

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise. However, Government announces Minimum Support Price (MSP) every year for 24 agriculture commodities so that the farmers can get reasonable prices for their produces. Apart from this, support is also extended through Price Support Scheme (PSS) for procurement of oil seeds, pulses and cotton through Central Nodal Agencies at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) declared by the Government. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare also implements the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities which are perishable and not covered under the PSS with objective to protect the growers from making distress sale. Government has also created Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) to promote direct purchase of potatoes, onions and pulses from farmers/farmers' associations.

Chemical-free farming

1311. SHRI BASAWARAJ PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) by when India will be a 100 percent chemical-free agriculture country;
- (b) the steps taken in this direction; and
- (c) the details of private initiatives in this direction for less expenditure, no soil quality loss and more production by indigenous methods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) to (c) At present, there is no plan under way for a 100 percent chemical free agriculture in the country. However, Government is committed to promote organic farming in the country through the dedicated schemes of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA). Both PKVY and MOVCDNER are under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) and are being implemented through cluster approach. A brief of the schemes is given in the Statement (*See below*). Organic Farming is also supported by other schemes *viz* Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Network Project on Organic Farming under the activities of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR) and National Programme for Organic Produce (NPOP) under activities of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Exports Development Authority (APEDA).

Several private initiatives by individuals/persons like zero based natural farming by Shri Subhash Palekar, organic farming by Shri Shri Foundation, Brahma Kumaris, etc., are under implementation for promoting organic farming and improving soil quality and reducing cost. Model Organic clusters by private agencies have been encouraged under PKVY.

Statement

Details of various schemes

Parampragat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

The Parampragat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) is the first comprehensive scheme launched by the Central Government as a Centrally Sponsored Programme (CSP), where the Central and state Govts. share the funding in varying ratio. It is 100% in UT, 90:10 in North-Eastern and Hilly States and 60:40 in case of other States. The scheme is implemented by the State Governments. It is implemented on a cluster basis of 20 hectare each. The farmer within the cluster is given financial assistance upto a maximum of 1 ha and the limit of assistance is ₹ 50,000 per ha during the conversion period of 3 years. The target is to promote 10,000 clusters covering 2 lakh ha over the period of 3 years, 2015-16 to 2017-18. In order to implement the PKVY in the 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 an amount of ₹ 226.19 crore, ₹ 152.19 crore and ₹ 144.85 crore has been released respectively to the States for cluster formation and capacity building, organic inputs, certification, labeling, packing, transportation and marketing of organic produce.

Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region

Realizing the potential of organic farming in the North Eastern Region of the country, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has launched a Central Sector Scheme entitled "Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region" for implementation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura, during 2015-16 to 2017-18. The scheme aims at development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification and creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative. The scheme was approved with an outlay of ₹ 400 crore for three years. An amount of ₹ 112.11 crore, ₹ 47.63 crore and ₹ 34.02 crore is released during 2015-16 to 2017-18.

The assistance is provided for cluster development, on/off farm input production, supply of seeds/planting materials, setting up of functional infrastructure, establishment

of integrated processing unit, refrigerated transportation, pre-cooling/cold stores chamber, branding labeling and packaging, hiring of space, hand holdings, organic certification through third party, mobilization of farmers/processors etc. Under this scheme, an area of 50,000 ha. have been targeted to be covered under organic farming in North Eastern Region of the country during the period of three years *i.e.* from year 2015-16 to 2017-18.

Target for agriculture credit

1312. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any target has been fixed for Agriculture credit in 2017-18;
- (b) whether farmers will be benefited from interest waiver; and
- (c) the farmers benefited so far in the State of Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) Yes, Sir. In the Union Budget 2017-18, the Government has announced an Agriculture Credit Target of ₹ 10.00 lakh crore for the year 2017-18.

(b) While complete interest waiver to farmers has not been envisaged, however, concessional interest rate on short term crop loans upto ₹ 3.00 lakh is provided to farmers to encourage them to enhance production, adopt new technologies, inculcate fiscal discipline, etc. ultimately, leading to reduced cost of cultivation and realization of better returns on their produce thereby rendering farming more viable.

With a view to benefit farmers with concessional crop loans, the government implements the Interest Subvention Scheme (ISS) wherein the short term crop loans upto ₹ 3.00 lakh are made available at a subvented interest rate of 7% per annum for a period upto one year and on prompt repayment, a further subvention of 3% is provided. The benefit of interest subvention is further extended for a period of one year in case there is a natural calamity, necessitating restructuring of crop loans. The benefit of concessional interest rate is also extended to Small and Marginal Farmers who hold Kisan Credit Cards, on post harvest loans upto six months to encourage them not to resort to distress sale and instead store their produce in warehouses accredited with Warehousing Development Regulatory Authority (WDRA).

(c) During 2016-17, for Kerala, the agriculture credit target was set at ₹ 42,880 crore. Against this target, an amount of ₹ 67,738.76 crore was disbursed to 64,37,363 No. of accounts in Kerala.