

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:169

ANSWERED ON:24.02.2015

USE OF BANNED PESTICIDES

Dubey Shri Nishikant ;Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun;Maganti Shri Murali Mohan;Patel Shri Dilip;Puttaraju Shri C.S.;Suresh Shri
Doddaalahalli Kempegowda

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that certain banned pesticides are being used in cultivation of crops and artificial ripening of fruits and vegetables in the country which causes spread of many diseases among human beings;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the fruits and vegetable samples collected contain residues above maximum residue level as fixed by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI); and

(d) if so, the corrective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to strictly ban the use of harmful pesticides/ chemicals which have an adverse impact on human health, soil and livestock and to ensure judicious usage of pesticides in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Agriculture is implementing a program for "Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National Level" under which samples of vegetable and fruits are collected and analysed for the presence of pesticide residues. No residues of banned pesticides have been detected in any of the samples collected under this program.

However, there have been reports in media about use of toxic substances like calcium carbide and oxytocin for early ripening of fruits and vegetables. Clause 2.3.5 of Chapter 2 of Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on sale) Regulations prohibits sale of fruits which have been artificially ripened by use of acetylene gas commonly known as carbide gas produced from calcium carbide.

However, use of ethylene gas in low concentration exogenously to trigger ripening of fruits is considered safe. The Commissioners of Food Safety/Food (Health) Authority of States/UTs who are responsible for implementation of the Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006 and its Rules/Regulations in their States/UTs have been requested to keep a strict vigil on and take legal action against use of carbide gas and other hazardous chemicals for ripening of fruits. The State Governments have also been advised to educate the public through mass electronic media against consumption of such artificially ripened fruits.

(c): During 2011-2014, out of 25,664 vegetable samples, 764 (2.9%) samples were found to contain pesticide residues above the maximum permissible residues level (MRL). Out of 7,501 fruits samples, the residues above MRL were detected in 88 (1.1%) samples. However, none of the banned pesticides were detected.

(d): The Registration Committee constituted under the provisions of the Insecticides Act, 1968 registers pesticides only after establishing their safety to human, animal and environmental health. Technical reviews are carried out from time to time and continued use of pesticides is permitted only if found safe.

The Central Govt. through Central Integrated Pest Management Centres of Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage as well as State Department of Agriculture conduct Farmers Field Schools and awareness campaign through print media, electronic media and hoardings, sensitizing farmers regarding safe and judicious use of pesticides, use of bio-pesticides/ bio-fertilizers etc.

A 'Grow Safe Food' campaign has been initiated to carry the message of safe and judicious use of pesticides to farmers and other stakeholders. A simple message on the five essential principles of judicious pesticide use - application of pesticides on the right crop, against pests for which the pesticide has been approved, at the right time, in approved doses, and as per approved method of application - is sought to be conveyed through hoardings, banners etc. in regional languages in Gram Panchayats and rural areas.