

Development of floriculture

2976. SARDAR BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the various steps taken by Government to improve floriculture in the country;
- (b) the expected average yield per-acre and the total area under cultivation for flower farming;
- (c) the steps taken by Government to ensure good quality Germ Plasm and tissue culture facility at affordable rates;
- (d) whether Government is planning to provide adequate marketing facility and sophisticated cold storage space for floriculture; and
- (e) whether Government is also planning to reduce import duty on all kinds of floriculture farming related material and equipment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India under the centrally sponsored scheme, Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), provides financial assistance for holistic development of horticulture including floriculture. The various development programmes undertaken under MIDH are production of planting materials, area expansion, promotion of Integrated Pest Management/Integrated Nutrient Management, protected cultivation, promotion of organic farming, horticulture mechanization, creation of water resources, post-harvest management, strengthening tissue culture laboratories, development of market yards, human resource development etc. Floriculture farmers are provided assistance @ 40% of the cost ranging from ₹40,000 per ha. to ₹1.50 lakh per ha. limited to 2 ha. per beneficiary. Besides, the technological support is provided by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, which has established a full-fledged Directorate of Floricultural Research at Pune to address the issues specific to floriculture research.

(b) The productivity of flowers varies from variety to variety. However, the average yield of flowers per acre is estimated at 3.48 tonnes. The total area covered under floriculture is 248300 ha. and the total production is 2158850 tonnes.

(c) Considerable quantity of germplasm of floriculture crops has been collected and being maintained at 21 All India Coordinated Research Project Centres (AICRP) of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) spread across the country. Besides, State Agricultural Universities, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) organizations like National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI), Institute of Himalayan

Bioresource Technology (IHBT) and various botanical gardens in different parts of country also maintain the germplasm of floriculture crops. The plant tissue culture laboratories in the State Department of Horticulture ensure the development of quality planting material including floricultural crops under assistance from MIDH.

(d) Government has been supporting all relevant infrastructures for integrated cold-chain development, which ensures market access for all horticulture produce including floriculture sector. The MIDH provides assistance ranging from 25 to 55% for establishment of market infrastructure like terminal markets, whole sale markets, rural and retail markets. Assistance is given for construction of cold storages, on-farm pack houses, mobile pre-cooling units, staging cold rooms, refrigerated vans etc. for which subsidy is extended by 35 to 50%.

(e) No. At present, this Department does not have any proposal to reduce the import duty of floriculture farming related material and equipment.

Whitefly attack on cotton crops in Punjab and Haryana

2977. SARDAR BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that cotton cultivation area in Punjab and Haryana has shrunk by 27 per cent this year;

(b) whether Government is also aware that framers have faced huge losses due to whitefly attack this year; and

(c) if so, whether Government is planning to give assistance to farmers in the form of subsidised pesticides and better MSP to reduce their accumulated losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA): (a) As per latest reports on sowing for the current year received from State Governments and 4th Advance Estimates for 2015-16, area coverage under cotton in Punjab during the current year is lower by 24.48% as compared to its area during the last year. In Haryana, the area coverage under cotton this year is lower by about 13.27% as compared to cotton area in the State during the last year.

(b) As per information received from State Government of Punjab, this year only a marginal area in Fazilka district of the State has been affected by whitefly above the Economic Threshold Limits (ETL). Though minor attacks have been reported from some isolated areas, the situation is manageable and there are no reports of any significant loss due to whitefly.