

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATION AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1308
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12/02/2021

HEALTH HAZARDS FROM UNSEASONAL VEGETABLES

1308 Sardar Balwinder Singh Bhunder:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether unseasonal vegetables are injurious to health as they contain more than 10 PPM pesticides; and
- (b) if so, the measures being taken to check it?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing a central sector scheme, "Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National Level", under which samples of vegetables, fruits, spices, cereals, pulses, tea etc. are collected from the retail outlets, markets, farm gate etc. and analyzed by enlisted NABL laboratories for pesticide residues. Reports of overuse or indiscriminate use of Pesticides are thereafter shared with concerned State Governments to undertake awareness campaigns and organize Farmer Field Schools to educate and orient farmers regarding the judicious uses of pesticides as per approved labels and leaflets. During 2019-20, various state governments conducted 7464 awareness and sensitization programmes in areas where the pesticide residues were detected above Maximum Residue Level.

Maximum Residue Limit is established on the basis of supervised field studies conducted at more than one agro-climatic zone, residue estimation, Acceptable Daily Intake and food consumption pattern in a country or region (food consumption factor) etc. Since different pesticides have different acceptable daily intake (ADI) and every food commodity has different food consumption factor, therefore the presence of pesticide residues above 10 ppm in seasonal/ unseasonal vegetable alone may not indicate that it is injurious to health.

Further, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing the 'Sub-Mission on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine' with a mandate to popularize adoption of Integrated Pest Management through training and demonstration in crops. Integrated Pest Management is an environmentally friendly comprehensive ecological approach through which farmers are made aware about the judicious use of chemical pesticides and use as per the prescriptions given in the label and leaflets. It encompasses pest control techniques such as cultural, mechanical and biological with minimum dependence on chemical pesticides. The Government has established 35 Central Integrated Pest Management Centers in 28 States and two Union Territory in the country which imparts trainings to farmers and State Extension Officers through Farmers Field Schools, short and long duration training programmes on Integrated Pest Management strategies. During 2017-18 to 2019-20, 2204 Nos. of Farmers Field Schools and 399 Human Resource Development programs have been organized wherein 93,100 farmers, pesticide dealers and State Officials have been trained on latest IPM technology in various crops.