

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4030
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2009
STEM RUST FUNGAL DISEASE
Mahato Shri Narahari

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian Council of Agricultural Research has formed a special team to prevent any occurrence of the stem rust fungal disease in wheat which has rapidly spread in the African Countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the recommendations made by the special team;
- (c) whether the ICAR has taken any action to protect wheat from such disease in future; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

- (a) The survey and surveillance against all the rusts, including Stem rust is being regularly done through special teams for this purpose. They monitor the incidence of various rust diseases in wheat growing regions of the country and report their prevalent races for appropriate interventions to prevent the spread of the disease.
- (b) The effectiveness of this survey and surveillance has borne fruitful results in the past also, when a new race of yellow rust 78S84 was detected by one of the team from Gurdaspur area in 2001. Effective breeding strategies led to the development of varieties deploying genes that were effective against this new virulence, thereby negating any adverse effect. The recently reported Stem rust race Ug 99 is also under tracking and so far it has not been reported from the country.
- (c) There is a constant vigil on all the rusts as well as other diseases and takes preemptive action to thwart any spread of any disease in wheat crop.
- (d) Foresighted breeding strategies have led to deployment of resistant genes against all the races of the various diseases in this crop for all growing regions of the country. In the event of the incidence of rust disease in wheat, suitable integrated disease management including application of effective fungicides to contain outbreak of the disease is put in place. Anticipatory research is actively being carried out to tackle the threat of Ug99 race of Stem rust through collaboration with CIMMYT and Borlaug Global Rust Initiative. Till date, more than 800 wheat lines have been screened including 420 lines in 2009, screened in Kenya and Ethiopia amongst which more than 150 resistant accessions have been identified. The most popular and widely grown Lok 1 wheat variety of Central India is also found to be resistant to Stem rust genes like Sr 25, Sr 26, Sr 27, Sr 32, Sr 33, Sr 35, Sr 40, Sr 43, Sr 39/Lr 35 and many more have been found effective against Ug 99 and are being effectively utilized in the breeding programme.