

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3658

ANSWERED ON:05.08.2014

ARTIFICIAL RIPENING OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram;Dhotre Shri Sanjay Shamrao

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note that the vegetables and fruits are being ripened artificially by oxytocin, ethylene gas and other toxic drugs in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has made any assessment of use of such drugs on the human health causing cancer and other fatal diseases and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has conducted any enquiry in this regard; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

(a) to (c): There have been reports in media about use of toxic substances like calcium carbide and oxytocin for early ripening of fruits and vegetables.

Clause 2.3.5 of Chapter 2 of Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on sale) Regulations, prohibits sale of fruits which have been artificially ripened by use of acetylene gas commonly known as carbide gas produced from calcium carbide. However, use of ethylene gas in low concentration exogenously to trigger ripening of fruits is considered safe.

(d) & (e): Implementation of Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006 and its Rule/Regulations rests with State/UT Governments. The Commissioners of Food Safety/Food (Health) Authority of States/UTs who are responsible for implementation of the Act in their States/UTs have been requested to keep a strict vigil on use of carbide gas and other hazardous chemical for ripening of fruits and take legal action for violation of the Act/Rules. The State Governments have also been advised to educate the public through mass electronic media against consumption of such artificial ripened fruits.