

[27 April, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

Rajouri in J & K, whose agricultural land has been rendered unfit for agricultural purpose;

- (b) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Free inputs and services to farmers under extension system

2737. DR.ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI:
SHRI VIJAY J.DARDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a fundamental limitation in the current extension system affecting the crop growing relates to distribution of free inputs and services to farmers;

(b) if so, whether this does not result in dependency on Government and mostly farmers to look to extension for a "hand out" rather than a reliable source of technology and information; and

(c) what steps have been taken to streamline the system so that small and marginal farms get full information preferably in their mother tongue and thus free inputs and services become easily available to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Agricultural research is largely in the Governmental sector. Typical extension activities include information dissemination, various forms of research-extension-farmer interactions, training and demonstration. Most of these are in the nature of services and only demonstration has an element of inputs. So far, the Government has been providing these services largely free. Any change in the approach will also require consideration of the capacity of farmers to pay for such services.

(c) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation have launched several schemes/initiatives to support State's efforts for providing improved extension services to farmers. These include:

- (i) "Support to State Extension Programme for Extension Reforms" scheme based on Agriculture Technology Management Agency

(ATMA) model. It promotes decentralized and farmer friendly extension system.

- (ii) "Mass Media Support to Agriculture Extension" scheme, which aims to utilize infrastructure of Doordarshan and All India Radio for disseminating information to farmers preferably in the regional language.
- (iii) Kisan Call Centre initiative. It aims to provide information to farmers through toll free telephone lines preferably in the regional language.
- (iv) "Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres" scheme. It promotes setting up of agri-ventures by agricultural graduates for providing free-based extension and other services to farmers.

National Agriculture Technology Project

2738. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI VIJAY J.DARDA;

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a World Bank project "National Agriculture Technology Project" was set up in 1998 to support long-term objectives of promoting comprehensive and sustained agricultural growth and rural development; and

(b) if so, whether NATP has been completed and what are its recommendations relating to strengthening the research capacity and management systems of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research to address poverty and rural-oriented sustainability of agricultural growth?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The NATP was completed in June, 2005 and its main recommendations are, besides crops, give adequate focus on livestock, fishery, marketing, post-harvest processing and policy issues, widely spread NATP technologies through extension, train the farmers as well as district/block level extension staff in new technologies to achieve greater impact, develop international partnership in the frontier areas of agricultural science, foster public-private sector partnership in technology generation and dissemination, improve the effectiveness and financial sustainability of the technology dissemination