

total production of foodgrains in the country during 2015-16 is estimated at 252.22 million tonnes which is marginally higher than their estimated production of 252.02 million tonnes for the agricultural year 2014-15.

### **Policy on Herbicide Tolerant crops**

2983. SHRI K.K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Swaminathan Task Force on Applications of Agricultural Biotechnology had recommended against the use of Herbicide Tolerant (HT) crops in the country and that Government had adopted the recommendations in 2004; and

(b) if so, whether the Ministry has adopted a policy on such HT crops as of now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) The Swaminathan Task Force on Application of Agricultural Biotechnology has not recommended against use of Herbicide Tolerant crops. It has however, indicated that breeding for Herbicide Tolerant crops may have low priority in several parts of India where there are large numbers of landless labour families. It also states that the priorities will have to be determined both on the basis of agro-climatic and socio-economic factors, region by region. Central Government accepted the report of Biotechnology Task Force in 2004.

(b) There is no direct policy stated in the Task Force Report on the issue of Herbicide Tolerant (HT) crops.

### **Measures to improve livelihood of small land holding farmers**

†2984. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of big, medium and small farmers, category-wise, in the country in terms of agricultural acreage; and

(b) the number of farmers having less than two hectares of land or small land holding and the measures taken to ensure livelihood of such farmers and agricultural labourers and the number of beneficiaries in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA): (a) According to the latest Agriculture

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.