

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3910

ANSWERED ON:22.12.2015

Fertility of Soil

Ajmal Shri Sirajuddin; Antony Shri Anto ; Chandumajra Shri Prem Singh; Chaudhary Shri C.R.; Chautala Shri Dushyant; Dwivedi Shri Harish; Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun; Lekhi Smt. Meenakashi; Mahato Shri Bidyut Baran; Rai Shri Prem Das; Rathwa Shri Ramsinh Patalyabhai; Sanjar Shri Alok; Selvam Shri V. Panneer

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government proposes to evaluate fertility of soil and set up a periodical's camps in villages for full exploitation of agricultural soil in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the number of new soil testing technology developed for the purpose and the ratio of farmers to soil testing labs in the country, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to give impetus to the Soil Health Card Scheme through organization of Krishak Melas and Seminars in various parts of the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to make the said Scheme accessible to the common farmers; and
- (e) whether the Government has launched any campaign/programme to educate the farmers on usage of chemicals, fertilizers and pesticides to protect the agriculture from adverse impacts of such inputs and if so, the details thereof and the success achieved therefrom?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

श्री अजमल सिराजुद्दीन, श्री अंतो, श्री चंदमजरा प्रेम सिंह, श्री चौधरी सी. आर., श्री चोतला दुष्यंत, श्री द्विवेदी श्री हरीश, श्री गान्धी श्री फेरोज़ वरुण, श्री लेखी सी. मीनाकशी, श्री महातो श्री बिद्युत बारन, श्री राई श्री प्रेम दास, श्री राथवा श्री रामसिंह पटाल्याबाई, श्री सान्जर श्री अलोक, श्री सेल्वम श्री वी. पान्नेर ( श्री मोहान्बाई कुन्दरिया )

(a) & (b): 'Soil Health Card' (SHC) scheme has been introduced from 2014-15 to assist State Governments to evaluate fertility in all 14 crore farm holdings and issue soil health cards to farmers regularly in a cycle of 3 years. Soil health cards provide information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendations on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility.

Under Soil Health Management (SHM) scheme, setting up of 103 new static and 77 new mobile soil testing laboratories have been sanctioned during 2014-15 and 2015-16.

State-wise statement on number of existing soil testing laboratories and number of farm holdings is given at Annexure.

(c) & (d): To give impetus to the 'Soil Health Card' scheme, soil health card campaign across the country was organized through print advertisements in local and national news papers, video spots and radio jingles. 'World Soil Day' was celebrated on 5th December 2015 at state, district, block and village levels. Several Union Ministers and Members of Parliament have participated in the event across the country. All the State Governments distributed soil health cards and organized workshops, seminars, rallies on the occasion. Regional Workshops to sensitise and activate States have been organized at Lucknow (UP), Bangaluru (Karnataka), Dispur (Assam), Patna (Bihar) and one more to be organized at Raipur (Chhattisgarh). Funds amounting to Rs. 73 crore have been earmarked for Information Education and Communication (IEC) publicity. Campaign has been planned to be covered in electronic and print media.

(e): To educate the farmers on usage of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and protect agriculture from adverse impacts of such inputs, following steps have been taken:-

(i) Government is recommending soil test based balanced and integrated nutrient management through conjunctive use of inorganic and organic sources of plant nutrient management to sustain good soil health.

(ii) Under Soil Health Management (SHM) component of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), financial assistance for training to farmers including field demonstrations on balanced use of fertilizers is provided @ Rs. 10,000/- per training for 20 or more participants. Financial assistance for frontline field demonstration is also provided @ Rs. 20,000/- per demonstration. So far 1568 Farmers trainings, 1259 demonstrations and 977 Frontline field demonstrations have been sanctioned under the scheme.

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(iii) In addition Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) also impart training, organizes front line demonstrations to educate farmers on this aspect.

(iv) Under the scheme 'Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in India' farmers are educated to adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as cardinal principle and main plank of plant protection strategy in overall crop production programme. Under the ambit of IPM programme, the Government of India has established 31 Central IPM Centres which conduct Farmers Field Schools (FFSs) to educate farmers about mechanical, cultural and biological control measures including use of biopesticides against different crop pests and weeds and judicious use of chemical pesticides as a measure of last resort.

(v) The Insecticides Act 1968 and the Rules framed thereunder mandate that pesticides are registered for use in agriculture in india only after a detailed evaluation of safety. Once registered, a pesticide is legally obligated to display and carry approved labels and leaflets containing critical information on safe use of pesticides for the benefit of farmers & extension functionaries etc. Application of pesticides in accordance with instructions on the label and leaflets is not likely to cause any harm to human health.