

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1287
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 02/08/2024

LEVERAGING AGRI-TECH SECTOR FOR BENEFIT OF FARMERS

1287. DR. KALPANA SAINI:

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

- (a) whether Government is taking several steps to ensure that the rapid growth in the agri-tech sector is properly leveraged for the benefit of farmers of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a screening committee has also been constituted by Government in this regard; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (d): Yes, the government acknowledges the significant potential of the Agri-Tech industry in driving the transformation of food systems and enhancing the efficiency and profitability of small farms. Further, various initiatives and policies have been introduced to promote technological advancements in agriculture, recognizing the role of Agri-Tech in addressing challenges and fostering sustainable agricultural practices. The government has laid the foundation to establish a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for Agriculture, incorporating standardised Registries, Krishi Decision Support System, Agri Data Exchange, Consent Manager, Sand Box and a Unified Farmer Service Interface (UFSI). This system aims to enhance interoperability and convergence of efforts, fostering the development of applications in the agricultural sector using emerging digital technologies.

Further, a component called “Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development” has been launched under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY-RAFTAAR) in 2018-19 with the objective of promoting innovation and agri-entrepreneurship by providing financial support and nurturing the incubation ecosystem. Under this programme, start-ups are encouraged to use innovative technologies to resolve challenges faced in agriculture and allied sectors. A total of 1176 start-ups have been selected in various areas of agriculture and allied sectors under this programme for providing financial support through Knowledge Partners and Agri Business Incubators appointed by the Department for implementation of this programme.

The Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) has been supporting Agri-based startups under the project called National Agriculture Innovation Fund (NAIF) initiated in year 2016-2017. It has two components viz. (I) Innovation Fund; (II) Incubation Fund and National Coordinating Unit (NCU):

- I. Component I: 10 Zonal Technology Management Units and 89 Institute Technology Management Units (ITMUs) established in 99 ICAR institutes provide a single-window mechanism to manage innovations, showcase intellectual assets, and pursue matters related to intellectual property (IP) management and transfer/commercialization of technologies in these institutes.
- II. Component II: Agri-business Incubator Centres (ABICs) are set up to speed up the delivery of the new technologies to stake holders. The ABICs are the nodal point to provide the desired link for Agriculture Research & Development (R&D) Institutions for incubation/ commercialization of the validated technologies. So far, 50 Agri-Business Incubation Centers have been established and are operational in the ICAR network under the NAIF scheme.
