GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:284
ANSWERED ON:06.08.2013
EXCESSIVE USE OF CHEMICAL FERTILISERS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are reports of adverse impact of excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in the cultivation of traditional and modern crops;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with its impact on fertility of soil and ground water;

(c) whether the Government has launched the National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility (NPMSHF) to promote the soil test based balanced and integrated nutrient management to maintain soil health and fertility in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof along with the works undertaken and the success achieved thereunder so far; and

(e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to encourage judicious use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides and to promote the usage of bio-fertilisers and organic farming?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR)

(a) & (b): There is no scientific evidence of declining soil/crop productivity from judicious use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. However, indiscriminate and imbalanced use of fertilizers coupled with low addition of organic matter over years may result into multinutrient deficiencies and deterioration of soil health as evident from the results of AICRP in 'Long-Term Fertilizer Experiments'. There is also possibility of nitrate contamination in ground water due to excessive use of nitrogenous fertilizers particularly in light textured soils.

(c) & (d): Government has launched the National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility (NPMSH&F) from 2008-09 to promote the soil test based balanced and integrated nutrient management to maintain soil health and fertility in the country. The main activities/components under the scheme are setting up/ strengthening of static/mobile soil testing/ fertilizer quality control laboratories; training of soil testing/ extension staff/ farmers on balanced use of fertilizers; adoption of villages through frontline field demonstrations; preparation of digital soil fertility maps and ; promotion of organic manures/ soil amendments/ micro nutrients. Component-wise achievement/ progress is given at annexure.

(e): The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is recommending soil test based balanced and integrated nutrient management through conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic sources of plant nutrients to reduce the negative impact of chemical fertilizers preventing deterioration of soil health and contamination of groundwater. Split application and placement of fertilizers , use of slow releasing N fertilizers and nitrification inhibitors, growing leguminous crops and use of Resource conservation Technologies (RCTs) are also advocated. The Council has developed technology for preparation of enriched vermi compost from various organic wastes, improved and efficient strains of biofertilizers specific to different crops and soil types are developed under Network project on Biofertilizers. ICAR also imparts training, organizes Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs) to educate farmers on these aspects.

ICAR during the 10th Plan initiated a Network Project on Organic Farming (NPOF) with lead centre at Project Directorate for Farming Systems Research, Modipuram with objective of developing package of practices of different crops and cropping systems under organic farming in different agro-ecological regions of the country.

The National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility (NPMSH&F) has been introduced during 2008-09 to promote soil test based balanced and judicious use of fertilizers in conjunction with organic manure.

Government is promoting organic farming in the country through various schemes like National Project on Organic Farming (NPOF), National Horticulture Mission (NHM), and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY). Government is already supporting financial assistance under National Horticulture Mission (NHM) for setting up of vermi-compost units @ 50% of the cost subject to a maximum of Rs. 30,000/- per beneficiary. Funds are also provided @ 50% of the cost subject to maximum of Rs. 10,000/- per hectare for a maximum area of 4 hectare per beneficiary for adoption of organic farming. Under NPOF scheme, financial assistance is provided for setting up of organic input production units as credit linked back-ended subsidy to the tune of 33% restricted to Rs. 60.00 lakh for setting up of fruit/vegetable market waste /agro-waste compost units and 25% restricted to Rs. 40.00 lakh for setting up of Biofertilisers production units/Biopesticides production units.

To encourage the judicious use of pesticides, Government has launched a scheme "Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in India" since 1991-92 by adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Under IPM programme the Government of India has established 31 Central IPM Centres in 28 States and one UT. The mandate of these Centres is pest/disease monitoring, production and release of bio-control agents/ bio-pesticides, conservation of bio-control agents and Human Resource Development in IPM by imparting training to Agriculture/ Horticulture Extension Officers and farmers.