

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1966-67)

HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH REPORT (THIRD LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

**Action taken by Government on the recommendations
contained in the Seventy-ninth Report of the
Estimates Committee (Third Lok Sabha) on
Central Potato Research Institute.**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

November, 1966/Agrahayana, 1888 (Saka)

Price : Re. 0.50

236.39 CR

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(1966-67)

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(iii)

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INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee, having been authorised by the Committee, present this Hundred and Eleventh Report of the Estimates Committee on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventy-ninth Report of the Estimates Committee (Third Lok Sabha) on the erstwhile Ministry of Food & Agriculture (Department of Agriculture)—Central Potato Research Institute, Simla.

2. The Seventy-ninth Report of the Estimates Committee was presented to the Lok Sabha on the 15th April, 1965. Government furnished replies indicating action taken on all the recommendations between 29th March, 1966 and 11th October, 1966. Government's replies were considered by the Study Group 'E' of the Estimates Committee (1966-67) on 5th September, 1966. The draft Report was adopted by the Committee on the 25th November, 1966.

3. The Report has been divided into the following Chapters:

- I. Report
- II. Recommendations that have been accepted by Government.
- III. Recommendations which the Committee do not want to pursue in view of Government's reply.
- IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventy-ninth Report (Third Lok Sabha) of the Estimates Committee is given in the Appendix. It would be observed therefrom that out of 21 recommendations made in the Report, 20 recommendations i.e. 95.2% have been accepted by the Government and reply of Government in respect of one recommendation i.e. 4.8% has not been accepted by the Committee.

ARUN CHANDRA GUHA,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

NEW DELHI;
November 30, 1966.
Agrahayana 9, 1888 (Saka).

CHAPTER I

REPORT

The Estimates Committee are glad to observe that the recommendations contained in their Seventy-ninth Report. (Third Lok Sabha) on the erstwhile Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Department of Agriculture)—Central Potato Research Institute, Simla have been generally accepted by Government. There is, however, one recommendation reply to which has not been accepted by the Committee and which has been commented upon in Chapter IV of this Report.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (S. No. 1, Para No. 7)

The Committee suggest that the schemes included in the Plan should be properly phased and expeditiously finalised in order to ensure that the objectives underlying the Plan provision are achieved. If Rs. 67 lakhs, proposed to be provided in the Fourth Plan, are to be put to good use, the Committee would suggest that detailed schemes should be drawn up in the earlier part of the Plan period so that these can be implemented in accordance with the phased programme.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Detailed schemes proposed to be taken up under the Fourth Five Year Plan are being drawn up and properly phased. Stress is being laid on such schemes which are of applied nature.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 2, Para No. 8)

The primary need in India is of increasing the food resources. Since potato is a nourishing and adaptable subsidiary food, it presents an attractive source for augmenting food resources. The Committee would like the Central/State Governments to approach the problem of increasing potato production from this angle of national importance and to adopt a phased programme of increasing its production.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Accepted. The Government of India has initiated a Crash Programme for the production of potatoes with the Co-operation of the State Governments.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 3; Para No. 10)

The yield of potato per hectare is the lowest in India. The Committee note that the yield for the last 12 years has been more or less stagnant. The Committee consider this to be a failure to fulfil the

main objective for which the Institute was set up. The Committee suggest that the Institute should devise a coordinated programme for increasing yield of potato per hectare. Such a programme should *inter alia* provide for supply of disease-free potato seeds, fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides, etc. Provision of ancillary service such as storage, marketing and credit may also be ensured.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The need for a coordinated programme for providing supply of disease-free potato seeds, fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, etc. as well as for provision of ancillary services such as storage, marketing, and credit is accepted. The Central Potato Research Institute, however, will be responsible up to the stage of multiplication of disease-free basic seed of improved varieties for supply to the National Seeds Corporation and the State Governments for further multiplication and distribution to cultivators. It has been decided that farms in the high hills as well as in the plains should be set up under the control of the Institute for the multiplication of basic seed.

Under the crash programme for the production of potatoes initiated by the Government of India, the other facilities and requirements mentioned in the recommendation are being provided.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 4; Para No. 13)

The Committee regret that even in the Fourth Year of the Third Plan, the Government and the Institute have not been able to make the States interested in taking up the implementation of the Scheme for production, inspection and certification of diseasefree seeds which was included in the Third Plan. The Committee consider that research should not be divorced from its practical application in the country. If the valuable materials and techniques developed at the Institute after years of concentrated research are not to be relegated to a research pigeon-hole but to be put to effective use in the field, it is patent that the role of the Institute should not only be that of a leader in research but it should also have a role to play in the actual cultivation. The Committee are aware that the question of providing any exclusive extension wing for a particular research institute is linked with the broader problem of the role and functions of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Directorate of Extension and the State Agricultural Organisations. The Committee would suggest that a high powered committee may be constituted

urgently to go into the matter in all its ramifications and evolve a solution which would provide an effective and purposeful link between the research institutes and the tiller of the soil so that the results of research come to the aid of the nation in these pressing times of food scarcity.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Government agrees with the views expressed by the Committee. It does not, however, consider it necessary to appoint a Committee as suggested. It has already been accepted that agricultural research institutes should carry the results of research to cultivators in its vicinity, in addition to giving them to the extension agencies for dissemination to cultivators all over India. The Government of India are also sponsoring national demonstrations for the popularisation of improved varieties and practices of cultivation, which are conducted by scientists themselves on cultivators' fields. In so far as the Central Potato Research Institute is concerned, the general policy mentioned regarding extension activities by research institutes is proposed to be implemented.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 5; Para No. 14)

In view of the fact that the total area available for the production of seed potatoes in the hills is limited and that the scattered nature of the available area also presents several problems such as transport, timely supply of seeds, etc., the Committee recommend that the seed plot technique should be made use of to the maximum extent possible so as to saturate the entire potato area of the country with seed potatoes in the phased programme of five years.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Taking note of the recommendation of the Committee, steps to improve the seed supply position in the country through the "Seed Plot Technique" are being undertaken through the National Seeds Corporation and the State Departments of Agriculture in the Fourth Five Year Plan.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 6; Para No. 15)

The Committee note with concern that the production of foundation seed stocks at the farms of the Institute has been progressively decreasing. The Committee further note with regret that the total quantities of the foundation seeds produced at the Institute's farms

and healthy seeds produced at the regional stations are not distributed fully to the States for further multiplication. The Committee need hardly emphasise that the Institute should have made proper arrangements to distribute all the healthy seeds produced at the farms of the Institute and regional stations to the States and progressive farmers. The Committee, however, expect that necessary remedial steps in this regard would be taken without any delay.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation of the Committee to increase the potential of nucleus seed at the Central Potato Research Institute is accepted by the Government.

There is no doubt that part of the healthy seed is utilised by the Institute itself for production of secondary seeds in the plains and part for experimental purposes, particularly, in the agronomic trials and in experiments connected with the production and maintenance of health standards of seed under different conditions of culture in the plains. This is unavoidable. Necessary measures designed to increase production of primary and secondary nucleus seed in the hills and plains regions are being taken as explained in reply to recommendation No. 3.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 8; Para No. 20)

The production, certification and grading of potatoes is a highly technical job and as such suitably trained and experienced hands will be required to tackle the day to day problems. The Committee recommend that the training facilities available at the Central Potato Research Institute should be fully made use of for training the technical staff of the State Departments of Agriculture, and also of the Agricultural Extension Officers of the Development Blocks.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendation is accepted. A short training course was held recently at Jullundur. Such training courses are proposed to be held periodically.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 9; Para No. 26)

As the yield of potato in India is almost the lowest in the world and it is not precisely known as to what extent among other

factors, the yield is depressed by pests and diseases, the Committee suggest that the Institute should undertake a study to ascertain the incidence of diseases and pests in potato cultivation and take necessary preventive steps.

The Committee also suggest that effective control of blight disease and a correct method of forecasting the disease should be evolved in collaboration with the Indian Meteorological Department.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendations are accepted. Appropriate schemes to give effect to them are proposed to be implemented under the Fourth Five Year Plan.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 10; Para No. 27)

The Committee suggest that in order to prevent spread of pests and diseases through imported seed potatoes, the need for a proper control on the import of seed potatoes may be impressed on all the States.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The import of potatoes from all countries except Burma and Nepal has been prohibited since January 1960, in order to prevent the import of certain dreaded pests and diseases. Imports from Burma and Nepal are also subject to the production of phytosanitary certificates for each consignment. All possible precautions are being taken to prevent the introduction of new pests and diseases of potatoes from foreign countries and to contain the pests and diseases that have already got introduced in the small pockets where they are found.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 11; Para No. 28)

The Committee recommend that as the plant protection chemicals are essential for the success of the potato crop, all efforts should be made to produce these chemicals in sufficient quantities indigenously to meet the increasing demands of the cultivators. The Committee suggest that the matter may be taken up with the Hindustan Insecticides Limited.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The local manufacture of pesticides required for Plant Protection work on all crop, including potatoes, is constantly under review of the Government of India in the Ministries of Food and Agriculture, Industry and Supply, Petroleum and Chemicals and Commerce and the Planning Commission. Estimates of future requirements and the review of the present production capacity and future plans have been worked out.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 12; Para No. 29)

The Committee are glad to note that anti-sera for common virus diseases have been developed at the Institute. The Committee suggest that the possibility of commercial exploitation of anti-sera through the National Research Development Corporation may be explored.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The possibility of commercial exploitation of anti-sera of common potato viruses developed at the Central Potato Research Institute through National Research Development Corporation will be carefully examined after the work has developed further and needed technical base at State levels for undertaking the work created.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 13; Para No. 30)

The Committee consider that the distribution of pure seed potatoes free from virus and other diseases is of paramount importance, if production of potatoes has to be augmented. The Committee are concerned to note that so far no machinery has been set up for grading of seed potatoes and the question of evolving suitable standard of purity has yet to be finalised in consultation with the States. The Committee cannot too strongly urge the need for grading seed potatoes according to standard of purity to be laid down by the Indian Standards Institution before distributing the same to the farmers. The Committee suggest that energetic steps may be taken to pursue the matter and finalise the standards of purity as expeditiously as possible.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The specifications of standard of purity and health of seed are being finalised by the Indian Standards Institution in consultation with the State Departments of Agriculture. The Standards as drawn up by the Institution would be adopted on an all-India basis under programmes of seed production undertaken by the State Governments and National Seeds Corporation.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 14; Para No. 31)

The Committee feel that the research on technological aspects of the potato crops should be kept out from the programmes of the Institute and that the technological research on potato can be suitably carried out by the Central Food Technological Research Institute in collaboration with Central Potato Research Institute as suggested by the Committee on Achievement Audit. The Committee hope that Government will take an early decision on this matter which is pending since 1960.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Government accept the recommendation of the Committee that the technological research on potatoes can be suitably carried out by the Central Food Technological Research Institute in collaboration with the Central Potato Research Institute. In this direction the Institute's function would be restricted only to development of raw products in the way of varieties suitable for dehydration and different processing industries. The scheme will be restricted accordingly in its scope.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

★ Recommendation (S. No. 15; Para No. 33)

The Committee suggest that the Central Potato Research Institute should compile accurate information on the Indian commercial varieties which can replace, with advantage, the imported varieties and disseminate such information to the Departments of Agriculture of States to the benefit of traders who have a preference for the imported potato seeds. The Committee further suggest that Government should have a phased programme of curtailing and finally stopping imports of potato seeds.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Accurate information on Indian commercial varieties which can replace the imported varieties has been secured by the Central Potato Research Institute and a monograph "Potato in India—Varieties" has been published by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The information in this monograph would be available to the States.

Import of potatoes, except from Burma and Nepal is already prohibited. Imports are restricted to the minimum and will be stopped altogether with the increase in the production of seed potatoes within India for which steps are being taken under the Fourth Five Year Plan.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 16; Para No. 34)

The Committee are surprised that the price of indigenous seeds is 60 per cent higher than that of the imported seeds. The Committee would like to invite attention of Government to the recommendation contained in para 14 of the Report and further recommend that urgent steps should be taken to bring down the cost of indigenous potato seeds so that the cost of seed may not exceed 25 per cent at most of the total cost of cultivation.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

Programmes have now been taken up under the Fourth Five Year Plan to produce high quality of seed potatoes, following scientific techniques, in the plains to meet the requirements of the country to a greater extent. The price of seed potatoes produced in the plains would be less than that of the hill potatoes of India because the tuber yields in the plains would be higher than in the hills with less cost of cultivation. This will bring down the cost of indigenous seed to a great extent.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 11th October, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 17; Para No. 35)

The Committee regret that in spite of the very clear recommendation of the Rural Credit Survey in 1964 that Warehousing facilities are to be created only, through three agencies—the Central Government, State Governments and the Cooperative organisations—and whenever necessary also to be financed and subsidised by the Government, there have been no attempts to set up a chain of warehouses

for storage of agricultural products for the benefit of the producers and there have been so much indiscriminate sanctions of private cold storages that these have now become more an instrument of cornering of goods and pushing up of prices rather than of giving the expected benefits to the actual producers. The Committee recommend that to eliminate the inordinate rise in prices of potato seeds, a phased programme should be taken up for setting up of cold storage within the control of the Government under the Warehousing Corporation Act or through producers' cooperative societies. Government should also restrict the issue of indiscriminate licences to private parties for opening of cold storage houses, to avoid undue rise in prices of vital agricultural products like potato seeds.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Government of India under the Special Development (Crash) Programme, have already sanctioned an amount of nearly Rs. 52.60 lakhs to six State Governments for setting up of cold storages. Under the Emergency Food Production Drive, the State Governments have been asked to accelerate the pace of setting up of cold storages for the storage of potatoes etc. A sum of Rs. 1 crore is likely to be made available to the State Governments during 1966-67 for this purpose. The Central Warehousing Corporation has also undertaken the construction of Cold Storages at Calcutta and Hyderabad. The Corporation has also plans to construct six Cold Storages in the Fourth Five Year Plan at suitable Centres in the country.

As regards the recommendation regarding the restriction of the issue of indiscriminate licences to private parties for opening of Cold Storages, the State Governments have been requested to take appropriate action in the matter.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 11th October, 1966.)

Recommendation (S. No. 18; Para No. 36)

The Committee recommend that the scheme for research on cold storage and maintenance of seed stocks and cultures under healthy conditions should be expeditiously executed and the results disseminated to the organisations manning cold storage plants.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Government accept the recommendation. A detailed scheme for research on cold storage problems has been drawn by the Central Potato Research Institute and is under active consideration of the Government of India.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 19; Para No. 37)

The Committee welcome the idea of setting up an International Germ Plasm Bank and hope that Government would pursue the matter further.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Government accept the recommendation. The details will be worked out by the Director, Central Potato Research Institute in consultation with Dr. J. S. Niederhauser, Director, Inter-American Potato Improvement Project, Mexico who is expected to visit India during 1966.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 20; Para No. 38)

The Committee need hardly stress that the Reports of the Institute should be published regularly within six months of the close of the year, if they are to be of any practical use to the scientists and others interested in the subject.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The observations of the Committee have been noted and would be implemented.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

Recommendation (S. No. 21; Para No. 39)

The Committee urge that the Institute should display the same zeal in purveying scientific data to the farming community which the scientists do in their laboratories.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The recommendations have been noted. A scheme for extension of information and publicity unit at the Central Potato Research Institute has been proposed under the Fourth Five Year Plan and stress will be laid on publicity of Scientific data available at the Institute for the benefit of the farming community.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

CHAPTER III

**RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT
DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY**

NIL

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (S. No. 7; Para No. 18)

The Committee regret to note that Government have not given serious consideration to the suggestions made by the First Tuber Crops Committee (1959) and the Committee on Achievement Audit (1960) for introduction of diploma course on a permanent footing to train personnel of State Departments of Agriculture and Agricultural Extension Officers of Development Blocks which is one of the main functions of the Institute. The Committee recommend that decision on the scheme submitted by the Institute should be expedited.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Institute has already started courses for Ph.D. degree by arrangements with the Punjab University and Agricultural University, Ludhiana.

The question of starting a six months' diploma course for the nominees of the States has been referred for opinion to the Achievement Audit Committee set up in 1965 which is examining the work of the Institute and necessary decision in this regard will be taken by the Government of India on receipt of the recommendation of the Committee.

(I.C.A.R. O.M. No. 2-3/65-Instt. II, dated 29th March, 1966).

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee note that the First Tuber Crops Committee (1959) and the Committee on Achievement Audit (1960) had suggested

introduction of diploma course on a permanent footing at the CPRI. The Committee are not able to appreciate the reasons for Government again referring the subject to the Achievement Committee set up in 1965. The Committee hope that Government will take an early decision in the matter.

NEW DELHI;
November 30, 1966.

Agrahayana 9, 1888 (Saka).

ARUN CHANDRA GUHA,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

APPENDIX

Analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 79th Report of the Estimates Committee (Third Lok Sabha)

I. Total number of recommendations	21
II. Recommendations that have been accepted by Government (<i>vide</i> recommendations No. 1 to 6 and 8 to 21).	
Number	20
Percentage to total	95.2%
III. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply (<i>vide</i> recommendation No. nil)	
Number	Nil
Percentage to total	Nil
IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee (<i>vide</i> recommendation No. 7)	
Number	1
Percentage to total	4.8%