

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1450
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 15/12/2023

ALTERNATIVE CROPS AND MARKET FOR TOBACCO FARMERS

1450. SHRI K.R. SURESH REDDY

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

- (a) whether Government plans to raise awareness about alternative crop production and marketing opportunities for tobacco farmers and encourage them to grow sustainable, nutritious crops;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI ARJUN MUNDA)

(a) to (c) The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing Crop Diversification Programme (CDP) under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana - Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied Sectors Rejuvenation (RKVY-RAFTAAR) to encourage tobacco growing farmers to shift to alternative crops/cropping system in tobacco growing states namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal since 2015-16. Under CDP, tobacco growing states have been given the flexibility to take suitable activities / interventions to shift from tobacco crops to alternative agricultural / horticultural crops, as per the cost norms approved under any centrally sponsored schemes/state schemes.

The Government of India is also providing flexibility to the states for state specific needs/priorities under RKVY-RAFTAAR and the States can promote crop diversification under RKVY-RAFTAAR with the approval of State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) headed by Chief Secretary of the respective states. The DA&FW also implements various

crop development programmes such as the National Food Security Mission on Rice, Wheat, Pulses, Shree Anna (millets), Coarse Cereals, Oilseeds and Commercial Crops (Cotton, Jute & Sugarcane), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) etc. for promotion of agricultural / horticultural crops. For motivating the farmers, State may also organize study tours/ exposure visits and campaigns etc. for highlighting harmful effects of tobacco and long term benefits of alternative crops.

ICAR- Central Tobacco Research Institute (CTRI) (now ICAR-National Institute for Research on Commercial Agriculture), Rajahmundry has recommended alternative cropping systems to the states for replacing tobacco. Tobacco Board, Ministry of Commerce & Industry is working continuously in collaboration with the Central Tobacco Research Institute (CTRI) and State Agricultural Departments to provide economically sustainable alternatives to tobacco growing farmers besides educational and awareness programmes on cultivation of alternative crops to tobacco crops.
