

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2857
ANSWERED ON:12.12.2005
PURITY STANDARDS OF INDIAN PRODUCTS
Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Agriculture Produce (Grading and Marketing) Act, 1937 fixes quality standards;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government has any proposal to consider purity standards fixed by the International Standard Organization in this field;
- (d) if so, the details in this regard;
- (e) the names of the agriculture products approved so far by the core group on harmonization of fruits and vegetables; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to increase the grading for export purpose?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a)&(b): Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937 empowers the Central Government to frame Grade standards of agricultural produce. These standards are popularly called Agmark Standards and are voluntary. Till date Grade standards for 181 agricultural commodities in the category of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, spices, fruits and vegetables, vegetable oils, butter, ghee, honey etc. have been framed and notified.

(c)&(d): While framing the Agmark Standards, relevant national Standards fixed under the provisions of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and the International Standards fixed by Codex Alimentarius Commission, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Economic Commission (EC), International Organization for Standardization, etc. are also considered. However, the characteristics and intrinsic quality of Indian produce is kept in consideration while fixing the Agmark standards.

(e): Ministry of Commerce and Industry has constituted a Standing Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables for drafting and finalization of standard. A Core group of experts comprising of representatives of Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI), APEDA, trade etc. is assisting the Standing Committee to draft standards. Standards of 18 fruits and vegetables namely table grapes, litchi, mangoes, pineapples, pomegranate, guavas, shelling peas, sugar snap peas, Brussels sprouts, headed cabbage, ribbed celery, spinach, banana, papaya, plums, tomato, garlic and onion have been notified. Standards of another 14 fruits and vegetables namely strawberries, cherries, melons, watermelons, beans, cauliflowers, pears, okra, chilies, capsicum, sapota, custard apple, gherkins and carrots drafted by the Core group have been approved by the Standing Committee. The above standards are harmonized with national and international Standards viz. Codex Alimentarius Commission, UNECE, EC etc.

(f): Director General of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce & Industries has notified DMI as official certification agency for export of fresh fruits and vegetables for export to European Union.