

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4920  
ANSWERED ON:25.08.2000  
WASTAGE OF FOODGRAINS  
SAMUDRALA VENUGOPAL CHARY

**Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Post harvest losses enough to feed 70 million' appearing in 'The Pioneer' dated July 20, 2000;
- (b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;
- (c) the amount of money is spent annually on storage of foodgrain;
- (d) whether the Government have ever monitored that the amount of money earmarked for storage is properly deployed;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) the remedial measures the Government propose to take to avoid loss of a huge quantity of foodgrains;
- (g) whether there is any storage problem in Punjab due to sub-standard paddy which has no buyers; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRIRAM CHAUHAN )

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) The gist of the matter reported in the news item is as follows:

- i. Although the Food Corporation of India (FCI) spends approximately Rs. 4 Crores / day on storage and handling of foodgrains, the country suffers heavy losses in post harvest period.
- ii. A World Bank report has revealed that wasted grains are enough to feed 70-100 million people. Even in the State like Punjab, the post harvest handling of paddy and wheat is poor and there are 15 to 20% losses.
- iii. A scientist from International Rice Research Institute, Philippines has suggested that FCI must generate resources from grain trade to improve the grain storage warehouses.
- iv. By year 2020 the country will require at least 200 - 230 million tonnes of foodgrains and unless wastage is avoided, PDS would be impaired.
- v. In the open storage, the foodgrains are damaged by rain and other biotic factors. Losses are also there in transportation.
- vi. Purchase centres located at kuccha grounds also contribute to losses.
- vii. The cost of handling of foodgrains by FCI is quite high which requires to be reduced.

It is clarified that the exact quantum of foodgrain losses during post harvest period at farm level due to insects, rodents, moisture, birds, micro-organisms etc. is not known. However, a committee headed by Dr.V.G.Panse, in its report submitted in 1968, had estimated annual post harvest losses in the foodgrains in various stages at 9.33%. These included losses during threshing (1.68%), transportation (0.15%), processing (0.92%), rodents (2.50%), birds (0.85%), insects (2.55%) and moisture (0.68%). A survey conducted by Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, Government of India, during 1973-74, had estimated post harvest losses in foodgrains to be about 5% out of which the storage losses were estimated at about 2.7%. A joint survey conducted by the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute and Indian Grain Storage Management and Research Institute during 1985-88 in Bulandshahr district of UP had estimated total foodgrain losses at about 4.12% due to different factors at various post harvest stages.

(c) The details of annual expenditure on storage of foodgrains by the FCI for the years 1998-99 and 1999-2000 ( Revised Estimates) are given below:

(Rupees in crores)

1998-99 (Provisional) 1999-2000 ( RE)

Storage charges 730 790

(d) Yes Sir.

(e) Regular monitoring at monthly / quarterly intervals is carried out in the Ministry on construction of godowns by the FCI.

(f) With a view to avoid losses in handling , storage and transportation , the Government has announced a national policy on bulk handling storage and transportation of foodgrains in the country. The policy envisages encouragement of private sector participation for the integrated bulk handling, storage and transportation of foodgrains.

Since the house-hold sector retains about 70% of the total production and substantial quantity of foodgrains are wasted due to improper storage, in order to reduce post harvest losses at farm level, the policy provides for :

(i) Introduction of a scheme to encourage use of metal bins as well as non metallic storage structures at individual farm level and construction of RCC bins at community level with appropriate financial incentives.

(ii) Strengthening of the existing training and research components of the Save Grain Campaign Scheme for scientific storage and preservation of foodgrains and their propagation among farmers.

(g) & (h) : No Sir.