

PRESS RELEASE

Text of the D.O. letter dated 6.2.2020 of Thiru **Edappadi K.Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, addressed to **Shri Piyush Goyal**, Hon'ble Union Minister of Commerce and Industry.

Dear Shri Pyush Goyalji

I wish to bring to your kind notice the difficulties faced by the Dhal and Flour Mills, falling under the MSME sector, who had submitted a representation to me, in procuring Peas of various varieties for operating their Dhal and Flour mills in the State of Tamil Nadu.

Peas which are mainly used for preparation of traditional and region-specific snacks, are being cultivated in an area of 5.40 Lakh Hectares across India, with an annual estimated production of 54.22 Lakh Metric tonnes. Peas cultivation is taken up in cooler regions and hence grown only in a smaller extent in Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu, Peas, especially Green Peas are cultivated in an extent of 120 Ha with production of about 1,960 MT. The cultivation of Peas, mainly as yellow peas is confined to Northern, Central and North-Eastern States of our Country viz., Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Assam, etc., and are consumed mostly there itself.

Since there is a heavy demand for Peas, which is used for preparing the traditional snacks, in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry & Kerala, more than 1,000 micro, small and medium Dhal & Flour Mills are functioning in Tamil Nadu for processing the Peas and thereby providing direct employment opportunity to around 50,000 labourers and indirectly to over 65,000 persons. **The average requirement of Peas in Tamil Nadu would be around Two Lakh Metric Tonne, of which maximum of 10,000 Metric tonnes alone are being transported from the Northern States.**

Moreover, because of a heavy demand for Peas in other States, cost of Peas transported from the Northern states after fulfilling their internal demand is very high and can range upto Rs.60/- per Kg. Hence, Peas are being imported from countries such as Australia, Canada, Russia etc., through Thoothukudi Sea port located in Tamil Nadu at cheaper rates by the Dhal & Flour Mills functioning in Tamil Nadu.

In the meantime, the Director General of Foreign Trade has, on 18.12.2019, issued a Public Notification imposing a Restriction on the import of Peas to 1.5 Lakh MT for the entire country. Due to this restriction, the cost of Peas has drastically increased to over Rs.65/- per kg in Tamil Nadu. **This ban has detrimentally affected the Dhal and Flour Mills operating as MSME units in Tamil Nadu and thereby the livelihood of**

labourers and others who depend on this trade. This restriction has also increased the demand and due to its shortage, the cost of Green Peas in Tamil Nadu has gone up.

Hence, I request that the Union Government may kindly permit the import of Peas with HSN Codes 07131010 (Yellow Peas), 07131020 (Green Peas) and 07131090 (Other) through Thoothukudi Sea port for the welfare of the Dhal and Flour milling trade in Tamil Nadu as well as the neighbouring southern States. This lifting of restriction on import of Peas through Thoothukudi Sea port, will hardly affect the domestic market in Northern States, which are broadly self-sufficient with in-house production of Peas.

I strongly recommend this case and request your favourable action.

**Issued by: Director, Information and Public Relations, Chennai-9.
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