

In order to make agriculture a profitable venture, the Government of India has launched several schemes to increase investments in agriculture sector, for accelerating agricultural growth and to raise farm incomes, such as, the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Development and Strengthening of Infrastructure facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seed, National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM), Gramin Bhandaran Yojana etc.

**Decline in fertility of land due to cultivation of Bt. cotton**

†3244. DR. VIJAYLAXMI SADHO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bt. cotton decreases the fertility of soil and increases the production cost; and

(b) if so, the facts in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Bt. cotton cultivation does not decrease the fertility of soil as integrated nutrient management strategies are advocated for long term sustainability of cotton production system. Bt. cotton is effective in controlling dreaded bollworm pest and reduces the need for use of chemical insecticides as compared to conventional cotton varieties and hybrids. Bt. cotton hybrids retain more number of bolls leading to better yield realisation.

**Special MSPs in view of severe drought condition**

3245. SHRI ARVIND KUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps taken so far by the Central Government to cope with the drought situation in the country are insufficient;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government would announce Special MSPs for current season in view of severe drought condition in the country and pitiable financial condition of farmers; and

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

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN): (a) and (b) Government has taken several measures to address any situation arising due to deficiency in monsoon rainfall during Kharif-2014.

Central Research Institute of Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), in collaboration with State Agricultural Universities has prepared contingency plans for 551 districts for implementing location specific interventions to sustain agriculture production in the eventuality of weak monsoon/deficient rainfall.

States have been advised to keep asides 10% of funds available under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and other schemes for undertaking appropriate interventions to mitigate any situation arising out of deficient rainfall and to ensure availability of short duration and drought tolerant varieties of seeds so as to be in a position to supply them to farmers in case such a need arises.

States have been requested to construct water harvesting structures, restore irrigation infrastructure by desilting canals; energising tubewells, replacing/repairing faulty pumps and arranging power to meet irrigation needs.

Decisions have also been taken for introduction of diesel subsidy scheme, enhancement of seed subsidy, waiver of import duty on oil cakes to increase availability of feed ingredients, implementation of fodder development scheme and introducing interventions on perennial horticulture crops to mitigate any eventual drought and rainfall deficit situation in the country.

(c) and (d) Government has already announced the Price Policy for current season/ enhancing Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for majority of kharif crops of 2014-15. The details are given in Statement (*See below*).

#### **Statement**

*Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for year 2014-2015 (As on 25.06.2014)*

(₹ per quintal)

Sl. No.	Commodity	Variety	Minimum Support Prices
<b>Kharif Crops</b>			
1.	Paddy	Common	1360
		Grade A	1400

Sl. No.	Commodity	Variety	Minimum Support Prices
2.	Jowar	Hybrid	1530
		Maldandi	1550
3.	Bajra		1250
4.	Maize		1310
5.	Ragi		1550
6.	Arhar (Tur)		4350
7.	Moong		4600
8.	Urad		4350
9.	Cotton	Medium Staple	3750
		Long Staple	4050
10.	Groundnut in shell		4000
11.	Sunflower seed		3850
12.	Soyabean	Black	2500
		Yellow	2560
13.	Sesamum		4600
14.	Nigerseed		3600
<b>Other Crops</b>			
15.	Jute		2400
16.	Sugarcane		220.00

**Compensation under NCIP**

3246. SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of farmers covered under the National Crop Insurance Programme (NCIP), State/Union Territory-wise;

(b) whether Government has made any assessment of the loss suffered and compensation to be paid in various States in regard to NCIP;

(c) if so, the details thereof along with the States which have furnished claims for compensation under NCIP, State/Union Territory-wise; and