

(d) whether Government has approached Department of Bio-Technology to develop best quality seeds; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) No, Sir. This Department has not received any complaint about huge financial losses due to bad quality of seeds supplied to the farmers. Moreover, adequate provisions are available under the Seeds Act, 1966, the Seed Rules, 1968 and the Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 to empower the State Governments to check the sale of fake/inferior/spurious seeds.

(c) The ICAR Institutes and State Agricultural Universities regularly conduct studies with latest scientific techniques for the development of new varieties of different crops. The new varieties are evaluated in different agro-climatic conditions over the years for abiotic and biotic stresses, nutritional value and yield potential before being recommended for cultivation to the farmers through gazette notification after the approval of the Central Seed Committee constituted under the Seeds Act, 1966.

(d) and (e) No specific request has been made by this Department to the Department of Bio-Technology to develop the best quality seeds. However, ICAR and State Agricultural Universities are engaged in biotech research for the development of new varieties in different crops.

**Rate of interest charged from farmers for
loan for agriculture purposes**

1868. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the rates of interest charged from farmers who have taken loans from banks and co-operative credit institutions;

(b) whether Government proposes to reduce the rate of interest to four per cent or less for farmers who purchase tractors, seeds and other agricultural equipments;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether existing information collection system collects and maintains data regarding amount of loans taken by farmers for agriculture purposes from individuals and other private institutions; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) to (c) Effective from Kharif 2006-07, farmers are receiving loans up to a principal amount of Rs.3 lakh for meeting their short term production credit requirements for purchase of seeds and other inputs including operating cost for tractors and other agricultural equipments at the rate of interest of 7 per cent per annum. Government is providing interest subvention to the banks on their own involvement of funds and on refinance support from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to ensure that farmers receive short term crop loan at the rate of interest of 7 per cent. During 2009-10, Government provided additional 1% interest subvention as incentive to those farmers who repaid their short term crop loans as per schedule. Government has raised the additional interest subvention for timely repayment of crop loans from 1% to 2% in the year 2010-11 and further to 3% in the year 2011-12 thereby enabling the prompt repaying farmers getting crop loans effectively at 4% interest.

(d) and (e) The report of the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) on the "Indebtedness of Farmer Households" (NSSO report 498 of NSS 59th Round) has estimated the magnitude of farmer's indebtedness from individuals and other private institutions. As per the survey report, the most important source of loan in terms of percentage of outstanding loan amount was banks (36%), followed by moneylenders (26%).

Decrease in bovine of Indian breed

†1869. SHRI MEGHRAJ JAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of bovine of Indian breed in the country, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (b) whether it is a fact that number of bovine of Indian breed is continuously decreasing; and
- (c) if so, the concrete steps being taken by Government to conserve cows of the Indian breed and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHARAN DAS MAHANT): (a) The number of bovine of Indian breed in the country as per the 18th Livestock Census (2007) is 271.7 million. A statement on State-wise number of bovine of Indian breed is given in statement (See below).

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.