

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2010
ANSWERED ON:01.12.2000
IMPORT OF FOODGRAINS
AKHILESH SINGH

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

- (a) whether substantial financial losses has been caused to the national exchequer for import of foodgrains at higher rates since 1997 despite abundance of the same in the country;
- (b) if so, the quantum of foodgrains imported in 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000 alongwith the names of foodgrains imported and the total expenditure incurred on this import;
- (c) whether the Government propose to take action against the persons responsible for these financial losses;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): No, Sir. The Government constantly reviews the stock position of foodgrains in the Central Pool vis-à-vis the prescribed minimum buffer norms, production of foodgrains in the country, procurement trend, requirement for public distribution system/other welfare schemes, open market prices etc. and decision to import foodgrains is taken depending on the overall situation. The following quantities of wheat have been imported through STC during 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000 to augment availability of wheat in the country: -

Year	Quantity (lakh MT)	CIF Cost (Rs. Crores)
1997-98	14.19	962.05
1998-99	14.15	939.23
1999-2000	Nil	Nil

(c), (d) & (e) : In accordance with the assurance given by the Government during the course of discussion on the subject in Parliament on 9.6.1998, Government asked the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on 20.7.1998 to look into the wheat imports on Government account made during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99. CBI has registered a PE 14(A)/98-Delhi dated

4.8.98 to enquire into the imports of wheat contracted by STC from Australian Wheat Board on 26.2.1998. The relevant records pertaining to State Trading Corporation (STC), Food Corporation of India (FCI), Department of Agriculture, Department of Food and Cabinet Secretariat have been collected and CBI has scrutinized the same.