

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5114
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2010
GROWTH OF PARTHENIUM WEED
Haque Shri Mohammad Asrarul

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total area of arable land that has become uncultivable due to rampant growth of the parthenium weed;
- (b) whether the Government is aware of experiments made in the State of Bihar of using the beetle zygramma as an effective antidote; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken for carrying out adequate tests for the development of this beetle as an antidote to the pernicious weed?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a): Out of total cultivable and arable land about 14.25 million hectare land has been estimated to be infested severely with the rampant growth of parthenium weed. However, with manual weeding and using herbicides, farmers are able to cultivate crops in these areas too but with low productivity.

(b): Government is aware that parthenium weed defoliating beetle *Zygogramma bicolorata* is being used to suppress parthenium in the state of Bihar. Nucleus culture of *Zygogramma bicolorata* supplied from Directorate of Weed Science Research, Jabalpur is being regularly released by Rajendra Agricultural University (RAU), Pusa, Bihar and Krishi Vigyan Kendras located in different districts of Bihar.

(c): Research efforts have been made at Directorate of Weed Science Research, Jabalpur to develop technologies to mass rear *Zygogramma bicolorata* throughout the year to use it as an effective antidote against pernicious parthenium weed. Technologies have also been developed to overcome the limitations of this bioagent to make it more effective against parthenium.