

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO B/134**

**B/134      The Honourable Second Member for Quartier Militaire and Moka (Mr. Dayal)**

*To ask Dr the Honourable Minister of Agro Industry and Fisheries: -*

**Whether, in regard to the planters of Côte d'Or, he is aware of the loss they have incurred in respect of the poor quality of the potato seeds, and if so, will be state if any compensation will be paid to them, indicating when?**

**REPLY**

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I am aware of the problem raised by the Hon. Member as I have personally met the planters concerned in his presence on several occasions to find an acceptable solution.

2. In my reply to PQ B/915, I indicated that a committee, under the chairmanship of the Agricultural Marketing Board (AMB) and comprising representatives from Agricultural Research & Extension Unit (AREU), Mauritius Sugar Industry Research Institute (MSIRI), Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd. (DBM) and Small Planters Welfare Fund (SPWF) would look into the issue and make recommendations.

3. The Committee concluded that 16 planters were mostly affected and estimated the value of losses incurred at Rs 1,626,323. As it was not established that the problem was linked to the quality of potato seeds, the Committee recommended the grant of a relief of 50% of the losses, amounting to Rs 813,162 to these planters as a support measure.

3. My Ministry and the AMB agreed to share the amount and cheques were remitted to the affected planters on Friday last.

4. Furthermore, as additional support, the DBM Ltd. has exceptionally rescheduled the loans to six planters who had not yet effected their repayments for a period of 2 years to be repayable by half yearly instalments at the concessionary interest rate of 9% per annum.

5. Additionally, the Board of the SPWF has agreed to provide to the 16 affected planters a subsidy to the tune of 50% on the premium payable per arpent up to a maximum level of cover of 50% and for a maximum acreage of 5 A per planter.