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Title : Need to set up food park and Agri-Export Zone in Theni district of Tamil Nadu.

SHRI R. PARTHIPAN (THENI): Theni District in Tamil Nadu is famous for the produce of mango, grapes, banana and spices. There is also a great potential for organic farming in Theni and Usilampatti region. Though there has been an action plan to ensure forward and backward linkage by adopting cluster approach under the National Horticulture Mission, there has not been any active support from the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. I request the Government to aid/support in setting up of Agri-Export Zone (AEZ) for production and cold-storage facilities for fruits such as mango, grapes etc.

The Government should also set up a Horticulture Institute at Usilampatti. Post Harvest Management facilities should also be set up for various fruits and vegetables in Theni district as part of the National Horticulture Mission.

Farmers have already organised themselves into grape growers Association, Mango Growers Federation etc. to take up organised cultivation and marketing of the produce. There is also great potential for processing of chilli, coriander, and tamarind, etc.

I, therefore, humbly urge the Government of India to set up linkage such as cold storage facilities, Food Park and Agri-Export Zones in this region for promotion of fruits and vegetables.