

Support price for Jute

*872SHRI RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of jute in Assam, Bihar and West Bengal have fallen below the minimum support price during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore;

(c) whether due to collapse of price support system, the area under jute cultivation has decreased; and

(d) if so, the remedial measures taken or proposed to be taken by the government for the promotion of jute cultivation and marketing so as to bring India at par with other jute producing countries?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) and (b), The wholesale prices of raw jute in Assam, Bihar and West Bengal in 1990-91 and 1991-92 Jute seasons ruled at a level much higher than the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) fixed for the commodity. However, in 1992-93 in certain centers of these states, the wholesale prices were quoted below the MSP.

The fall in prices of raw jute during 1992-93 was largely on account of (i) huge carry-over stocks of raw jute, (ii) erosion of exports of jute goods to the erstwhile Soviet Union, (iii) lower off take of jute products by Food Corporation of India and (iv) apprehension of the dilution of orders reserving packing of foodgrains, sugar, urea and cement in the jute packaging material.

(c) Over the years, there has been no precipitous fall in the area under jute. However, the fluctuation in area under the cultivation depends largely on climatic factors specially the behavior of monsoon during the sowing period. Prices received by farmers also effect the area to some extent.

(d) In order to make jute cultivation more competitive with other growing countries, the Government has taken a number of developmental measures to increased the production through improvement of yield per hectare. These include (i) launching of Special Jute Development Programmes; (ii) checking decline market prices through price support operation by Jute Corporation of India without any quantitative limits; (iii) arising the inventories of the jute mills; (iv) releasing and export quotas of 1.5 lakh bales of raw jute the curret Year; (v) enactment of Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packaging Commodities) Act, 1987; and (v) creation of Jute Modernnisationn Fund and Special Jute Development Fund.

[Translation]

Aerial Seeding and Spray

*873. SHRI RAJENDRA
AGNIHOTRI:
SHRI SWAMI
SURESHANAND:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to intensify Agricultural Development Programme by the applications of aerial seeding and aerial sprayu of insecticides;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) to (c), National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board, Ministry of Environment & Forests is executing an aerial sceding programme for afforestation inn difficult areas.

Aerial spraying is also occasionally undertaken for pest control or selected crops.

However the thrust is on integrated pest management approach aiming at minimum use of chemical pesticides.

Soyabean Production

*874. DR. RAMKRISHNA
KUSMARIA:
SHRI PRABHU DAYAL
KATHERIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the production of soyabean during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the estimated quantity of soyabean likely to be produced during 1993;

(c) whether the Government propose to provide some incentives to farmers growing soyabean in view of its high protein content; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

(b) During 1992-93, it is provisionally estimated that Soabean production will be around 31.09 lakh tonnes.

(c) and (d) Centrally sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) is in operation to increase the production of 9 major oilseeds including Soyabean. Financial assistance is given on basic key inputs like production and distribution of seed, seed mini-kits, plant protection measures, rhizobium culture, distribution of farm implements, demonstrations including front-line demonstrations on farmers fields, distribution of gypsum/pyrite, etc. Minimum support prices for soyabean in 1992-93 have been fixed at Rs. 525/ quintal (Yellow variety) and Rs. 475/quintal (black variety) which are 18% and 20% higher than the minimum support prices for yellow and black varieties respectively in the previous year.