

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4570

ANSWERED ON:21.04.2015

DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH QUALITY SEEDS

Kushwaha Shri Ram Kumar Sharma;Naik Prof. Seetaram Ajmeera;Patil Shri Bheemrao Baswanthrao;Senthilnathan Shri PR.

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Indian farmers are dependent on multinational companies for high quality and certified seeds due to failure of Indian Council of Agricultural Research in providing/developing high quality and certified seeds;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Union Government's supplying and selling hybrid seeds such as vegetables, paddy etc. which are produced by MNC's are costlier by 20 times than the seeds produced by Indian Research Institutes;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the varieties of high quality and certified seeds developed during the last three years by the research institutes; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to develop new varieties of high yield-enhancing seeds?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): No, Madam. The seeds of major self-pollinated field crops such as paddy, wheat, maize, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane and forages, covering substantially large cropped area, are being produced and made available to farmers by different institutes of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), National Seed Corporation, State Seed Farms, State Departments of Agriculture and State Seed Corporations. The ICAR institutes and SAUs are jointly involved in producing the nucleus and breeder seeds. The breeder seed production has increased enormously from a meager 30,644 quintals in 2001-02 to 72,598 quintals in 2013-14. Subsequently certified/quality seeds are sufficiently produced to meet the demand of farmers, as reported by the states. Against a total requirement of 33.0, 31.5, 33.5 and 34.4 lakh tonnes of certified/quality seeds of different field crops, 35.4, 32.9, 34.7 and 35.2 lakh tonnes was produced and made available for distribution to the farmers during 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15, respectively. Multinational companies (MNCs) are mainly concentrated on hybrid seeds of crops like vegetables, paddy, pearl millet, maize, sorghum, sunflower, rapeseed-mustard and cotton. The area under hybrid seeds of these crops is not substantial in comparison to that of self-pollinated crops' seeds. However, cotton hybrids due to proprietary Bt technologies cover almost entire cotton acreage in the country.

(c) & (d): The Union Government is not buying hybrid seeds of vegetables, paddy etc. directly from MNCs for sale purpose. Such seeds are directly marketed by them. However, seeds of hybrids are costlier than that of the varieties.

(e) A total of 309 new high yielding varieties/hybrids that includes 192 varieties of cereals, 42 of oilseeds, 39 of pulses, 13 each of fibre and sugar crops and 10 of forage crops were released for cultivation during the last three years.

(f) The ICAR undertakes basic and strategic research at its research institutes and coordinate applied research through All India Coordinated Research Projects (AICRPs) mostly situated in SAUs for developing new high yielding varieties of various crops and location-specific improved technologies besides the regular production of nucleus and breeder seed of improved varieties as per the indent of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation for their further multiplication into certified quality seeds for use by farmers.