

**PRESS RELEASE**

Text of the D.O. letter dated 15.7.2019 of **Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu addressed to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

I wish to bring to your kind attention an important issue which is affecting the poultry farmers of Tamil Nadu.

As you know, Tamil Nadu is at the fore front of poultry production in the Country, with a poultry population of about 11.73 crore. Tamil Nadu produced 4 lakh Metric tonnes of poultry meat during 2017-18. Tamil Nadu has been witnessing a cumulative growth percentage of 23.5% in egg production and 30.53% in poultry meat production during the period 2013-14 to 2017-18. Commercial poultry rearing is practiced in the districts of Namakkal, Salem, Erode, Tiruppur and Coimbatore which have approximately 1,000 to 1,300 layer farms of various capacities that house about 3.5 to 4 crore layer birds. The number of broiler birds reared is of the order of 50 crore live birds / annum. The Government of Tamil Nadu is also actively encouraging rearing of Native chicken in a cluster based approach as a livelihood proposition which also addresses the nutritive requirements of the household. Tamil Nadu is the fourth largest producer of broilers and second largest egg producer in India.

Due to the above facts, the poultry feed requirement of Tamil Nadu is 1.38 million tonnes for broiler and 1.97 million tonnes for layer sector which is the largest in India followed by the States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Haryana & Punjab. **The primary ingredient in poultry feed is Maize.** Maize accounts for 47% of total poultry feed consumed. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh are high maize producing States in the Country.

Unfortunately, recently maize crops were affected by Fall Army Worm, a pest that has affected over 2.20 lakh hectares of maize crop out of the 3.55 lakh hectares sown in Tamil Nadu State in 2018-19. The pest had also affected maize crops in Andhra Pradesh, Telengana and Karnataka. Consequently, the production of Maize has been severely hampered leading to sky rocketing of prices of maize, thereby putting the poultry farmers to a great hardship in sourcing Maize for poultry feed.

To reign in the price of maize and prevent the rise in production cost, selling cost and purchasing cost of eggs and poultry meat, maize needs to be imported from maize producing countries. **The poultry farmers have requested permission to import Maize themselves at 0% import duty. I feel that in the present circumstances their request is justified.** I was informed that recently the Government of India had imported one lakh tonnes of Maize to be distributed for whole of India. Though this imported stock may last for a few days, it may not address the gap between supply and demand. If the situation continues, it is bound to affect the production and selling of eggs and poultry meat. There is a monthly requirement of 2 lakh metric tonnes of Maize for poultry feed use in Tamil Nadu. Thus, Tamil nadu requires 10 lakh Metric Tonnes for the next 5 months.

In this context, **Poultry Farmers themselves may be permitted to import Maize to tide over the present crisis of non-availability of Maize. The import duty levied for such imports may also be waived as a special case.**

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