

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 964
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 10/02/2023

USAGE OF TOXIC CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS

964. SHRI VINAY DINU TENDULKAR:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that chemical fertilizers and toxic chemicals being used in agriculture are causing a lot of long term health problems to the consumers;
- (b) whether Government has set up any mechanism to ban the use of these harmful chemical fertilizers and toxic chemicals in agriculture, if so, under which administrative Department the mechanism works and whether it includes any provision for punishment; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) to (c): Agricultural productivity plays critical role in ensuring the level of food security, which in turn, requires fertilizer as one of the vital input. Balance and judicious use of fertilizer as per recommended doses does not have any adverse effect on the health of humans. It is the Government endeavour to promote judicious use of chemical fertilizers, bio-fertilizers and locally available organic manures. To achieve this objective, Government is implementing Soil Health Card Scheme of National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility to provide soil test based fertilizer use recommendations to farmers. Government has an effective monitoring mechanism through network of soil testing labs including Government and private entrepreneurs. Soil health card provides the information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendation on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its

fertility. Soil Health Card recommendations is one of the important criteria for assessment of fertilisers for Kharif and Rabi Seasons.

Demonstrations about balanced use of fertilisers based on soil health card recommendations and training to the farmers on proper and integrated use of fertilisers are integral part of the scheme. Financial assistance is provided to the State Governments for training of farmers, demonstration on farmer fields and organizing farmer melas.

Since 2015, around 6.45 lakh demonstrations, 93781 farmers trainings and 7425 farmers melas are organized/conducted under the programme. Alongwith State/District agriculture machinery and panchayats, village level rural development workers like Krishi Sakhis, PasuSakhis are involved in educating farmers on the right use of fertilisers. ICAR also imparts training, organizes from line demonstrations to educate farmers on this aspect. Farmers are also being encouraged to use technology i.e drones etc. in fertilizer application in order to ensure optimal use of fertilizer.

Pesticides play an important role in sustaining agricultural production by protecting crops from pests and disease. Availability of safe and efficacious pesticides and their judicious use by the farming community is critical to long term sustainability of agricultural production and productivity. The Registration Committee while granting registration as per the provisions of the Insecticide Act, 1968, conducts a complete evaluation of pesticide on parameters, studies and data with respect to chemistry, bio-efficacy, toxicity, packaging and processing and accordingly approves the details of doses, crops, precautionary measures, antidotes etc on Label and leaflets for each pesticide for its safe use. However, pesticides are inherently toxic and need a well ordered system of management and regulation. In India the Insecticides/ Pesticides are regulated under the provisions of Insecticides Act, 1968 and Insecticides Rules, 1971. At present, 11080 officers of various State Government and 191 Central Government officers are notified as Insecticide Inspector to check the quality of pesticides and its management. Surprise visits are not conducted at fields of farmers as the Act exempts the use of any insecticide for own household purposes or for kitchen garden or in respect of any land under his cultivation.

There are 26 Central Integrated Pest Management Centers (CIPMCs) under Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine & Storage which conduct surveys in the farmers fields and organise various training programmes (Farmers Field Schools (FFS), 2 Day & 5 Day Human Resource Development Programmes and Seed treatment campaigns) to make the farmers aware about safe and judicious use of pesticides. Farmers are also encouraged to use various ecologically sustainable pest management approaches rather than relying only on chemical pesticides. Use of

bio-pesticides and bio-control agents as on alternatives to chemical pesticides in plant pest management is also being promoted.

For development of sustainable agriculture Government has been promoting organic farming in the country since 2015-16 through the schemes of Paramparagat Krishi VikasYojana (PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER). Both the schemes promote use of biofertilizers and organic fertilizers for adoption of organic farming and end to end support to farmers engaged in organic farming i.e. from production to processing, certification and marketing and post-harvest management support including processing. PKVY is being implemented in all the States other-than North Eastern (NE) States, across the country. MOVCDNER scheme is implemented exclusively in the NE States. Under PKVY, farmers are provided financial assistance of Rs.50000/ha for 3 years out of which, Rs.31000/ ha / 3 years is provided as incentives directly to farmers through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for on-farm and off-farm organic inputs including bio-fertilizers and organic fertilizers. Whereas, under MOVCDNER, an assistance of Rs.46575/ha for 3years is provided for creation of FPO, support to farmers for organic inputs, quality seeds/ planting material and training, hand holding and certification, out of which Rs.32500/ ha for 3years is provided as incentives to farmers for off-farm and on-farm organic inputs including bio-fertilizers and organic fertilizers.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research has developed improved technology to prepare various types of organic manures such as phosphocompost, vermicompost, bio-enriched compost, municipal solid waste compost, etc. from various organic wastes. The Council has developed improved and efficient strains of biofertilizers specific to different crops and soil types under the Network project on Soil Biodiversity-Biofertilizers. Liquid Biofertilizer technology with higher shelf-life has also been developed. The ICAR also imparts training, organises front-line demonstrations to educate farmers on all these aspects.
