GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4875
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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN AGRICULTURE
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the notable achievement made by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) scientists in transfer of technology from lab to land, development of High Yielding Variety (HYV) of seeds of various crops during the last one year;

(b) whether inspite of development of HYV of seeds by ICAR the productivity level of foodgrains, pulses and other crops have remained far below than the international levels;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government proposes to depute ICAR agricultural scientists to rural areas to teach the farmers of latest development made in agriculture in the country;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to increase the productivity levels of those crops?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE & FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)

(a) The Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) have taken up a number of activities for assessment and demonstration of technologies/products and its dissemination through extension programs. During the year 2013-14, about 23,500 on-farm trials (OFTs), about 90,300 frontline demonstrations (FLDs) of various crops including cereals, pulses, millets, oilseeds and commercial crop and about 61,400 training programs were organized under capacity development where 16.06 lakh farmers/farm women, rural youth and extension personal participated. For creating an awareness among farmers about improved technologies and to provide timely advisories to farmers, ICAR organized 4.24 lakh extension programmes/activities in the form of advisory services, diagnostic and clinical services, exhibitions, exposure visits, kisan ghosthi, kisan melas, scientists visit to farmers field, group meetings, etc. A total of 132 varieties comprising of 83 cereals, 19 oilseeds, 14 pulses, 6 sugarcane crops, 3 fibre crops and 7 forage crops were released during last year.

(b) & (c): The productivity of foodgrain and other crops have constantly increased over the years. The varieties/hybrids developed by ICAR have high productivity potential which is comparable with the productivity of crops in other countries. The per day productivity of majority of the crops in India is also globally comparable. The gap in the potential and realized crop yield in India is not due to non-availability of improved varieties and technologies but on account of several factors such as shorter growing seasons, about 60% area under rainfed cultivation influenced by vagaries of monsoon, severe and diverse biotic stresses, inadequate availability of quality inputs to farmers in time, resource poorness of majority of small and marginal farmers, low level of farm mechanization, inadequate energy availability, etc.

(d) & (e): The ICAR agricultural scientists are invariably deputed to rural areas to participate in farmers' meets, off-campus trainings, field demonstrations/ trials, exhibitions, awareness camps in order to teach the farmers of latest developments made in agriculture.

(f) In order to increase agricultural productivity in the country, the Council has developed improved crop varieties with resistance/ tolerance to various biotic and abiotic stresses, water harvesting techniques, in situ soil and water conservation measures, soil reclamation/amelioration measures, resource conservation technologies and technologies for mulching, vermi/bio-enriched composting, biofertilizers production, integrated soil -water-nutrient management and integrated farming in this direction. A number of agricultural implements, tools, gadgets, products, processes and structures have been developed and popularized through demonstrations, exhibitions, extension literature and training to farmers, processors, extension officers, trainers, entrepreneurs, etc. Various precision agriculture techniques for efficient input management in crops have been developed and are being popularized. The mitigation and adaptation strategies to climate change are being developed to ensure better performance of crops under changing climate situations. Besides, ICAR provides agro-advisory services and has prepared contingency plans for 540 districts to address climate vagaries.