

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3940

ANSWERED ON:18.02.2014

SEEDS VILLAGE SCHEME

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the present Seeds Act does not deal with quality control for genetically modified (GM) seeds;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is a fact that GM seeds are very costly and sometimes farmers can be misled and there is a strong need to develop protocol for determining the presence or absence of genes incorporated in such seeds;
- (d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard;
- (e) whether a new re-structured 'Seeds Village Scheme' to upgrade the quality of farmers' saved seeds has been introduced recently;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) whether the Government is aware that financial assistance under the scheme has not reached the farmers directly and if so, the corrective measures taken in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): The Seeds Act, 1966, Seed Rules, 1968 and the Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 adequately cover the quality control of seeds including GM seeds. The Seeds Act, 1966 and the Seeds (Control) Order, 1983 have provisions to draw the samples of GM seeds and test the same in the seed testing laboratories notified under section 4 of the Seeds Act, 1966.

(c) & (d): The protocol for determining the presence or absence of genes in GM seed have been prescribed under Rule 33 of the Seed Rules, 1968 and laboratories for testing are notified under it.

Only Bt. Cotton has been allowed by Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) in India. The cost of Bt. Cotton seed is fixed by the respective State Government in consultation with Bt. Cotton seeds producing companies.

(e) & (f): Yes, Madam. Existing Seed Village component under the Central Sector Scheme 'Development and Strengthening of Infrastructure Facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seeds' has been revised and financial assistance enhanced for farmers for upgrading the quality of farmer saved seeds in new restructured 'Sub-Mission for Seed and Planting Material' (SMSP) under National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET).

(g): There is no provision for funding the farmers directly by the Government of India, it releases fund to the States/implementing agencies under the Scheme for expenditure in accordance with the Scheme Guidelines.