

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5245

ANSWERED ON:08.05.2012

CONDITION OF COTTON GROWERS

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether poor performance of genetically modified seeds adopted by ninety per cent of the cotton growers is one of the causes of farmers' suicides;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to help such farmers in cotton growing States;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to review the performance of Bt. Cotton; 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) & (b): No, Madam. India has harvested an average of 5.1 million tons of cotton per year which is well above the highest production of 3.0 million tons before the introduction of Bt. cotton. Reasons of suicide by farmers, as reported by State Governments are manifold which, inter alia, include, indebtedness, crop failure, drought, socio-economic and personal reasons. Numerous measures that have been taken by Government of India to prevent suicide by farmers, improve financial condition and to overcome indebtedness include implementation of Rehabilitation Package in 31 districts of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra, implementation of Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, increasing credit flow to agricultural sector, providing Kissan Credit Cards, providing interest rate subvention for timely payment on crop loans. In addition yearly announcement of Minimum Support Prices (MSP) and providing Microfinance through apex institutions are some of the ways to help the farmers of the country.

(c): No, Madam. In fact due to use of Bt. cotton, the biggest gain to the farmers as well as the country has been the reduction in insecticide usage. Insecticide use on cotton amounted to 46% of the total insecticides used in India upto 2001 but declined to 25% within four years of Bt. cotton introduction in the country and further declined to 21% during the last two years (2009 and 2011). The total production of cotton has increased from 86.24 Lakh bales in 2002-03 to 352 Lakh bales in 2011-12 as per the Third Advanced Estimates of Directorate of Economics & Statistics. The area under Bt. cotton has also increased from 0.29 lakh ha. in 2002-03 to 111.39# lakh ha. (Estimated) in 2011-12.

(# source DOCD).

(d): Question does not arise.