

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1538
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2012
QUALITY OF PDS FOODGRAINS
Mahajan Smt. Sumitra

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has received number of complaints from the States regarding storage and supply of rotten and substandard quality of foodgrains;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether any system is in place to ensure quality of foodgrains before and during storage for the purpose of supplying to various States including Madhya Pradesh under the Public Distribution System;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons behind the failure to check such cases; and
- (e) the remedial steps taken by the Government for proper upkeep and quality check of foodgrains?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b) : No complaint regarding storage and supply of rotten and sub-standard quality of foodgrains has been received from any State Government during 2012-13. However, during 2011-12 some States had given complaints.

State Governments of Goa and Odisha had complained about supply of poor quality of wheat under Wheat Based Nutrition Programme under Integrated Child Development Scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Food Corporation of India (FCI) investigated the complaints and had found that only fair average quality (FAQ) stocks of wheat were issued to the representatives of these State Governments and before taking delivery, as per the laid down procedure, these representatives had taken the samples and satisfied themselves about quality, issued certificates to FCI to that effect and so the complaint about quality was baseless. Accordingly the States were informed.

A complaint regarding supply of inferior quality of rice received from Chhattisgarh for distribution under PDS was given by Government of West Bengal in November, 2011. The complaint was got investigated through FCI who informed that few rakes of rice received from Chhattisgarh in West Bengal were the cause for complaint. Although the stock was within issuable range under C category, but keeping in view the insistence of State Government, FCI had moved out these stocks and issued them other stocks.

Also, UT Administration of Chandigarh had complained in January 2012 about supply of sub-standard rice under Mid Day Meal Scheme. The complaint was got investigated through FCI and not found correct. However, CMD, FCI had been requested to issue instructions to all concerned field officers to be vigilant about ensuring supply of good quality foodgrains under TPDS and other welfare schemes including Mid Day Meal scheme.

(c) & (d) For all States including Madhya Pradesh, there is an elaborate procedure to ensure good quality of foodgrain from procurement till distribution to the consumers.

Before the commencement of Rabi and Kharif Marketing Season, uniform specifications are formulated by the Government for procurement of foodgrains under Central Pool. The foodgrains procured by the field functionaries as per these specifications are subjected to supervisory checks/inspections in FCI to ensure prescribed standards of quality.

During storage, prescribed code of storage practices are followed to maintain the quality. FCI has a regular monitoring mechanism under which inspections at all levels are carried out for this purpose. Fortnightly inspection of stocks on 100% basis are done by Technical Assistants for declaring categorization of stocks followed by monthly inspections of 1/3rd of stocks by Manager (QC) and also there are further periodic inspections by senior officers as well.

Foodgrains (wheat and rice) are issued from FCI depots to State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations for distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS) and other welfare schemes through a well defined procedure of joint sampling of the stock before issue. Only after the States/UTs through their technically qualified officers are satisfied about quality, the stock is to be issued to State Governments/ UT Administrations alongwith joint sealed samples. A certificate duly signed by the representatives of States/UTs about quality and quantity of the stock is kept by FCI in their records for all such issues.

After having received the stocks from FCI, it is the responsibility of the concerned States / UTs and their officers to ensure that during transportation and storage at different stages in the distribution chain, the foodgrains retain the required quality specifications and are not damaged or pilfered.

(e) Steps taken for safe & scientific storage and preservation of foodgrain are at Annexure.