

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1372

ANSWERED ON:29.11.2011

PROBLEMS OF FARMERS

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether decline in production and productivity, impact of climate change, unabated suicides by farmers, debt trap and host of other problems have dented the agriculture sector in the country;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government proposes to revisit the agriculture sector afresh and initiate structural reforms, including amendments in the Agricultural Policy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

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

(a) to (d): Agriculture sector in India has been resilient to various problems facing it. To revitalize agriculture sector and ameliorate condition of farmers, Government has taken various steps, including implementation of schemes specifically aimed at increasing production & enhancing productivity of crops, mitigating adverse impact of climate change, arresting suicide by farmers, increasing credit flow to farmers at affordable rate and incentivizing its repayment etc.

Public investment in agriculture sector has been increased through implementation of various schemes such as Rashtriya Krishya vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission, National Horticulture Mission, National Mission on Micro- Irrigation, Watershed Management, National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility etc. Additional measures initiated for enhancing production in agriculture during 2011-12, inter-alia, include schemes for bring 60,000 hectare under oil palm plantation, initiative on vegetable clusters, promotion of production of nutri-cereals and launching of National Mission for Protein Supplements.

Rehabilitation Package announced in 2006 initially for 3 years, covering 31 districts in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra, to address problems of agrarian distress has been implemented. An amount of Rs.19910.70 crore has been released under this package till 30.06.2011. The period for implementation of non- credit components of the package was extended up to 30.09.2011.

Agricultural Debt Waiver & Debt Relief Scheme, 2008 benefitted about 3.69 crore farmers, involving Rs.65, 318.33 crore, as per provisional figures.

Interest subvention for timely repayment of crop loan up to Rs.3 lakh was enhanced during 2011-12, which resulted in lowering of effective rate of interest to 4% per annum for such farmers, who repay their crop loan on time.

Minimum Support Prices of major agricultural commodities were enhanced substantially during last 5 years to benefit farmers.

Reforms envisaged in National Policy for Farmers, 2007 and concerted efforts made by Government have delivered positive results, as evinced from progressive increase in production of agricultural commodities as a result of which growth rate in agriculture & allied sectors for first four years of Eleventh Five Year Plan is placed at 3.2% despite severe drought which intervened in 2009. This growth rate is higher as compared to previous two Five Year Plan periods. Growth in agriculture & allied sectors is estimated at 6.6% for 2010-11. Also, substantial relief has been provided to indebted farmers and agricultural credit flow through institutional sources has been increased. Moreover, suicide by farmers due to agrarian reasons, as reported by State Governments, have declined.