

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1865
ANSWERED ON:01.12.2009
PEST ATTACKS
Sharma Shri Madan Lal

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the deficient monsoon has increased the vulnerability of crops to pests, even in modified Bt. Cotton, especially in Vidarbha;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether hybrid seeds are more tolerant to drought situation;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps being taken by the Government to improve agriculture production in the wake of severe drought in the region?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

- (a) & (b): Yes, Madam. Incidence of sucking pest such as whitefly, jassids and thrips has risen in several pockets of Vidarbha during this season. Besides, the bollworm infestation has also been recorded in this region.
- (c) & (d): Yes, Madam. Hybrid varieties are more tolerant to drought situation. The cotton hybrid NHH 44 and variety LRA 5166 qualifies in such trait for drought tolerance.
- (e): Institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) are conducting research on development/identification of cotton for abiotic stress tolerance including drought tolerance. In Vidarbha region, emphasis has been given on moisture conservation practices and recycling of rain harvested water as included in the package of practices for cotton cultivation.