

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2089
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09/08/2024

FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO AGRI-STARTUPS

2089. DR. DHARMASTHALA VEERENDRA HEGGADE:

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government promotes Agri-startups by providing financial and technical support to Agri-startups in agriculture and allied sectors;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the criteria for selection of Agri-startups;
- (c) whether any financial assistance have been released under any scheme to incentivize Agri-startups, if so, the details thereof as on 31.12.2023;
- (d) the details of other operational schemes to fund Agri-startups and their benefits;
- (e) the details of incubator centers located in Karnataka to cater to the needs of Agri-startups in the State; and
- (f) the present status of implementation of “Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development” Programme?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (d): Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare is implementing “Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development” programme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) from 2018-19, with the objective of promoting innovation and agri-entrepreneurship, by providing financial and technical support for nurturing startups. 5 Knowledge Partners (KPs) and 24 RKVY Agribusiness Incubators (R-ABIs) have been appointed for training & incubation of startups and implementation of this programme.

Under the programme, financial support upto Rs. 5 lakh is provided at the idea/pre seed stage and upto Rs. 25 lakh at the seed stage to entrepreneurs/ startups in agriculture & allied sector to launch their products, services, business platforms, etc in the market and to facilitate them in scaling up.

The startup should be a registered legal entity in India as per notification of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) from time to time. In the selection process, applications are invited by the KPs and R-ABIs through advertisement in newspaper and their respective websites. Initial screening of applications is done at the level of respective KP and R-ABI, thereafter it is presented to R-ABI Incubation Committee (RIC) for evaluation of application by the domain experts. The technologies, products and services developed by these startups are evaluated by the RIC committee in terms of their utility and impact in agriculture and allied sectors. Preference is given to the start-ups creating innovative solutions in Agriculture and allied sectors and their impact to farmers. Start-ups are trained and incubated by the respective KPs and R-ABIs appointed under the programme. Further, Selection and Investment Committee (SIC) evaluates and recommends the funds to the Startups as per their milestones. Start-ups must have a minimum viable product, business or a service with market fit, viable commercialization and scope of scaling up.

Financial assistance of Rs. 122.50 crore have been released in installments to a total of 1708 agri startups through various KPs and R-ABIs from 2019-20 to 2023-24 under the “Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development” programme.

Further, Agri Accelerator Fund of INR 300 crore has been approved for 3 years commencing from 2023-24 to nurture the agriculture start-up ecosystem. The operational guidelines for the Agriculture Accelerator Fund are in the process of consultation and finalization.

(e) & (f): There are two incubation centers located in the State of Karnataka to cater to the needs of Agri-startups namely University of Agriculture Science (UAS), Dharwad as a KP and ICAR- National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology & Disease Informatics (NIVEDI), Bengaluru as a R-ABI under the Innovation and Agri-entrepreneurship programme of RKVY. The details of startups supported during 2019-20 to 2023-24 by the UAS, Dharwad and ICAR-NIVEDI, Bengaluru in the State of Karnataka is as under:

| Name of KP and R-ABI | Total number of startups supported |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| UAS, Dharwad, Karnataka (KP) | 101 |
| ICAR-NIVEDI, Karnataka (R-ABI) | 45 |
| Total | 146 |

The “Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development” Programme has been approved for implementation for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26.
