

is no formal MoU signed between Government and ISRO. However, there is collaboration between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Government for use of Geospatial Technology in Agriculture Sector, including Crop Forecasting, Drought Assessment, Horticultural Inventory and Development, Technology for Crop Insurance.

ISRO has supported Government in the establishment of Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre (MNCFC) as an Attached Office under Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers, in form of human resources and technology transfer.

Geospatial technology is being used for various applications in agriculture such as crop damage assessment, crop condition monitoring, yield estimation, crop cutting experiment planning, horticultural development, identification of rice fallow areas etc. These technologies are useful and beneficial for adopting appropriate and suitable interventions by farmers for improving their crop productivity.

Revamping the mechanism for MSP

561. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any proposal to revamp the current mechanism of MSP declaration of crops;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the proposed key changes to make this mechanism more farmer friendly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) to (c) Government fixes Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the major agricultural produce on the recommendation of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), views of the State Governments, concerned Central Ministries/Departments and other relevant factors. While formulating its recommendations on price policy, CACP considers various important factors that include cost of cultivation, trends in market prices, demand and supply situation, effect on general price level, effect on cost of living etc. CACP also holds consultation with all the stakeholders including farmers before formulating its recommendations.

Methodology for estimating the cost of production is reviewed from time to time. Government has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of the then Director, National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy (NCAP) in 2013, to examine the methodological issues in fixing Minimum Support Prices. One of

the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Committee was to examine the cost concepts for the purpose of fixing Minimum Support Prices and suggest various factors for improvement so as to make more realistic. The report has been submitted and is under consideration of the Government.

Implementation of NHM

562. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of districts covered under the National Horticulture Mission (NHM) across the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to expand the NHM to noncovered districts as well, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government has received a representation from the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in this regard, if so, the action taken by Central Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) A total of three hundred and eighty four (384) districts under National Horticulture Mission (NHM) are covered in 23 States/UTs. State-wise number of districts covered under NHM is given in the Statement (*See below*).

(b) and (c) No such proposal is under consideration. However, references from Tamil Nadu State Government have been received requesting for inclusion of all districts of the state under NHM.

On this issue consistent view of the department is that while finalizing/identifying districts for inclusion under NHM, a cluster approach for developing potential horticultural crops while ensuring backward and forwarded linkages was adopted. The selection of the district was decided on the comparative advantage of crops based on agro climatic conditions, potential for developing marketing opportunities were taken into consideration. No new districts are being added as this may result in thinning out of already limited resources.

However, there is a provision under NHM scheme for setting up of infrastructure units relating to post harvest management, marketing and other project based activities in non NHM districts, provided there is a clear linkage of the units with the horticulture produce. Apart from this, activities for development of horticulture in non-NHM districts can be carried out under other Government Schemes like Rashtriya Krishi