

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5294  
ANSWERED ON:06.09.2011  
SOYABEAN SEEDS  
Devappa Anna Shri Shetti Raju Alias

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government is aware that thousands of farmers have had to suffer financial losses due to non-sprouting of soyabean seeds sold by `Mahabeez` and other 23 seed companies and sown in large parts of Maharashtra;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Union Government proposes to issue any directive to the State Government in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the action taken by the Government against the guilty seed companies?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI HARISH RAWAT)

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. Ministry of Agriculture, on the basis of the newspaper reports regarding abnormally low percentage of germination/non-germination of Soyabean seeds in different parts of Maharashtra, has called for a report from the State Government. Government of Maharashtra informed that during the Kharif season 2011, complaints were received from farmers from Khandesh, Marathwada and Vidharbha regions regarding germination problems in soyabean seeds. Around 28,171 complaints were received from 124 blocks of 25 districts covering an area of 29,538 hectare including 3082 seed lots with seed quantity of 25,398.51 qtls.

(c) to (e): Department of Agriculture & Cooperation has called for a report from the State Government of Maharashtra on the abnormally low percentage of germination/ non-germination of soyabean seeds in different parts of the State. Government of Maharashtra informed that out of 29,538 ha. area involved in the complaints, 27,336 ha. area has been inspected by Field Officers. Out of total complaints, 15% complaints are due to low rainfall, 10% complaints are due to sowing below 5 cm. depth and remaining 75% complaints are due to poor quality of seeds supplied by different seed companies. It has been further informed that most of the companies have given compensation by replacing seeds for re-sowing and other remaining companies have given cash compensation amounting to Rs.43.54 lakhs. It is added that re-sowing has been done in 25,984 ha. out of affected area of 26,234 ha. and the crop condition at present is satisfactory in the State.

Further, Government of Maharashtra has also requested the Directorate of Soyabean Research (DSR), Indore to constitute and depute a committee of experts for verification of this issue and to investigate the reasons for future precautionary measures during soyabean seed production and distribution in the State. Accordingly, the committee visited farmers' fields, seed production plots, seed processing plants, godowns at various places/locations. The Committee observed that Soyabean Seed problem in Maharashtra this season is due to very scanty rainfall in June followed by dry spell, insufficient rains in early July, sowing on insufficient soil moisture and higher soil temperature, deep sowings than recommended depth. In addition, mechanical damage to seeds due to improper handling led to a vast drop in germination percent as well as seed vigour.

For regulating the quality of seeds in the country and for curbing the sale of substandard/spurious seeds, adequate provisions are available under the Seeds Act, 1966, Seeds Rules, 1968 and Seeds (Control) Order, 1983. The State Governments are fully empowered to take action in all such cases at their level. Further, the Inspectors notified under relevant provisions of these legal instruments have powers to draw the samples, seize the stock and issue 'Stop Sale Order' in case the commodities under reference contravenes the provision of law.