

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3790
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2010
STRATEGIC BUFFER STOCK
Sinha Shri Yashwant

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

- (a) whether the Government has failed to maintain an additional strategic buffer of key essential commodities to allow timely and effective intervention by the Government in the domestic market to regulate retail prices for commodities such as wheat, paddy and pulses during the last three years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the total stock of essential commodities including wheat, paddy, pulses and sugar held by the Government agencies alongwith the arrangement made for its safe and proper storage; and
- (d) the quantum of wheat procured during the current season?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) and (b): No, Madam. Buffer stocks of food grains in the Central Pool are required for (i) feeding the Targeted Public Distribution System, (ii) catering to the requirements of other welfare schemes of the Government, (iii) maintaining a minimum food security reserve for emergencies and (iv) undertaking price stabilization or market intervention operations.

In addition to the regular buffer stocks, a strategic reserve of 30 lakh MTs for wheat w.e.f. 1.7.2008 and 20 lakh MTs of rice w.e.f. from 1.1.2009 is maintained. The buffer norms and actual stock position for the last 3 years as on 1st July, 2010 is as under :-

(in lakh tonnes)
Date Wheat Rice
 Buffer Norm Actual stock Buffer Norm Actual stock

1.7.2008 201 249.12 98 112.49

1.7.2009 201 329.22 118 196.16

1.7.2010 201 335.84 118 242.96

(c) The stock of wheat and rice held by Government agencies as on 1.7.2010 are 335.84 & 242.96 lakh tonnes respectively. The stock of sugar held by FCI as on 1.8.2010 is 0.667 lakh tonnes. The steps taken by the Government for safe and proper storage of foodgrains is at Annexure.

(d) 225.25 lakh tonnes of wheat has been procured during the current Rabi Marketing Season 2010-11.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3790 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 17.8.2010.

ANNEXURE

The following steps are being taken for proper and safe storage and transportation of food grains in FCI:

1. All FCI godowns are constructed as per specifications and food grains are stored by adopting scientific storage practices.
2. Adequate dunnage materials, fumigation covers and chemicals are provided in all the godowns.

3. Prophylactic and curative treatments are carried out regularly and timely for the control of stored grain insect pests and rodents.
4. Food grains in 'Cover and Plinth' (CAP) stored on elevated plinths and wooden crates are used as dunnage material. Stacks are properly covered with specifically fabricated low-density black polythene water proof covers and tied with nylon ropes/nets.
5. Regular inspections of the stocks/ godowns are undertaken by qualified and trained staff of FCI.
6. The principle of "First-In-First-Out" (FIFO) is followed so as to avoid longer storage of food grains in godowns.
7. Only covered wagons are used for movement of food grains so as to avoid damages during transit.
8. Proper weighment and accounting is done at the time of receipt and issue.
9. Insuring transit losses in movement of food grains by rail.
- 10 Providing escorts while transporting food grains from Depot to Rail head & vice-versa.