

DR. G.S. DHILLON: It is his duty to defend his erstwhile? government.

[*Translation*]

Import of Sunflower Seeds

*395 SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA†:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Union Government have recently imported sunflower seeds;
- (b) if so, the quantity and value thereof;
- (c) whether the experts had explored the possibilities of their growing it in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regard?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (DR. G.S. DHILLON): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Union Government have recently imported 35 MT of "Improved Peredovik" variety from Russia. The cost of seed was Rs. 3.27 lakhs.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. A small quantity was first obtained and put under trial. It was found to be sufficiently promising to warrant a larger multiplication programme resulting in the above import.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: The point is, the cultivation of sunflower can be made popular in the country and according to reports, there is a steep shortfall between the target and production of seeds. The target for the production of the sunflower seeds was 5.25 MT but the production was only 5.15 MT in 1984-85 and

3.21 MT in 1985-86; there as a huge shortfall. My point is that it is an admitted fact that to offset the effects of drought, many State Governments recommended the cultivation of sunflower because it takes only 85 days to get the crop matured. Twelve thousand growers were looking forward for the supply of seed in Punjab. Originally there was a plan to bring 6,000 acres of land under sunflower cultivation and the Punjab farmers demanded hybrid sunflower seeds. Instead of supplying for 6,000 acres it was supplied only for 650 acres and even the supply was given to only influential persons. Only influential people could get it and that was also some quantity of old seeds with low germination value mixed with new seeds and they were sold to farmers in new bags. When there was a huge demand and when it was planned to offset the affects of drought and also recommended by the Agricultural universities that it can be grown in a short period-because paddy takes too much water and too much time - why did the Government of India not import sufficient quantity of sunflower seeds?

DR. G.S. DHILLON: I have just noted his speech. But I am trying to find out what is the exact question. It was only when we decided that sunflower should be made an essential crop for oilseeds that you asked this question about import of Russian seeds and its multiplication. It is only because we needed a high quality seed that we have experimented with certain sunflower seeds of various countries, Russia being one of them. When we brought this Peredovik variety even for these 35 tonnes that we imported we had to pay the airfreight and bring it by air so that the seed can be multiplied for the coming Rabi. If it had not been brought by air the whole Rabi would have been missed. We gave you four tonnes out of that. But be sure that it is just to accommodate the States and supply has been made to the possible extent. We are taking up the four stages of development of the seeds. Nucleus, that is

the high quality of seeds, out of that we produce broader quantity seeds and then we have to make foundation seeds and then we have to supply it to the States. It is a long process. It is not so easy as you look at it. We have to grow by high yielding varieties and that we have sought to do. Be sure that we will be giving it for your rabi crop.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOW-ALIA: My point which I emphasised has not been answered. Through you I asked him—that oil seeds with low germination value are mixed with new seeds and sold to farmers in new bags, Why he is shy of taking it up.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: He must explain why he is shy, shy of sun or flower.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOW-ALIA: What precautionary steps are being taken to encourage the farmers to adopt sun flower cultivation? How much quantity of sun flower seed can you supply and have you arranged so far or planned?

DR. G.S. DHILLON: I am not shy, except sometimes I feel shy of him. Your question does not pertain to the main question. You have asked a question about the import of sun flower seed and I replied to that.

So far as other points are concerned, I have noted them that how the germination was not with proper strength that I will look into them. We will have a number of times to meet. I will tell you what happens. This only about the import of quality seeds from Russia. Why I should feel shy when they are coming from Russia?

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Do not worry, you will not be given sub-standard seeds.

[*English*]

DR. CHINTA MOHAN: Sir, you are the leader of the farmers.

[*Translation*]

DR. DATTA SAMANT: He is buttering.

MR. SPEAKER: Allow him to do so once in a while.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOW-ALIA: Today is his birthday.

[*English*]

DR. CHINTA MOHAN: You know much better than any other Ministers about the grievances of the farmers in India. Everybody says that the farmers are the backbone of this nation. Unfortunately, the farmers are the worst victims of this nation due to not having the clear policies of the Central Government. Here, the Minister has said, he has imported 35 MT of sunflower seeds from Russia. The Ministers knows much better that the sun flower seeds sowing season is between mid July and mid August. I would like to know on which date, he has imported the sun flower seeds from Russia, and when he has actually distributed the seeds to the farmers. If it has been distributed to the farmers, what amount of premium he has taken and to which of the farmers seeds were distributed in Punjab and Andhra Pradesh. Sir, at least in the coming rabi season, the Minister will make it a point to distribute the seeds in an appropriate time so that the farmers will not have any hardship in future.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: I assure the hon. Member that the seed to be sown was brought in time in July. That is why, instead of taking the risk of putting it in the boat or the ship, we brought it by a special airlift and that was sown in time—that was in early of July

and that came quite in time. I have no dates here. But I can assure you that we have procured and we had to expedite because of the sowing season. That seed will be ready for the rabi.

DR. CHINTAMOHAN: In kharif season, the farmers are facing hardships and that you are accepting it—the Government is accepting it.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: I accept everything that you say. You must accept me too.

Andhra Pradesh got exactly the same quantity as Punjab—four tonnes.

SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI: Does the Minister know that Karnataka is one of the States where extensive cultivation of sunflower is grown? Will the hon. Minister be able to convince us that he has allotted such seeds to Karnataka? What is the difference between the existing seeds and the improved seeds which you have imported from Russia? Will the Minister give an assurance that he is going to distribute such seeds to the registered growers in various States in future?

DR. G.S. DHILLON: Karnataka's share was duly looked into and they were given four tonnes of seeds. So far as foundation seeds are concerned, after we get that we will certainly give it on an equitable basis to all the States. I am really afraid that sometimes, the drought conditions may not affect its yield.....(*Interruptions*) As I told you, the seeds came in early July.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU: With regard to sunflower, it is a rain-fed and drought resistance variety. As the Minister is aware, most of the States are facing drought and the country is facing an acute shortage of edible oil. As far as sunflower is concerned, in different names in different States sunflower seeds are sown. But the cost is more than

that of groundnut and coconut oilseeds. It is also non-cholesterol and non-fat. So it is very very useful for the health. Sunflower seeds are being distributed by various States seeds corporations. But spurious seeds are being given to farmers. With regard to low germination of varieties in rain-fed areas and particularly in drought affected areas is concerned, the farmers are not getting profit out of them. Will the Minister look into this? Will he also see that the hybrid variety which has been received from Russia, about 35 MT, is distributed equally to all the States.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: Let them get more.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU: Yes, let them get more and distribute it to all the States.

DR. G.S. DHILLON: Thank you very much. This is nucleus to breeder and then to foundation. We are all—the National Seeds Corporation, the State Farms Corporation; and various other organizations—at it. I assure you that no State will be discriminated against because our interest is to adopt the sunflower as out of the main sources of oilseeds. We have so many of them. But we have found that sunflower seed is excellent in oil yield. What we are trying to do is to have good varieties. We will examine some of them which we will get from Hungary, Bulgaria and Russia. We are still working on it. This is the earliest that we could get hold of. We hope, it will be good in seed yield as well as oil yield.

[*Translation*]

SHRIUTTAMRATHOD: Are you aware that due to fall in the price of cotton, people are increasingly running after the cultivation of sunflower these days, especially in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra and Punjab.....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: What do you mean by running after?

SHRIUTTAMRATHOD: You are aware that these hybrid varieties of sunflower require to be caressed at least twice for proper pollination. I would like to know if the seeds imported from U.S.S.R. also require to be caressed twice?

MR. SPEAKER: Which is that *Surajmukhi* (Sunflower) you caress?

(Interruptions)

DR. G.S. DHILLON: The very name *Surajmukhi* is so sweet that everybody gets tempted to prop it up. Unless you prop up, nothing can be produced.

[English]

Map of Horticultural Areas

*396. SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has identified areas for efficient horticulture;

(b) if so, whether a map of horticultural areas has been prepared along with the fruits best suited for these areas; and

(c) what steps are being taken to promote horticulture in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (DR. G.S. DHILLON): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. However, delineation of areas suited for horticulture crops based on agro-climatic requirements is in progress.

(c) Development of horticulture in different areas is the responsibility of the re-

spective State Governments. However, Government of India also provides adequate support through implementation of schemes for development of horticulture and strengthening of research capabilities of the States/UTs in these crops.

SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA: Sir, I would like to know how much areas have been delineated and, at this rate, does Government think that they will be able to identify the entire area for horticulture within the Seventh Plan and what is the response of the agriculturists for the idea of shifting from agriculture to horticulture? Is it a fact that the farmer is reluctant to shift from agriculture to horticulture on account of his psychological attachment to traditional agriculture. What is being done in this respect?

DR. G.S. DHILLON: Sir, as I told the House during the reply to the debate last week, we are trying to say good-bye to the old types of agriculture because conditions are changed. We are trying to divide the country into 8 agro-climatic zones. For horticulture, we are trying to divide the country into 4 zones and within those Zones and within the States, we will also have agro-climate zones.

SHRI SATYEDNRA NARAYAN SINHA: Sir, my specific question has not been answered. I wanted to know how much area has been delineated and whether the Government has been able to identify the entire area and what is the response of the agriculturists to the idea of shifting from agriculture to horticulture. Is it a fact that the agriculturists are reluctant to shift to horticulture on account of their psychological attachment to agriculture?

[Translation]

DR. G.S. DHILLON: You will be surprised to know that people generally think that only fruits etc. come under horticulture,