

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3576

ANSWERED ON:15.05.2006

BENEFITS OF WHEAT IMPORT

Jai Prakash Shri

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

whether the import of wheat from abroad is more beneficial than transporting the surplus stock from Punjab to deficit States as reported in Dainik Jagran dated April 3, 2006;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, the rationale behind importing wheat despite surplus availability in Punjab?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public DISTRIBUTION
(DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH)

(a),(b)&(c): The decision to import 5.0 lakh tonnes of wheat in February, 2006 was taken in view of rising prices of wheat especially in the Southern States. The cost of delivering imported wheat in South India was less than delivering surplus wheat from Punjab.

Further, the decision to import 30 lakh tonnes of wheat has been taken in April, 2006 for the following:

(i) Stock of wheat in the Central Pool as on 1.4.2006 was 20 lakh tonnes which was 20 lakh tonnes lower than the buffer norm of 40 lakh tonnes for 1st April;

(ii) Need to build up adequate buffer stock to meet the commitment under Public Distribution System (PDS) and Welfare Schemes;

(iii) Lower than normal production of wheat;

(iv) Low level of procurement of wheat in the Central Pool.