

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:999

ANSWERED ON:20.03.2012

QUALITY OF SOIL

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

- (a) whether the Government has assessed the health of soil including the quality after continued use of chemical fertilisers, pesticides etc. and its likely impact on the overall food production;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the plan of action initiated to improve soil health and productivity;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to promote sustainable growth in agriculture in the country;
- (d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this direction;
- (e) the number of soil testing laboratories in each State/UT at present; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to set up more such laboratories?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) investigations have revealed emergence of multi-nutrient deficiencies including micro and secondary nutrients (viz. sulphur, zinc and boron) in several parts of the country particularly in intensively cultivated Indo-Gangetic plains. The latest estimates on nutrient deficiencies at the country level are of the order of around 90, 80, 50, 41, 49, 33, 13, 12, 5 and 3 percent for nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, sulphur, zinc, boron, molybdenum, iron, manganese and copper respectively. Investigations under All India Coordinated Research project (AICRP) on 'long term fertilizer experiments' over the last few decades concluded that only integrated use of optimal dose of NPK and organic manure can maintain soil health and give higher sustainable quality yields. Accordingly, Government is advocating Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) envisaging conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic sources of nutrients viz. Farm Yard manure (FYM)/ Compost, bio-fertilizers, green manures etc. to sustain good soil health and higher crop productivity in the country.

(c) & (d): In order to promote sustainable agricultural growth in the country, soil test based balanced and judicious use of fertilizers in conjunction with organic manures like Farm Yard Manure (FYM), compost, vermi-compost, green manure and bio-fertilizer is being promoted through the scheme National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility (NPMSH&F).

(e): There are 1049 soil testing laboratories (STLs) in the country. The number of STLs in each State/UT is given at annexure.

(f): The Government is encouraging setting up of STLs under National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility (NPMSH&F) and also under flagship schemes such as Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) and Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA) Scheme.