

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2310

ANSWERED ON:09.03.2000

IMPORT OF WHEAT

CHANDRA NATH SINGH;NARESH KUMAR PUGLIA;PRABHUNATH SINGH

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

- (a) whether the State Trading Corporation and the Food Corporation of India imported wheat from Australia and Canada;
- (b) if so, the quantity of wheat imported by each of these Organisations from each of the country during the last three years alongwith the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the F.C.I. now wants to sell this imported wheat by floating open tender;
- (d) if so, the details of profit/loss as a result thereof;
- (e) whether the Government propose to get this matter probed by CBI and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (f) the quantity of wheat which has deteriorated due to lax storage by Food Corporation of India;(g) the reaction of the Government thereto; (h) whether wheat imported under D.G.L. is cheaper; and (i) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SRIRAM CHAUHAN)

(a) & (b) : The details of wheat imported by the State Trading Corporation of India on Government account during the last three years are as under:-

Years

Country

Quantity(in lakh tonnes)

1996-97

Australia

Canada

Argentina

Total

13.90

2.66

0.95

17.51

1997-98

Australia

10.18

1998-99

Australia

14.15

199-2000

Nil

Nil

The import of wheat was made to augment its availability in the country. The Food Corporation of India has not imported any quantity of wheat during this period.

(c) In view of the availability of substantial stocks of wheat in the Central Pool, it has been decided to dispose of 1.00 lakh tonnes of imported wheat through tender.

(d) Profit or loss will be known only after the tender rates are finalized.

(e) Government has asked the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on 20.7.1998 to look into the wheat imports on Government account made during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99. CBI has registered a Preliminary Enquiry to look into the wheat imports from Canada during 1996-97 and from Australia during 1998-99.

(f) No case of major deterioration in quality due to storage by the Food Corporation of India has been reported.

(g) Does not arise.

(h) &

(i) Government has imposed 50% duty on all wheat imports w.e.f. 1.12.1999. Therefore, import of wheat under O.G.L. is no longer cheaper than domestic wheat.