

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

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 123
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 06/12/2024

PROMOTION OF BIO-FERTILIZERS

*123. DR. M. THAMBIDURAI:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that chemical fertilizers harm the agricultural lands;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the awareness created among the farming community;
- (c) whether Government is promoting other forms of fertilizer like bio-fertilizer;
- (d) if so, the details thereof: and
- (e) the steps taken by Government for promoting its use among the farming community?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN)

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

STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 123 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 06/12/2024 REGARDING PROMOTION OF BIO-FERTILIZERS.

(a) & (b): There are no harmful effects of fertilizers on soil fertility, if applied in a balanced and judicious manner. However, indiscriminate and imbalanced use of chemical fertilizers coupled with low addition of organic matter and neglect of micro and secondary nutrients, over the years, may cause multi-nutrient deficiencies and deterioration of soil health.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), based on the results of All India Coordinated Research Project on “Long Term Fertilizer Experiments” over five decades, is recommending balanced and integrated nutrient management through combined use of both inorganic and organic sources (manure, biofertilizers, green manuring, in-situ crop residue recycling etc.) of plant nutrients. In addition, split application of fertilizer, use of slow releasing fertilizers including neem-coated urea and growing leguminous crops are also advocated.

The Government of India is implementing Soil Health & Fertility Scheme. Under the Scheme, the Soil Health Cards are issued to farmers for providing information on fertility status of soils and recommends dosages of fertilizers, micro-nutrients, and macro-nutrients. Further, the Soil Health Card recommends the dosage of fertilisers to be applied and the type of crop to be sown.

Based on the soil health cards generated, advisories are issued to farmers through Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK). In addition, 70,000 Krishi Sakhis are trained to issue soil health card advisories. Further, till date, approximately 7 Lakh demonstrations, 93,781 farmer’s training programmes and 7,425 farmer’s mela have been organized on the proper use of fertilizers to improve soil quality.

(c) to (e): The steps taken by Government of India for promoting use of bio-fertilizers and organic fertilizers are as under-

(i) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), a scheme that promotes the use of organic inputs by giving assistance of Rs.15,000 per ha for a period of three years to farmers through DBT for on- farm / off- farm organic inputs including bio-fertilizers.

(ii) Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER), a scheme that promotes the use of organic inputs by giving assistance of Rs.15,000 per ha for a period of three years to farmers through DBT for on- farm / off- farm organic inputs including bio-fertilizers.

(iii) Development of Bio-fertilizers network production units:- To increase domestic production of organic fertilizers, a new component, “development of Bio-fertilizers network production units” has been included under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.

(iv) National Mission on Natural Farming:- The Union Cabinet on 25th November 2024 approved the National Mission on Natural Farming. The Mission has a target to initiate 1 crore farmers to natural farming, spreading over 7.5 Lakh ha land. Natural Farming is a chemical free farming, involving livestock integrated natural farming methods and diversified crop systems. Natural farming package of practices involves use of on-farm made natural farming bio-inputs like Beejamrut, Jeevamrut, Ghanjeevamrut, Panchagavya etc. which improves the soil texture and its fertility, enhances the soil organic carbon content, increases nutrient availability to the plants, increases water use efficiency etc.

Further, **National Center of Organic and Natural Farming (NCONF)**, under DoA&FW along with its regional centres (5) organizes various training on organic and natural farming as well as on- farm production and use of various kinds of organic and bio- fertilizers. The ICAR also imparts training, organizes front-line demonstrations, awareness programs etc. to educate farmers on all these aspects.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed improved technologies to prepare various types of organic manures such as phospho-compost, vermicompost, municipal solid waste compost, etc. from organic wastes and such technologies are disseminated to farmers through training and demonstration. In order to promote bio-fertilizers use, ICAR has developed improved and efficient strains of bio-fertilizers specific to different crops and soil types. Liquid bio-fertilizer technology with higher shelf-life has also been developed.

The Government of India not only promotes the use of bio-fertilizer but also ensures the availability of good quality of these bio-fertilizer/organic fertilizer to the farmers. Under the Fertilizer Control Order (FCO), 1985, the bio-fertilizers and organic fertilizer are notified and their specifications are specified. The specifications prescribed are mandatorily followed for manufacture and sale of bio-fertilizer/organic fertilizer. Further, the quality of bio-fertilizer/organic fertilizer is regularly checked by taking random samples. Any violation of the provisions of FCO invokes both administrative action under FCO and penal action under Essential Commodities ACT, 1955 with punishment from three months to seven years with fine.
