

Use of harmful pesticides in agricultural fields

2502. SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether pesticides that are extremely harmful for human beings are widely used in farms across the country;

(b) the methods for checking extensive use of harmful pesticides in agricultural fields;

(c) whether any scientific study has been conducted for finding out the amount of pesticides in fruits, vegetables and other crops; and

(d) whether any scientific system is prevalent as a regular mechanism to check vegetables, fruits and other crops that are having contents of harmful pesticides and chemicals, used at the fields or at storages and coming in the market for daily consumption of the general public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) No, Sir. There is no report that harmful pesticides are being used in farms across the country. Use of pesticides in the country is regulated under the Insecticides Act, 1968. Pesticides are permitted for use after verifying claim of efficacy and safety to human beings and animals and are to be used as per the label claims. Central and state Government functionaries impart extensive training to the farming community in the use of pesticides to ensure that only the approved pesticides are used against target pests on respective crops.

(c) and (d) Government of India is implementing a Central Sector Scheme "Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National Level" under which samples of various food commodities including vegetables and fruits are analyzed for the presence of pesticide residues. Food Safety and Standard Authority of India analyzes samples of food items including fruits and vegetables for the quality and safety regularly.

Use of urine in agriculture

2503. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of a report published in a prominent English Daily on 27th March, 2012, Chennai Edition, according to which use of urine as a fertilizer can significantly reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and increase agricultural production;

(b) if so, the comments of Government in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken for further research in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Preliminary study conducted by National Research Centre for Banana, Tiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu has revealed that urine is a source of plant nutrients particularly, nitrogen and its application as liquid manure enhances banana yield and reduces use of chemical fertilizers. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is conducting further studies to validate results.

Productivity of BT. Cotton

2504. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that the productivity of Bt. Cotton is now projected to decline and there are also signs of diminishing returns;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) since when Bt. Cotton variety has been introduced in the country;
- (d) the production of cotton since then; and
- (e) the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) and (b) Cotton productivity over the past decade (2002-2011), after the introduction of Bt. cotton, averaged at 472 kg/hectare, as compared to an average of 302 kg/ha during the years 1992-2001, prior to the introduction of Bt cotton. Integrated nutrient management strategies besides integrated pest management strategies are continuously advocated in order to sustain the higher yields of Bt. cotton. Soil health management options are also being given due importance.

(c) “Bt. Cotton hybrids containing cry 1AC gene (MON 531) event of M/s Monsanto was the first transgenic crop released in India in April 2002 with the approval of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), constituted by Ministry of Environment and Forests under Rules 1989 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. As of date only Bt. cotton hybrids are under commercial cultivation and no Bt. Cotton variety is commercially cultivated.

- (d) Production of cotton since then (2002-03 to 2011-12) is as under:-

Year	Production in lakh/ bales
2002-03	86.24
2003-04	137.29
2004-05	164.29