

IV

Agricultural Marketing

8.72 Promotion of standardization and grading of agricultural products is the main function under institutionalised agricultural marketing. An effective quality control mechanism is essential for improving the marketability of products within and outside the country. The Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Act, 1937 was the first legislation enacted by the Central Government to formulate standards and carry out grading and marking of agricultural and allied commodities. The articles included in the Schedule are fruits and vegetables, dairy and poultry products, foodgrains and allied products, pulses, oilseeds, oils and cakes, essential oils, fibres, spices and condiments, forest produce, edible nuts, tobacco, tea, coffee, honey, wheat, atta, besan, suji and maida, raw meat etc. The Act also empowers the Central Government to include additional commodities/products in the schedule for enforcement of grade standards and implementing grading and quality control. The

Act specifically empowers the Government to:

- (i) fix grade designations indicating the quality of the produce;
- (ii) define the quality indicated by each grade designation;
- (iii) specify the grade designation mark to represent particular grade designation;
- (iv) specify the manner in which the article could be packed, sealed and marked;
- (v) authorize a person or a body to use the grade designation marks under prescribed conditions.

8.73 So far Agmark standards have been framed and notified in respect of 163 commodities which include food-grains, pulses, fruits and vegetables, spices, edible nuts, oil seeds, vegetable oils and fats, fibres, forest products, livestock, dairy and poultry products. At present, 22 Regional Agmark Laboratories are operating under the Apex Central Agmark Laboratories, Nagpur. These laboratories also provide training to chemists of the laboratories of the States/UTs.