

Crop Insurance Schemes are also under implementation in the country for horticulture crops including spices. Apart from this, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has recently approved a Revenue Insurance scheme for plantation crops for small cardamom and large cardamom to protect the farmers against losses arising from both fluctuations in yield as well as prices.

Maintenance of bull mother farms

2751. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there are 172 bull mother farms in the country run by Central and State Governments;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that these are currently in dilapidated condition;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that there is an absence of quality bulls and indigenous cow breeds, as well as lack of basic amenities like sheds of good condition and other equipments required for the maintenance of cattle and farms; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken by Government to strengthen the existing infrastructure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Looking towards the status of the farms and to meet demand of disease free high genetic merit bulls Government of India is undertaking strengthening and modernisation of bull mother farms under National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development (NPBBDD) and Rashtriya Gokul Mission (part of NPBBDD). In addition this Government has initiated massive progeny testing and pedigree selection programme under NDP-I to meet shortage of quality bulls at semen stations.

Facilities provided to farmers

† 2752. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government has taken a number of important decisions in the interest of farmers;
- (b) whether Government arranges to provide new variety of seeds to farmers on time, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the facilities provided to farmers during the last two years, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) Agriculture, including agricultural indebtedness, being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support.

The Government is implementing as Sub-Mission for Seed and Planting Material (SMSP) under National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET), the main objective of this Sub-Mission is to develop/ strengthen seed sector and to enhance production and multiplication of high yielding certified/ quality seeds of all agricultural crops. The details of year-wise seeds made available to the farmers including new varieties of seeds for the last two years and current year as reported by the States are as under:—

Year	Quantity of seeds made available in lakh qtls.
2014-15	351.77
2015-16	343.52
2016-17	380.29

During the last two years, the strategy of the Government has been to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. Farm viability is possible, when cost of cultivation is reduced, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices on their produce. The Department has, therefore, been implementing various schemes to meet this objective, viz. Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme, Neem Coated Urea, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), the National Agriculture Market scheme (e-NAM) and the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). The facilities provided under each of the above schemes is as below:-

- (i) Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme has been formally launched on 19.2.2015 by Hon'ble Prime Minister at Suratgarh (Rajasthan). During 2015-16 as against the soil sample collection target of 1,04,68,657, 89,52,410 samples were collected, 60,08,912 samples were tested and 1,47,52,382 SHCs were issued. During 2016 as against the soil sample collection target of 1,62,32,206 for the year 2016-17, 2,20,52,552 samples have already been collected, and 1,45,03,919 tested. So far 3,80,55,120 SHCs have been issued.

- (ii) Neem Coated Urea is being promoted to regulate urea use, enhance its availability to the crop and reduce cost of fertilizer application. The entire quantity of domestically manufactured urea is now neem coated. From the current year (*i.e.* 2016), the urea that is imported would also be neem coated.
- (iii) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) is being implemented with a view to promote organic farming in the country. This will improve soil health and organic matter content and increase net income of the farmer so as to realise premium prices. Under this scheme, an area of 5 lakh acre is targeted to be covered through 10,000 clusters of 50 acre each, under organic farming from 2015-16 to 2017-18. During 2015-16 out of total outlay for ₹ 511.67 crore, ₹ 226.18 crore was released to develop 7186 clusters. During 2016-17, ₹ 143.75 crore has been allocated to the States to develop the remaining 2814 clusters.
- (iv) The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) is being implemented to expand cultivated area with assured irrigation, reduce wastage of water and improve water use efficiency.
- (v) The National Agriculture Market scheme (e-NAM) was approved on 1.7.2015 with a budget allocation of ₹ 200 crore to be implemented during 2015-16 to 2017-18. The releases of grants under the scheme are made on the basis of completion of 3 reform pre-requisites *i.e.* Single Trading License, Single License Fee and Creation of e-Platform for Trading. The scheme was launched on 14.04.2016 in 8 States *viz.* Gujarat, Telangana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand covering 21 markets. The Scheme envisages initiation of e-marketing platform at national level and will support creation of infrastructure to enable e-marketing in 585 regulated markets across the country. As on date 250 markets have been integrated.
- (vi) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) is being implemented from Kharif 2016 season. PMFBY has addressed all the shortcomings in the earlier schemes and is available to the farmers at very low rates of premium. This scheme would provide insurance cover for all stages of the crop cycle including post-harvest risks in specified instances. A total number of 326.25 lakh loanee and non-loanee farmers have been covered under PMFBY/ Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme during Kharif 2016.

Apart from the above schemes, the Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to ₹3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2015-16, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.

Further, the Government is implementing several Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. National Food Security Mission (NFSM); Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH); National Mission on Oilseeds and Oilpalm (NMOOP); National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA); National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is also notified for both Kharif and Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP). The Commission collects and analyses data and recommends MSP. In addition, the Government has declared bonus on pulses for Kharif 2016 over and above the MSP. Even last year, the Government offered bonus over and above the MSP in case of pulses.

The Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations' to protect the interest of the farmers. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the MSP on the request of State/UT Government. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production.

Public investment in fertilizer sector

2753. SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has any plans to increase public investment in fertilizer sector, if so, the details thereof and the success achieved therein; and
- (b) whether Government proposes to call/invite private sector/NGOs/SHGs in distribution of fertilizers and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI MANSUKH L. MANDAVIYA): (a) No, Sir. However, it is pertinent