

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:300
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2014
WASTAGE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES
Chaudhary Shri Babulal

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has paid attention towards the adverse effect of natural calamities causing damage of foodgrains, fruits and vegetables on the economy;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to amend the norms for assistance related to damage of crops due to natural calamities like floods, drought, hailstorm etc.; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the details of the compensation for crop loss provided by the Government due to natural calamities?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. Ministry of Agriculture closely and regularly monitors weather events, progress of sowing, crop health etc. in the country, in close coordination with India Meteorological Department (IMD) and State Governments. An inter-Ministerial Crop Weather Watch Group (CWWG) meets every week to review weather and rainfall pattern, crop conditions, water storage and input availability over the country. Weekly video conference with States is also held to get first-hand information about State's preparedness in the wake of natural calamities and to advise States appropriately whenever needed.

Central Research Institute of Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), in collaboration with State Agricultural Universities has prepared contingency plans for 576 districts in the country for implementing location specific interventions to sustain agriculture production in the eventuality of drought, flood etc.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has initiated a Network Project entitled 'National Initiative on Climate Resilient Agriculture' (NICRA) to enhance resilience of Indian Agriculture to climate change and climate vulnerability through strategic research, technology demonstration, capacity building etc. Ministry has also commenced near real-time drought assessment of the country since Kharif-2012. The assessment provides information on prevalence, severity level and persistence of agricultural drought at state/district/sub-district level.

(c) & (d): In the eventuality of a notified natural calamity, State Governments are empowered to initiate necessary relief measures from State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) which is readily available with them. Additional financial assistance, over and above SDRF, is considered from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) on receipt of relief memoranda from State Governments and in accordance with extant norms and procedures.

Revision of the list of items and norms of assistance under SDRF and NDRF is reviewed normally after the award of successive Finance Commissions. Taking into account various factors including inflations, Government has been revising items and norms of assistance under SDRF/NDRF from time to time, last being done on 28.11.2013.

The extant norms inter-alia provide for assistance to the farmers in the form of Agriculture input subsidy (where crop loss is 50% and above) for damage caused to all types of agriculture and horticulture crops due to the notified natural disasters. The level of assistances are Rs. 4,500/- per ha. for rainfed crops, Rs. 9,000/- per ha. for assured irrigated crops, subject to minimum assistance not less than Rs.750 and restricted to sown areas, and Rs. 12,000/- per ha. for all type of perennial crops, subject to minimum assistance not less than Rs. 1500/- and restricted to sown areas., where crop loss is more than 50% and above.

Financial assistance from SDRF and NDRF is for providing immediate relief and is not to be construed as compensation for loss/damage to crops. Farmers are entitled for compensation under the Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) and National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS).