

**Supply of tractor to farmers during fourth plan**

1704. SHRI M. S. SANJEEVI RAO:  
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether target of supply of tractors to farmers for the fourth plan has been fully met; and

(b) if so, number of tractors supplied to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE):  
(a) No target of supply of tractors to farmers was fixed by the Government of India.

(b) The number of tractors supplied to the farmers upto January, 1974, is as under:—

Imported tractors . . .	45,500 Nos.
Indigenous tractors . . .	94,942 Nos.
Total . . .	<u>1,40,442 Nos.</u>

**Offer to Sri Lanka for plant breeding and food research**

1705. SHRI M. S. SANJEEVI RAO:  
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an offer has been given to Sri Lanka for the training programme in the sphere of food research and plant breeding; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE):  
(a) No such specific offer has been made. However, it was agreed between Government of India and Government of Sri Lanka that India would extend assistance wherever possible to Sri Lanka for the development of the latter's sugar industry and provide facilities for training. Both countries will exchange information on the subject. India will consider Sri Lanka's request for training their personnel in

sugar-cane improvement and sugar technology. Both countries agreed that it would be desirable if they were invited to participate in seminars, workshops and conferences to be held in either country on the subject. A representative of the Government of Sri Lanka will also be invited for participation in the Workshop on Soya Bean.

(b) Does not arise.

**Prices of essential commodities in Gujarat and Bombay**

1706. SHRI ARVIND M. PATEL:  
SHRI VEKARIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of essential commodities like foodgrains etc. were highest in Gujarat and Bombay as compared to other States;

(b) if so, what were the main reasons; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to check upward trend of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE):  
(a) In Gujarat, prices of all important foodgrains except gram are higher than those in other States. As in Bombay city statutory rationing has been in existence in regard to some of the foodgrains, prices data are available only for bajra. At Bombay, prices of Bajra are higher than those prevailing in other cities.

The prevailing prices of groundnut oil, sesamum seed and sesamum oil in Gujarat and Maharashtra are not higher than those ruling in other parts of the country and at times they have been even lower.

(b) The main reasons for the higher level of foodgrains prices are:—

(1) decline in the production of foodgrains during 1972-73 due to

severe drought conditions both in the kharif and rabi seasons and damage to 1973-74 kharif crops by heavy rains and floods.

- (ii) lower market arrivals of major foodgrains during the current marketing season so far (upto 25-1-1974).
- (iii) withholding of stocks by producers partly for replenishment and partly to provide for future contingencies.

(c) Various measures have been taken by the Government to improve the availability of foodgrains and oils and to check the rise in prices:—

1. Special Rabi and Kharif production programmes for 1973-74 were organised for securing increase in foodgrains production.
2. Announcement of guaranteed increased support prices before sowings.
3. To improve the availability of oil seeds and oils in the country, the measures taken include:
  - (a) efforts to raise the production of traditional and non-traditional oilseeds like sunflower seed and soyabean;
  - (b) fiscal incentives to encourage greater utilisation of cotton seed and rice bran oils in the manufacture of vanaspati;
  - (c) restricting the use of groundnut and mustard oils in the manufacture of vanaspati by utilisation of several substitute oils;
  - (d) augmentation of supplies by imports to the extent feasible; and
  - (e) regulation of bank credit and forward trading.
4. Intensification of efforts for the procurement of foodgrains from the domestic crop.

5. Arrangements for importing about 41 lakh tonnes of foodgrains were made on commercial basis. In addition, a loan of 20 lakh tonnes of wheat was arranged from the U.S.S.R. Government.

6. Restriction on inter-zonal movement of coarse grains have been relaxed since January, 1974 so as to allow the purchase and movement of coarse grains outside the States by the sponsored agents of the State Governments.

**Farmers reluctant to sell foodgrains to F.C.I. due to gap between procurement price and open market price**

1707. SHRI ARVIND M. PATEL:  
SHRI VEKARIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a gap between the procurement price of open market price of foodgrains and hence the farmers are reluctant to sell their surplus foodgrains to Food Corporation of India; and

(b) if so, what steps Government consider to take to reduce the gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHEB P. SHINDE):  
(a) and (b). With a view to reducing the gap between the open market prices of foodgrains and the procurement prices and encouraging the producers to offer stocks to public agencies measures taken include (i) maximisation of production effort; (ii) cordoning of the surplus areas and restrictions on the movement of foodgrains on trade account; (iii) substantial increase in the procurement prices for kharif cereals for 1973-74 and the announcement prior to sowing of higher guaranteed minimum prices for rabi 1974-75 season; (iv) tightening of credit facilities to reduce the boarding capacity of the traders, etc.