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Title: Need to evolve a pilot scheme for promoting tomato cultivation and its marketability besides setting up of food processing industries in Thirupathur, Natrampalli and Ottanchathiram in Tamil Nadu.

SHRID. VENUGOPAL (TIRUPPATTUR): \*Tomato, which has a significant place among vegetables, has also a place in our Indian cooking. Tomato grows in plenty in places which are neither hilly region nor plain region but in areas adjacent to hills with suitable climatic conditions. Thirupathur, Natrampalli and Ottanchathiram are places in Tamil Nadu known for plentiful growth of tomato. Though there is uniform demand throughout the year, the poor farmers who are in tomato cultivation do not get uniform remunerative prices. But instead, they are put to losses due to fluctuations and heavy fall in prices. Increased tomato cultivation in other areas, lack of cold storage facilities and non-existing food processing facilities with industrial units to make tomato powder come in the way of tomato cultivation. There is a need to evolve a pilot scheme and identify places like Thirupathur, Natrampalli and Ottanchathiram and the Ministry of Food Processing Industries can establish cold storage facilities and FPI unit to produce tomato powder. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to go for a co-ordinated scheme involving the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Food Processing Industries, and Rural Development to benefit and protect the tomato growing farmers and also this perishable commodity.

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\*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Bhuvaneshwar Prasad Mehta – not present.

Shri Abdul Rashid Shaheen.