

**Issues with Bt. Cotton**

2109. DR. NARENDRA JADHAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of difference in yield of Bt. cotton compared to conventional cotton during past five years;
- (b) whether there is stagnation in yield of Bt. cotton in past five years, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether per hectare usage of fertilizers and pesticides has increased for production of Bt. cotton, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether any steps are being taken to decrease excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides;
- (e) whether alternatives to Bt. cotton are being developed locally; and
- (f) the details of average revenue and losses made by cultivators of Bt. cotton in the past five years?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) and (b) Majority of cotton crop area in the country is covered under Bt. Cotton. Yield data is not maintained independently for Bt. and conventional cotton. However there is no stagnation in yield of Bt. Cotton. The yield of cotton in past five years is as under:

Years	Production (in lakh bales)
2014-15	348.05
2015-16	300.05
2016-17	325.77
2017-18	328.05
2018-19 (4th advance estimate)	287.08

(c) and (d) Various awareness programmes on Integrated Nutrient and Pest Management have been organized to sensitize farmers for judicious use of fertilizers and pesticides.

(e) Both ICAR and State Agricultural Universities have developed and released several non-Bt. varieties of cotton. Besides, ICAR have also developed low cost production and protection technologies to cultivate these varieties of cotton.

(f) No any States has reported such losses.

#### **Review of soil health card scheme**

2110. SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Governments have not taken the scheme for distribution of Soil Health Card seriously with the result that majority of farmers are yet to derive desired benefits and if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government intends to review the scheme afresh and re-lay emphasis on soil testing to apprise the farmers the nature of fertilizer or mineral needed for better productivity?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR): (a) and (b) No Sir. The successful implementation of Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme through State Governments in the last 4 years has resulted in 10.33 crore farmers receiving SHCs in cycle 1 (2015-17) and 11.51 crore farmers in second cycle (2017-19) across the country.

Based on the suggestions/ recommendations from States and other stakeholders, Model Village programme has been initiated in the current year. Under the pilot project, one village per block is adopted for farm holding based soil testing and to take up large number of demonstrations up to a maximum number of 50 demonstration (1 ha each) in each adopted village for balanced and judicious use of fertilisers. So far 6954 villages have been identified by the States and 11.50 lakh farmholding based Soil Health Cards distributed to farmers. In addition, 246968 demonstration and 6951 Farmer Melas are approved to the States.

#### **Distribution of soil health cards in Uttar Pradesh**

2111. DR. ASHOK BAJPAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has the information about the number of Soil Health Cards distributed, district-wise in Uttar Pradesh;