

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATION & FARMERS WELFARE

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 143
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 2ND JULY, 2019

SALE OF PESTICIDES

*143. SHRI BALAK NATH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether incidents of sale of pesticides with banned chemicals and herbicide-tolerant cotton seeds have been reported from different parts of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto;
- (c) the likely impact of such pesticides and seeds on crops and health of farmers; and
- (d) the action being taken by the Government thereon and to check their sale in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 143 DUE FOR REPLY ON 2ND JULY, 2019.

(a): As informed by the States, no incident of sale of pesticides with banned chemicals has been reported. However, incident of sale of herbicide-tolerant (HT) cotton seeds have been reported from three Cotton growing States i.e. Maharashtra, Gujarat and Telangana.

(b): As reported by the State Government of Maharashtra, illegal HT Cotton Seeds were seized in the districts of Nagpur, Chandrapur, Parbhani, Nandurbar, Yavatmal and Gadchiroli. Total of 9387 illegal cotton seed packets and 1087 Kg loose cotton seeds valued at Rs 102.87 Lakh was confiscated. Further 20 FIRs have been filed against the culprits in the respective police stations.

As reported by the State Government of Gujarat, during the last one year there are 8 incidences of HT cotton seeds. 7 FIRs were registered against accused of selling HT cotton seeds in Vadodara, Kutch, Sabarkantha and Gir-Somnath and one is under process in Bhavnagar district.

As reported by the State Government of Telangana, sporadic cases of HT cotton seeds have been witnessed. However, because of close monitoring and effective seed control mechanism adopted by State Government the cases of HT seeds have reduced considerably in last one year. In 2017, 368 seed samples were tested and 81 were found HT positive. In 2018, 694 seed samples were tested and 119 were found HT positive. In 2019, 302 seed samples were tested and 8 were found HT positive. Taking punitive actions, 40 cases have been booked, 44 persons have been arrested, administrative action taken against 7 seed licenses and 29647 quintals of seed stock having HT trait worth Rs 907 Lakhs have been seized.

(c): As there are no incidents of sale of pesticides with banned chemicals, the question of its impact on crops and health of the farmers does not arise. However, as far as the HT cotton seeds are concerned, they are not approved for use in the country and therefore, this Department does not have any scientific evidence of likely impact of HT cotton seeds on crops and health of the farmers.

(d): In addition to the punitive actions mentioned in para (b) above, the State Governments have alerted the quality control inspectors and district authorities to be vigilant to the illegal production and sale of HT cotton seeds duly taking samples in all cases of suspicion and taking consequential action in cases of mischief. Time and again farmers are being educated extensively not to use HT Cotton seeds. In Telangana, State level and District level statutory committees have been formed for ensuring prompt action and the State Government has also banned Glyphosate in the State excepting for non-cropped area. Andhra Pradesh State Government has restricted the sale of Glyphosate formulation and the sale of HT cotton is being monitored and restricted through squads and enforcement authorities with creation of awareness.

In addition, to check the sale of HT cotton seeds, an Inter-Ministerial Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee (FISEC) has been constituted for on-the-spot inspection of the cotton fields to assess the veracity of spread of unapproved HT cotton in the country, to confirm the presence of gene(s), strategies and measures to contain it. The FISEC has suggested strategies for immediate action, short term action and medium term action to control and curb the spread of HT cotton. Furthermore, this department has issued advisory to all cotton growing States urging them to take all the necessary steps to check the sale and cultivation of illegal, unapproved HT cotton.