

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:64  
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2013  
HIKE IN PRICES OF FOOD ITEMS  
Deka Shri Ramen;Mohan Shri P. C.

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the prices of fruits, vegetables, milk and other agricultural commodities have increased manifold beyond the reach of the common man;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the prices of onions and tomatoes in wholesale and retail markets have increased exorbitantly during the last three months;
- (d) if so, the details thereof indicating the rise in prices in terms of percentage; and
- (e) the long-term and short-term steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to bring down the prices of fruits, vegetables, milk and other agricultural commodities so as to bring them within the reach of the common man?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 64 DUE FOR REPLY ON 10TH DECEMBER, 2013.

(a) & (b): Monthly Wholesale Price Index (WPI) of Fruits and Vegetables including Onion and Tomato increased from 190.4 in January 2013 to 281.2 in October 2013. The WPI for Milk was 210.5 in January 2013 which has increased to 220.5 in October, 2013. In respect of Cereals, the index was 210.4 and 229.6 for the respective period. The WPI for Pulses and Oilseeds showed decline from 244.3 to 227.8 and 207.6 to 199.5 respectively during the same period. The month-wise and commodity-wise details are at Annexure -I. The price fluctuation of food items can be attributed to several factors such as mismatch in localised production and demand, seasonality factors, adverse weather conditions and improvement in income and living standards with resultant changes in dietary habits.

(c) & (d): The wholesale and retail prices of Onion and Tomato displayed variation from month to month and market to market during the last three months, as per details given at Annexure-II.

(e): The Government has taken various steps to control prices of food items. These include, inter-alia, allowing import of various items of mass consumption including onion, pulses and edible oils at zero or concessional import duties together with restriction on their exports, prescribing stock holding limits under the Essential Commodities Act 1955, allocation of food grains at affordable prices under Targeted Public Distribution System etc. States have also been advised to waive the cess on onions in APMC markets and instruct APMC officials to ensure that traders do not hold stocks beyond usual trade norms. The long term measures, inter alia, include increasing production of agricultural commodities; encouraging processing in respect of Onion, Tomato; improving storage structures; linking producer groups to aggregators/retailers etc.