

- There is a need to prioritize and reorient our research programmes relating to transgenic research in crops, animal and fisheries, in order to maximize benefits from limited resources in areas of relevance to food, livelihood and ecological security.
- There are regions in India which represent either primary or secondary centers of genetic diversity in major crops like rice. These areas should be conserved for posterity as "Agro-biodiversity Sanctuaries". A Technical Committee may be constituted by ICAR, NBPGR, DBT, Deptt. of Agriculture and Ministry of Environment and Forests (Botanical, Zoological and Forest Surveys of India) to develop guidelines for earmarking areas as Agro-biodiversity Sanctuaries and Organic Farming zones.
- At least one Ag-Biotech Park on the model of the one developed by ICRISAT in Hyderabad may established in every State in collaboration with NABARD.
- A special insurance scheme for GM crops should be devised and introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture. There is a need to explore the possibility of the seed company selling GM seeds providing farmers with an insurance cover, so that they may get some relief if crops fail.
- The Task Force has suggested provision of Rs. 1200 crores of additional funds during Tenth Plan for giving effect to its recommendations-Rs. 300 crores for capacity building, Rs. 200 crores for Venture Capital, Rs. 150 crores for setting of NBRA, Rs. 400 crores to upgrade research infrastructure in ICAR and Animal Husbandary and Dairying and Rs. 150 crores for establishing Ag-biotech Parks.

Investment in agriculture

81. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is decline in public investment in agriculture; and

(b) if so, the action taken for more investment to revive growth in agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
(SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) According to the figures compiled by the

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RAJYA SABHA

Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), Gross Capital Formation (GCF) in agriculture, including allied sectors, in public sector at 1993-94 prices increased from Rs. 4444 crore in 1998-99 to Rs. 4756 crore in 1999-2000. Though GCF declined to Rs. 4435 crore in 2000-01, it increased to Rs. 4635 crore and Rs. 4892 crore in 2001-02 and 2002-03 respectively.

(b) GCF in the public sector is mainly due to irrigation projects undertaken by Departmental Commercial Undertakings. Accordingly, creation of additional irrigational facilities has been identified as thrust area for priority attention.

Availability of seeds

82. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the action taken to provide reliable and quality seeds to farmers to ensure that their production do not fall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): A provision of making available 55.89 lakh quintals of reliable and quality seeds to the farmers have been made during Kharif 2004, against a requirement of 49.98 lakh quintals of seeds projected by the State Governments.

Sufficient number of Seed Inspectors have been notified by various State Governments under the Seeds Act, 1966 and Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 for enforcement of the Seeds Act, 1966, Seeds Rules, 1968 and Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 with the help of the infrastructure of sufficient number of Seed Testing Laboratories and Seed Certification Agencies to effect quality control measures with a view to provide reliable and quality seeds to farmers. National Seed Corporation, State Farms Corporation of India, Limited and 13 State Seeds Corporation are also engaged in providing quality seeds to the farmers.

Special steps for increasing paddy production

†83. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take any special steps to increase paddy production in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when such steps would be taken?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.