

propose to buy this year from Australia?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: We have already purchased what we wanted to purchase. That comes to 347,000 tons.

Pandit S. C. Mishra: What is the average under this head for the last five years approximately?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: From Australia?

Pandit S. C. Mishra: Yes, under the head of wheat and wheat products from Australia, or, if that not be available, from foreign countries.

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The hon. Member wants the cost or total quantity?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The quantity on average.

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: The quantity I can give for Australia for five or six years.

1946	385,000 tons.
1947	168,000 tons.
1948	633,000 tons.
1949	762,000 tons.
1950	770,000 tons.
1951	192,000 tons.

Pandit S. C. Mishra: Have Government thought of any method of getting wheat from such uneconomic holdigs as are not yet profitable in India itself?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We are going away from the subject. This is from Australia. Many things can be done in India. How does that come in? I must call another hon. Member.

Shri Kelappan: How does the price of the imported wheat compare with that of the Indian wheat?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Though the landing cost will be a little bit more than the idigenous price, the actual cost we pay there in the country of origin will be less than that of the Indian wheat.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know, in view of the increase of price of imported wheat, was the price of last year from Australia less than this year's?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): The price till the end of this year, i.e., up to the end of July, was the same as last year. What price we have to pay next year has yet to be decided, because it will depend upon the price in the open market.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May we know, then, why the price has gone up in rations?

Shri Kidwai: Nobody says the price has gone up because in the open market itself the price paid came to what was last year, and if it again occurs at the time of purchasing, then we will not have to pay any higher price.

LOANS FOR PURCHASE OF FERTILISERS

***252. Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have given any loan to any State Government for the purchase and distribution of fertilizers during the year 1953:

(b) if so, to which State Governments; and

(c) the total amount of loan given to them?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). A statement showing the required information is placed on the Table of the House [See Appendix II, annexure No. 3.]

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know on what basis the loans have been granted to the State Governments, and whether the State Governments which have been granted loans are distributing the fertilizer on a uniform basis to the cultivators?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The loans are advanced according to requirements

and the possible consumption of fertilizers that was fixed by negotiation between each particular State and the Central Government, and it is to be expected that all cultivators who are in need of this and are likely to utilize it for the better method of cultivation would get it.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know whether as a result of granting these loans, the cultivators of the States concerned are enabled to use more fertilizers this year than they used to do previously?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): I think there is some misapprehension. The loan is not cash loans. The fertilizer has been given to them for distribution as loan and the price will be collected at the time of harvesting.

Shri Dabhi: Is any interest being charged on these loans?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Yes, Sir. Interest at 3.125 per cent. is charged.

Dr. Suresh Chandra: May I know whether the Government of India have any check on the use of the sums which are given to the State Governments?

Shri Kidwai: I said no sums have been given to the State Governments. If they can misuse the fertilizers, they are free to do so!

Shri L. N. Mishra: May I know whether it is a fact that the credit agricultural depots working under the auspices of the State Co-operative Bank of Bihar engaged in distributing fertilizers are being closed down on a large scale in the State of Bihar?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I am not aware. I would like to have notice.

Shri Kakkan: On account of failure of monsoon in Madras State last year, the agriculturists are unable to repay the loans. So, may I ask the hon. Minister whether the Government will instruct the Madras Government to collect the loans in the next fiscal year?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: If the question refers to this year's loans and giving fertilizers, for that payment has not to be made, immediately. I am not aware of the previous year's situation. I would like to have notice.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know, Sir, whether the Central Government have issued any instructions to the State Governments to the effect that fertilizers in the form of loans will not be issued to cultivators who own less than five acres of land?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: No, Sir. There is no such restriction.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, whether the accumulated stocks of fertilizers in Sindri which were causing concern in January and February of this year have been cleared as a result of the introduction of this system, and if not, how much has been cleared?

Shri Kidwai: A large stock has been distributed throughout the country. Therefore, the stocks are not so much in accumulation as they were at the time when the reports were published in the papers.

LOCUST SWARMS

*253. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any movement of locust swarms into India from Pakistan during the past four months;

(b) whether there has been any rise in the locust breeding in the desert areas of North-West India; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to fight that locust menace?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) A statement showing the steps being taken by Government to fight the locust menace is placed on the