

Need to implement Crop Insurance Scheme and compensate farmers? losses incurred due to natural calamities ? laid

SHRI HASNAIN MASOODI (ANANTNAG): The horticulture sector contributes to more than 8.2 percent of Jammu & Kashmir's GDP. Multiple spells of rains followed by hailstorm caused huge Shopian, damage to the orchards across the districts of Kashmir Pulwama, Kulgam and Anantnag. The fruit laden trees including apple, cherry and pear orchards have suffered extensive damage, endangering the livelihoods of around 45 lakh farmers. According to estimates, the calamity might have caused a loss of Rs 200 Crore to the apple industry. It is pertinent to point out that the fruit industry has already suffered huge losses due to closure of NH- 44 last year and slashing down the import duty of the Washington apple by 20 percent. In the light of this event, the Crop Insurance Schemes become extremely important as they provide financial protection to farmers against losses incurred due to Natural Calamities or other unforeseen circumstances. The Fruit Association of Jammu and Kashmir has been demanding compensation for the losses incurred. There is a strong need for the Government to intervene and give aid packages to the affected farmers and implement a Crop Insurance Scheme that covers trees or root stock.