

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4795

ANSWERED ON:23.04.2013

PROCUREMENT OF FOODGRAINS

Hegde Shri Anant Kumar;Panda Shri Baijayant;Roy Shri Arjun

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

- (a) the quantum of foodgrains procured during each of the last three years and the estimates/ targets for procurement during the ensuing year indicating the percentage of procurement out of the total production, State and grain-wise;
- (b) whether the present policy regarding procurement is leading to increased dependence of farmers on private agencies for procurement of the wheat produced by them;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (d) the remedial/corrective steps taken/ proposed to be taken to ensure that all the wheat offered by the farmers is procured?

Answer

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

(a) The quantity of wheat, rice and coarse grain procured state-wise during each of the last three years indicating the procurement as the percentage of total production is at Annexure I, II and III respectively.

The estimates of procurement of wheat and rice for the current marketing seasons are at Annexure IV and V respectively. The estimation of procurement of coarsegrains is not done and it is taken up as and when requested by any State Government.

(b) & (c) No, Madam. As per the existing procurement policy, the Central Government extends price support to paddy and wheat through the FCI and State Agencies. All the foodgrains conforming to the prescribed specifications offered for sale at specified centers are bought by the public procurement agencies at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The farmers have the option to sell their produce to FCI/State Agencies at the MSP or in the open market as is advantageous to them. There is no compulsion on the farmers to sell their produce, to their disadvantage. The amount of foodgrains procured by the Food Corporation of India has increased in the successive years.

(d) Steps taken by Government to ensure that all the wheat offered by the farmers is procured are as under:

1. MSP is announced well ahead of the start of the crop year;
2. In order to maximise the outreach of MSP operations, FCI in consultation with State Govt., operates sufficient number of purchase centres;
3. To ensure that the benefit of MSP reaches to the farmers, FCI has directed the field units to make the payment through account payee cheque/ electronic mode, wherever possible;
4. To spread the awareness, MSP operations are given wide publicity through pamphlets, sign boards and print & electronic media every year; and
5. State Governments are encouraged to undertake decentralized procurement, so as to enhance the procurement of food grains.