

**Revamping of curriculum of agricultural and veterinary courses**

354. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has felt any need for revamping the curriculum for Veterinary Science Courses and Agriculture Science Courses across the country in view of the gaining importance of Climate Change;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Veterinary Science Under Graduate courses are regulated by the Veterinary Council of India. Curriculum for other undergraduate courses of Agriculture and Allied subjects and all Post Graduate subjects is revised through constitution of Dean's Committee and Broad Subject Matter Area Committees respectively at regular intervals at ICAR level.

(c) Question does not arise.

**Ban on pesticides in farming**

355. DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any concrete steps to reduce the use/complete phase out/ban of pesticides in farming;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has constituted any expert committee in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA): (a) and (b) Yes, the following steps have been taken by the Government:

(i) The pesticides are registered under the Insecticides Act, 1968 and rules made therein only after testing the efficacy and toxicity of the pesticides.

They are allowed to be used only as per the approved label/leaflet claims. In additions, technical reviews are carried out from time to time to assess the safety of pesticides for their continued use.

- (ii) Promoting use of bio-pesticides which are safer alternatives to the chemical pesticides.
- (iii) Implementing 'Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach' (SMPMA) Scheme, wherein, *inter alia*, Farmers Field Schools (FFSs) are organized to sensitize farmers on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach and to use chemical pesticides as a last resort as per approved labels and leaflets.
- (iv) Implementing "Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National Level" (MPRNL) scheme, under which food commodities are collected and analyzed for the presence of pesticide residue. The annual reports of MPRNL are shared with the States for taking corrective measures.

(c) and (d) The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) has constituted an expert committee under the Chairmanship of Anupam Verma in July 2013, to review 66 pesticides that are banned, restricted, withdrawn in one or more countries but continued to be registered in India. The Expert Committee, *inter alia*, recommended 13 pesticides to be completely banned, 27 pesticides to be reviewed in 2018 after completion of certain technical studies and 6 pesticides to be phased out by 2020. The Complete list is given in Statement. [Refer to the Statement-I appended to answer to USQ No. 342 Part (a) and (b)]. Considering the recommendation of Expert Committee as accorded by the Registration Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare had invited objection and suggestions from the public/stakeholders on banning/phasing out of certain pesticides. The details are given in Statement [Refer to the Statement-II appended to answer to USQ No. 342 Part (a) and (b)]. In response to which, the Ministry has received various objections and suggestions. Keeping in view of which, a committee has been constituted to review the received objections and suggestions.

#### **Allocation of additional funds to ICAR**

356. SHRI MANISH GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether ICAR has started any major projects to develop improved variety of pulses to increase production in the country;