

Spread of fungal disease affecting sugarcane in Kerala

479. PROF. K. V. THOMAS : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a fungal disease affecting the stems of sugarcane is spreading from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to Kerala;

(b) the effective steps taken to control the disease; and

(c) how much loss has occurred to sugarcane cultivators due to this disease ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) Red Rot disease of sugarcane caused by a fungus affecting stem has been prevalent since long in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu but it has not been recorded in Karnataka so far. It was reported in Kerala (Tiruvala factory area) for the first time in 1981. Though there is no direct evidence to show that the said disease is spreading from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka to Kerala, probability of its spread with the movement of seed material from Andhra Pradesh cannot be ruled out because the strain of the fungus found in Kerala is similar to that of strain of fungus in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) The following steps have been/are being taken to control the disease :—

(i) Research Efforts.

The Institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Agricultural Universities have developed/are developing several Red Rot resistant/tolerant varieties, as well as cultural and management practices, to combat the disease. Since the resistant varieties tend to become susceptible for various reasons, breeding for resistant varieties remains a continuous process. The Red Rot resistant varieties like Co 77/04

and 6907 are the presently recommended varieties for general cultivation in Kerala.

(ii) Extension and Development efforts.

The Departments of Agriculture of States/U.Ts concerned are advocating/popularising the following cultural/agronomic practices to avoid the Red Rot disease :—

(1) Use of healthy seed material for planting.

(2) Avoidance of ratoon crop.

(3) Roguing and destruction of affected shoots and clumps.

(4) Moist hot air treatment of seed-cane before planting.

(c) Precise estimates of losses due to Red Rot disease are not available. Depending upon the severity of the disease, losses may vary from area to area.

[Translation]

Setting up of pests and disease control centres in Madhya Pradesh during Seventh Plan

480. SHRI K. N. PRADHAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of pests and diseases control centres proposed to be set up in Madhya Pradesh during the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(b) the number and locations of such centres proposed to be opened in Madhya Pradesh during 1986-87 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) and (b) There is no proposal to set up any Central pest and disease control centres in Madhya Pradesh during the 7th Five Year Plan, and the year 1986-87.