

**Decline in sugarcane sowing area**

†1376. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that less area was covered under sugarcane sowing in the country in 2015-16 and in 2016-17 too, it has come down approximately by 5.5 per cent;

(b) if so, the expected shortage in sugar production due to declining sowing acreage and whether the prices of sugar is likely to increase in the country, as per the experts; and

(c) the area under sugarcane in the country during the last three years, year-wise and the reasons for decline in it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA): (a) From 50.67 lakh ha. in 2014-15, area coverage under Sugarcane declined to 49.61 lakh ha. during 2015-16 (3rd Advance Estimates) *i.e.* a decline of 1.06 lakh ha. (2.1%). During the current year *i.e.* 2016-17, sowing of sugarcane is still in progress. However, as per latest trend on the progress of sowing received from State Governments so far, area coverage under sugarcane in 2016-17 (as on 22.07.2016) is lower by about 4.2% as compared to its area coverage during the corresponding period of last year.

(b) Sugar production during sugar season 2015-16 (October-September) is estimated at about 250 lakh tonnes. Taking into account the carry over stock of the last season, and expected production during the current sugar season 2015-16, total availability of sugar in the country would be around 340 lakh tonnes which is sufficient to meet the expected demand of sugar for the current sugar season. Further, to prevent holding of sugar stocks and check any artificial price rise, Government has imposed stock holding limit on sugar. In order to conserve the sugar stocks in the country and discourage sugar exports, the Government has imposed 20% basic customs duty on export of sugar. Currently, sugar price is stable.

As per the reports from the State Cane Commissioners, production of sugar in the country during the ensuing sugar season 2016-17 may decline. However, taking into account the current year's production and anticipated carry over stock at the end of

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

the sugar season 2015-16, total availability sugar in the country is expected to be sufficient to meet domestic requirement for the next sugar season 2016-17.

(c) Details of area coverage under sugarcane in the country during the last three years *i.e.* 2013-14 to 2015-16 are as under:

Crop	Area (in lakh ha.)		
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16*
Sugarcane	49.93	50.67	49.61

\*3rd Advance Estimates.

It is observed that depending upon the rainfall/weather conditions, availability of water in reservoirs, irrigation facilities, resource availability, shift of area to other competing crops etc., there are minor fluctuations in the total area under sugarcane in the country. However, at all India level the overall area under the crop during the last three years *i.e.* 2013-14 to 2015-16 has been hovering at around 50 lakh ha.

#### Protection of fertility and health of soil

1377. SHRI K. K. RAGESH:

SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the regular use of fertilizers and pesticides affects fertility and health of soil, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps taken by Government for protection of fertility and health of soil?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) studies show that there is no harmful effect of fertilizers and pesticides with recommended doses and judicious use. However, studies point out that imbalance in the use of chemical fertilizers coupled with low addition of organic matter over years may cause multi-nutrient deficiencies in soil. The limiting nutrients do not allow the full expression of other nutrients, thereby, lowering the fertilizer responses and crop productivity.

(b) The Government is promoting adoption of soil test based site specific Integrated Nutrient Management envisaging conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic source