

Indigenous variety of Bt. Cotton seed

3682. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Institute for Cotton Research has developed an indigenous variety of Bt. Cotton;

(b) if so, the results relating to the quantum and quality of cotton produced with this indigenous variety; and

(c) the steps taken to promote the use of this new variety of Bt. Cotton seeds this season?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):
(a) Yes, Sir. The 'BN Bt' variety was developed by the University of Agricultural Sciences (US), Dharwad, the Central Institute of Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur and the National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology (NRCPB), New Delhi.

(b) In the multilocation trials on BN Bt. Cotton variety conducted by State Agricultural Universities and CICR, Nagpur showed that the variety can yield up to 4-6 quintals per acre seed cotton under rainfed conditions. This variety has fibre quality of medium staple length and good ginning out-turn.

(c) A total of 11,000 packets of 2kg each of BN Bt. seed have been made available to farmers through the state seed corporations in the States of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat for sowing in 2009-2010 crop season.

Soil testing laboratories in the country

†3683. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has prepared any plan to provide information to each farmer of the country regarding the quality of soil of his farming land;

(b) if so, the plan thereof;

(c) whether laboratories for testing the soil of farmers' land are established in each district of the country; and

(d) if so, the facts in this regard and daily testing capacity of each laboratory?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):
(a) to (d) The soil samples of farmer's fields are tested by 686 soil testing laboratories (STLs)

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

all over the country with total analyzing capacity of 69.68 lakh soil samples per annum in 2007-08. Based on such tests, soil health cards are also issued to farmers by State Governments.

Under the 'National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility' launched during 2008-09, it is planned to set up 500 new STLs and 250 mobile STLs during Eleventh Five Year Plan to enable coverage of all districts of the country. The annual analyzing capacity of each STL is 10,000 samples and that of each mobile STL is, 5,000 samples, generally.

Improvement in the breed of Indian cows and buffaloes

†3684. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that animal husbandry could be made profitable occupation for the farmers of the country;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that possibility has been explored for improvement in Indian breed of cows and buffaloes in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's plan to enhance improved breed of animals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):

(a) In order to make milk production more profitable and remunerative to small and marginal farmers, the Government is implementing comprehensive centrally sponsored scheme "National Project for Cattle and Buffalo Breeding" (NPCBB) since October, 2000 over a period of ten years, in two phases each of five years duration, NPCBB envisages genetic up gradation of bovine population. For promoting Sheep and Goat as a viable economic activity, a new scheme, "Integrated development of small ruminants and rabbits" with an outlay of Rs.134.825 crore has been sanctioned for implementation during Eleventh Plan period.

(b) to (d) It has a focus on development and conservation of indigenous breeds. During Phase-I of the project an amount of Rs.58 crore has been released exclusively for development and conservation of indigenous breeds. An amount of Rs.356.78 crore has been exclusively earmarked for development and conservation of indigenous breeds under Phase-II of NPCBB. Government is also implementing three central sector schemes, namely Central Cattle Breeding Farms (CCBFs), Central Frozen Semen Production and Training Institute (CFSP&TI) and Central Herd Registration Scheme (CHRS) for production of genetically superior breed of bull calves, good quality frozen semen and identification of location of superior germplasm of cattle and buffaloes to meet the requirement of bulls and frozen semen of some of the important indigenous breeds in the country.

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