

Development of rice intensification system

2949. SHRIRAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a system of rice intensification has recently been developed in which less water is consumed by crop and more production is ensured, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the action Government proposes to take to introduce the system in Maharashtra and other rice producing States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) Yes, Sir. The system of rice intensification (SRI) technique has potential to enhance rice yield ranging from 36-49% with about 22-35% less water than conventional transplanted rice.

(b) The Government under National Food Security Mission (NFSM) is popularizing SRI in different rice growing states of the country. Maharashtra State is also being covered under NFSM-Rice Programme. Assistance of ₹7500/- per hectare is given to the farmers for organizing cluster demonstration on SRI. SRI is also being promoted under the scheme Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI) in eastern India.

Impact of drought on cotton production

2950. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that drought in cotton growing areas has deeply affected cotton production this season all over the country;

(b) if so, the expected cotton production this year, with figures for last three fiscal years;

(c) the reasons for Government being unable to make cotton cultivation immune to drought generally;

(d) the economic status of cotton growing farmers in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana due to drought; and

(e) the steps proposed to protect cotton growing farmers from drought in future and also from volatile cotton prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA): (a) and (b) As per India Meteorological Department

(IMD), rainfall has been recorded 3 % higher against normal for the period from 1/6/2016 to 8/8/2016 in the country. The drought, so far, have not affected cotton crop in major cotton growing states in kharif 2016. The Cotton crop is in juvenile to flowering stage and 1st advance estimates of production are issued in September, therefore, it is too early to predict production of cotton in 2016-17. The Cotton production during last 3 years is as under-

(Production in lakh bales of 170 kg each)

Year	Production
2013-14	359.02
2014-15	348.05
2015-16*	301.47

*4th Advance Estimates

(c) About 64% cotton is grown in rainfed area in the country. In case of early withdrawal of monsoon, the crop is affected due to terminal stress particularly in shallow soils. The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare conduct demonstrations on Integrated Crop Management (ICM) on various technologies including, crop management and water management etc. to mitigate the impact of drought through Indian Council of Agricultural Research/State Department of Agriculture. The State Department of Agriculture also advocate for use of water saving devices like drip irrigation system in cotton for optimum use of irrigation water.

(d) and (e) In view of low yield of cotton in drought prone areas, Government of Telangana is promoting diversification of cotton towards pulses and soybean particularly in red soils. Besides, the State Government is also promoting farm pond technology and life saving irrigation at the times of prolonged dry spells and introduction of micro irrigation in cotton wherever feasible. The Department of Agriculture, Andhra Pradesh is also encouraging to grow pulses and oilseeds in light and chalka soils where productivity of cotton is low. To mitigate the impact of drought, the State Government is advocating technologies viz., *insitu* moisture conservation, formulation of water conservation bunds, formulation of contour trenches, construction of farm ponds, use of micro irrigation system.

For better price realization in Telangana, a specialized electronic trading platform called "Unified Market Platform" (UMP) has been introduced which enables automated price discovery mechanisms and post auction process.

The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) is closely monitoring the domestic price situation. With a view to pass on benefit of Minimum Support Price (MSP) and to ensure

remunerative price to a large section of cotton farmers, the Government of India has nominated the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) as nodal agency to undertake Minimum Support Price (MSP) operation in all cotton growing States in the event when prices of seed cotton (kapas) touch the MSP level to purchase entire quantity of kapas (FAQ grade) offered by the cotton farmers in various Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) market yards at MSP rates.

Impact of drought on rabi crops

2951. SHRI A. U. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of districts that have been noted as drought affected, particularly in Odisha;
- (b) whether Government has evaluated the effect of drought on rabi sowing and on the agricultural growth rate, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) whether Central Government has extended/plans to extend central assistance to State Governments to combat the drought situation, if so, the details thereof, time-line, identified States and quantum of funds, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA): (a) As reported by the States, during the year 2015-16, 279 districts have been affected by drought including 27 districts of Odisha. No memorandum has been received from States for drought occurring in the year 2016-17.

(b) and (c) Rabi area coverage as per the 4th Advance Estimates for 2015-16 is 611.79 lakh hectare. During 2014-15 the coverage has been 629.234 lakh hectare. As per 4th Advance Estimate total production of foodgrains (Kharif+Rabi) during 2015-16 has been estimated at 252.22 million tonnes as compared to foodgrain production of 252.02 million tonnes estimated for 2014-15.

The State Government is primarily responsible for taking necessary relief measures in the wake of natural calamities including drought. For undertaking relief measures, funds are available with the State Government in the form of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). Additional financial assistance, over and above SDRF, is considered from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for natural calamities of severe nature and is approved on the basis of Memorandum received from State Government, in accordance with established procedure. Details of funds approved from NDRF in the wake of drought, during the year 2015-16, is given in the statement (*See below*).

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has prepared District Agricultural Contingency Plans (DACP) to tackle any eventuality in agriculture sector. These plans