions on Specified Foodstuffs (Amendment) Order, 2025 was issued on 27 May 2025 and was applicable for all States and Union Territories.

As part of continuous efforts to moderate prices of wheat, Central Government has revised the Wheat Stock limit on 26 August 2025 applicable until 31st March 2026 as under:

Entities	Revised Wheat Stock Limit
Trader/ Wholesaler	2000 MT;
Retailer	8 MT for each Retail outlet
Big Chain Retailer	upto 8 MT for each retail outlet subject to maximum quantity of (8 multiplied by total no. of outlets) MT. This will be the maximum stock that can be held at all their retail outlets and depots put together
Processor	60% of Monthly Installed Capacity (MIC) multiplied by remaining months of FY 2025-26

(b): Department of Consumer Affairs monitors the daily prices of 38 essential food commodities submitted by the 555 price monitoring centres that have been set up, with Central assistance, by the State Governments and UT Administrations across the country. The daily report of prices and indicative price trends are duly analysed for taking appropriate decisions such as release of stocks from the buffer, stock disclosure by stockholding entities, imposition of stock limits, changes in trade policy instruments like rationalisation of import duty, changes in import quota, restrictions on exports of the commodity etc. Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) reviews and deliberates, on regular basis, the situation of prices and price trends of essential agri-horticulture commodities and suggests measures to enhance availability through increased domestic production and through imports.

Further, in order to ensure accessibility and availability of foodgrains for vulnerable section of the society, the Government decided to provide free foodgrains to about 81.35 crore beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) for a period of next five years with effect from 1st January, 2024, as per their entitlement (i.e. 35 kg of foodgrains per month per Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) household and 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month in case of Priority Household).

(c): The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) a flagship scheme of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, launched in 2016 with the objective to protect farmers from crop loss due to unforeseen natural calamities from pre-sowing to post harvest and to provide adequate financial support to farmers in the event of loss of crops.

(d): Under the Capacity Building component of the PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme, Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) provides assistance for training of Trainers, District Resource Persons, Entrepreneurs and various other groups for Entrepreneurship Development Skilling (EDP+) & product specific skilling to meet the requirement of food processing industry. So far, 1,26,353 beneficiaries have been trained across the country under the PMFME scheme till 30.10.2025.

MoFPI through its two autonomous Institutions namely, National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship & Management, Kundli, Haryana (NIFTEM-K) & National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship & Management, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu (NIFTEM-T) also facilitates high skilled manpower, through educational courses like B.Tech, M.Tech, Ph.D, etc. in food processing sector.

(e): In order to promote use of technology including Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things and blockchain adoption in Food Processing Sector, MoFPI extends Grant-in-Aid to educational and research institutions including Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) recognized Research and Development (R&D) units in private sector for related demand driven R&D projects through its R&D scheme under Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY).

Under R&D component of the Scheme, financial assistance as grant-in-aid is provided to Private organizations/ universities/institutions/R&D laboratories and CSIR recognized R&D units in private sector to the tune of 50% of equipment cost in general areas and 70% in difficult areas and to various Universities, IITs, Central/ State Government Institutions, Government funded organizations to promote and undertake demand driven R&D work in food processing sector for product & process development, design and development of equipment, improved storage, shelf-life, packaging etc. R&D projects of Government organizations/ Institutions are eligible for 100% grant-in-aid for the cost of equipment, consumables and expenditure related to Research Fellows, etc.

In addition, National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship & Management (NIFTEM) Kundli and NIFTEM, Thanjavur, under administrative control of MoFPI, are also engaged in R&D activities in the sector.
