

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 669
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 3/12/2021

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

669. SHRI SANJAY SINGH:

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

- (a) whether there is a Government policy towards diversifying agriculture and related activities;
- (b) the approaches towards addressing the issue of unsustainable levels of groundwater, particularly in the states of Punjab and Haryana due to reckless exploitation of groundwater;
- (c) whether Government intends to look beyond wheat and rice towards bio crops; and
- (d) if so, the possible route in this direction and how must farmers be made aware of practices of sustainable agriculture?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing Crop Diversification Programme (CDP), a sub-scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), in Original Green Revolution States viz; Haryana, Punjab and Western Uttar Pradesh since 2013-14 to divert the area of water intensive paddy crop to alternative crops, which require less water such as pulses, oilseeds, coarse cereals, nutri cereals, cotton etc. and shifting of tobacco farming to alternative crops/cropping system in tobacco growing States. The CDP provides support to the farmers for four major components viz., (i) alternate crop demonstrations, (ii) farm mechanization and value addition, (iii) site specific activities and (iv) contingency for awareness, training, implementation, monitoring, etc. Besides, efforts of state governments are also supplemented to encourage diversified production of horticultural crops under Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and state specific needs/priorities under RKVY.

The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing Per Drop More Crop component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) from 2015-16, which focuses on water use efficiency at farm level through promotion of Micro Irrigation systems (Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation).

Government of Punjab has formulated Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority (PWRDA) and enacted Punjab Preservation of Sub-Soil Water Act, 2009 in the state to address the issue of sustainable and efficient use of water. In Haryana, the scheme "Mera Pani Meri Virasat" has been formulated from the year Kharif 2020 to solve the problem of declining groundwater by diversifying the paddy crop to alternate crops.

(c) & (d): In order to ensure sustainable management of groundwater resources for agricultural purpose, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed cost effective, location specific technologies viz., rainwater harvesting measures and recycling, conjunctive use of rain, surface and groundwater resources besides use of micro-irrigation and resource conservation technologies. Under the various on-going schemes, provision has been made for farmers trainings, field demonstrations, Kisan Ghosti, Kisan Melas and Exposure visits on the field of progressive farmers. The new technologies on cropping pattern are demonstrated at the farmers' fields through State Department of Agriculture/Indian Council of agricultural Research (ICAR)/ State Agricultural Universities (SAUs)/Krishi Vigyan Kendra's (KVKs), etc. For promoting sustainable agriculture, Soil Health Cards are issued to provide nutrient status of the soil and recommendation on appropriate usages for improving soil health and fertility.
