

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT): (a) Yes, Sir. Cotton seed cakes are the mainstay of animal feed used as a source of protein supplement and its incorporation helps in improving milk fat in dairy animals. It also helps in enhancing production performance in other livestock species.

(b) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has conducted study trials of short duration nature on animals and livestock species related to impact of Bt. Cotton seed and products as feed. There is no policy approach to recommend to the farmers for use through package of practices on Bt. cotton seeds based upon available findings.

#### **Impact of GST on the rate of agricultural tools**

†1460. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of tools used in farming have risen significantly with the introduction of GST;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry would request the Ministry of Finance to keep the tools used in farming out of the ambit of GST, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would consider giving grants for buying farming tools?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Agricultural Hand Tools, such as, spades, shovels, mattocks, picks, hoes, forks and rakes; axes, bill hooks and similar hewing tools; secateurs and pruners of any kind; scythes, sickles, hay knives, hedge shears, timber wedges and other tools of a kind used in agriculture, horticulture or forestry and other Agricultural implements manually operated or animal driven are exempted from GST. Hence, there is no rise in price on these Agricultural Hand Tools due to introduction of GST.

There is 12% GST on Agricultural Machinery and equipments other than Agricultural Hand or animal driven tools. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has taken up with Ministry of Finance to reduce the rate of GST so as to ease out the financial burden on farmer.

(c) To promote farm mechanization in the country, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare is providing financial assistance to farmers through

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

State Governments for procurement of various agricultural machinery, implements and tools under Sub Mission of Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY), National Mission on Oil Seeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP), National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH).

#### **Launching of e-Krishi Samvad**

1461. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the funds allocated to the newly launched *e-Krishi Samvad*, an online interface platform;

(b) whether the interface will also be able to generate employment as more and more specialists and institutes will be required to provide direct and effective solutions to the problems faced by farmers;

(c) if so, the number of jobs Government proposes to generate in first year; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA): (a) No additional funds are allocated to develop *e-Krishi Samvad*. The application was developed in-house with available man power and resources.

(b) No. Effective solution to the problems faced by farmers will be given by the Scientist (Subject Matter Specialists) of ICAR Institutes through internet.

(c) No employment will be generated.

(d) *e-Krishi Samvad* was developed in-house and the solutions to the problems of farmers will be provided by ICAR Scientist online. So, no additional employment is required.

#### **Threat of yellow rust fungus on wheat crops**

1462. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that yellow rust fungus threatens to ruin wheat crops in many parts of the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that farmers have been advised to consult experts for confirmation of yellow rust and to spray a solution to control its spread, if so, the details thereof?