

**Small and marginal farmers in Puducherry**

577. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per Agriculture Census 2010-11 the number of small and marginal farmers in Puducherry have gone up from 28,000 to 31,000 compared to 2005-06;

(b) if so, the steps Government has taken to protect these small and marginal farmers in Puducherry; and

(c) the annual income of these farmers during the last five years, year-wise and the efforts being made to double their income in the next five years as promised in the Budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) Yes, Sir. As per Agriculture Census 2010-11, the number of small and marginal operational holders taken together have increased from 28677 in 2005-06 to 31260 in 2010-11.

(b) and (c) As per the information received from the Department of Agriculture, UT of Puducherry, the annual income of the farmers for the last 5 years ranges from ₹ 15,000/- to ₹ 20,000/- for farmers growing seasonal crops and ₹ 30,000/- to ₹ 50,000/- for those growing annual and cash crops depending upon the yield and market prices. However, Government is assisting farmers to get remunerative prices for their produces through regulated markets, farmers mandis and direct sale to the consumers.

The Government is taking several measures to protect farmers and to double their income in the next five years in the country including Puducherry, some of which are as under:-

- Special focus on irrigation with sufficient budget, with the aim of “Per Drop More Crop”.
- Provision of quality seeds and nutrients based on soil health of each field.
- Investments in Warehousing and Cold Chains to prevent post-harvest crop losses.
- Promotion of value addition through Food Processing.
- Creation of National Agriculture Market, removing distortions and e-platform.
- Introduction of a New Crop Insurance Scheme to mitigate risks at affordable cost.
- Promotion of ancillary activities like Poultry, Beekeeping and Fisheries etc.