

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:37
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2014
USE OF BANNED PESTICIDES
Girri Shri Maheish;P. Shri Nagarajan

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that certain banned pesticides including endosulfan and other pesticides are being used in the production and ripening of vegetables and fruits which have an adverse impact on human health and livestock;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government has constituted a committee in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the committee; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to run awareness campaign to educate the farmers for balanced use of fertilizers and pesticides and to encourage farmers to use bio-fertilizers and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 37 DUE FOR REPLY ON 25TH NOVEMBER, 2014.

(a) to (d): 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 for 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 artificial ripened fruits.

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 list of pesticides which are banned/ restricted/ withdrawn in one or more countries but continue to be registered for domestic use in India is annexed. A Committee of Experts has been constituted on 8th July, 2013 to review continued use of 6 neonicotinoid pesticides and other pesticides which are banned/ restricted/ withdrawn in one or more countries but continue to be registered for domestic use in India. The Committee has submitted a Report with respect to neonicotinoid class of pesticides. The Committee has inter alia recommended that use of neonicotinoids may be allowed with instructions to not spray during flowering stage of the crop; inclusion of appropriate residue/ toxicology parameters in registration requirement, and further studies on bio-efficacy and toxicity.

(e): 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. Under Soil Health Management (SHM) component of National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), assistance is being

provided for training and demonstrations to promote balanced use of fertilizer. Use of Bio-fertilizers is popularized amongst farming community through various extension and publicity activities like Exhibition, Radio Talks, TV Programmes, distribution of literature, etc.