

## **Lesson-24 Storage of perishable products**

### **24.1 Introduction**

Perishable food includes fruits and vegetables, fresh meat, foods purchased from chill cabinets, freshly cooked food stored to be used later. It is usually stored in a refrigerator. Some fresh fruits and vegetables, however, will store quite well out of the refrigerator as long as they are stored in a cool place.

### **24.2 Why storage?**

Storage is an important marketing function involving holding and preserving foods from the time they are produced until they are needed for consumption.

- The storage of foods, therefore, from the time of production to the time of consumption, ensures a continuous flow of foods in the market.
- Storage protects the quality of perishable and semi-perishable products from deterioration.
- Some of the farm products, have a seasonal demand. To cope with this demand, production on a continuous basis and storage become necessary.
- It helps in the stabilization of prices by adjusting demand and supply.
- Storage is necessary for some period for performance of other marketing functions.
- Storage provides employment and income through price advantages.

### **24.3 How to store?**

#### **1) Refrigeration:**

Refrigeration can substantially reduce the rate at which food will deteriorate. Low temperatures slow down the growth of microorganisms and the rate of chemical (including enzymatic) changes in food. These are two of the main causes of food spoilage.

#### **2) Cartons:**

When sending perishable goods, small Thermochron data loggers can be put into strategically chosen boxes clearly marked with Alert Tape. The Thermochrons are easy to return to shipper if they are put in fobs tied to tags with return address. And they are not so expensive that it would be a disaster to lose one.

#### **3) Cold Storage:**

Availability of proper cold storages are important for preserving perishable commodities like milk, meat, eggs, vegetables, fruits, ornamental flowers and other floricultural goods. These cold storages give perishable food items a longer shelf life by preventing them from rotting due to humidity, high temperature and micro-organisms. This results in a substantial decrease in loss due to spoilage.

#### **4) Warehouse:**

Three public sector agencies are involved in building large-scale storage and warehousing capacities in the country. These are as follows

**a. Food Corporation of India (FCI)**

The FCI has the largest agricultural warehousing systems with over 30.52 million tonnes of storage capacity in over 1820 godowns located all over India. This includes owned as well as hired warehouses.

**b. Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC)**

The CWC was founded in 1957 to provide logistics support to the agricultural sector. Currently, it operates around 465 warehouses across the country with a storage capacity of 10.80 million tonnes. Other than storage and handling, CWC also offers services such as disinfections, pest control, fumigation, clearing and forwarding, handling and transportation, procurement and distribution.

**c. State Warehousing Corporations (SWCs)**

State Warehousing Corporations exist in 17 States to provide storage facilities and pest control services for various agricultural commodities belonging to farmers of that State. These warehouses work under different Warehousing Acts enacted by the respective State Governments.

While the FCI uses its warehouses mainly for storing food grains, the storage capacities with CWC and SWCs are used for the storage of food grains as well as other items.

**Uses of Warehouses:**

- Scientific storage of produce from the vagaries of weather, rodents, insects and pests. They prevent quality and quantity losses.
- Meeting the financial needs of people who store the produce by providing value for the goods stored.
- Regulating price levels by regulating the supply of goods in the markets. More goods from the buffer are released when supplies are less and less is released when supplies are more in the markets.
- Offering market intelligence in the form of price, supply and demand information so that market users may develop selling and buying strategies.

**References:**

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