

Long term measures for foodgrains Production

384. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:

SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps as suggested by the ICAR and also other measures taken to reduce the overall impact of the current drought on India's stocks of food grains and other agricultural products;

(b) what has been their outcome and also the effect on likely food-grains imports; and

(c) what long term measures are being considered in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARI KRISHNA SHASTRI): (a) and (b) To reduce the overall impact of the current drought on India's stocks of food-grains and other agricultural products, ICAR and other line departments have suggested short and long term strategies. Some of the important suggestions are as follows:

AGRICULTURE

1. Crop production practices for important rabi crops such as wheat, rice, barley, pulses and oilseeds both under irrigated and rainfed situations.

2. Identification of important crops & areas under assured growing conditions for augmenting the seed supply and to meet future seed requirement.

3. Package of practices for promising fruit crops which can tolerate drought conditions.

4. FODDER

(i) Specific treatment of about 10.5 million tonnes of paddy

straw available in Punjab & Haryana and sizeable quantity of sugarcane bagasse for utilising as feed for livestock after treatment.

(ii) Intensive production of fodder crops in assured/limited water supply situations.

Long term measures include:

(iii) Development of silvi-pasture and grazing lands.

(iv) Growing of fodder shrubs and trees in agro-forestry, social-forestry and other forestry programmes.

(v) Steps to increase the productivity of natural pastures through improved management;

(vi) Growing of perennial fast growing grasses on bunds, channels and fields.

5. The Department of Agriculture has taken up National Watershed Development Programme in unirrigated arable lands in the country mostly falling in the rainfall range of 500-1125 mm to stabilise and increase crop yields; to augment the fruit, fodder and fuel supply and, to conserve soil and water resources.

ANIMAL HEALTH

Practices for controlling pests and diseases of livestock have been suggested.

(b) Targets of rabi production have been stepped to 76.0 million tones. To meet the increased targets in food production suitable crop production technologies/strategies have been suggested. As on time, the prospects of current rabi production appear to be better than the previous rabi season.