

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1307

TO BE ANSWERED ON 06/12/2024

SUPPORT TO STARTUPS IN AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES

1307. SHRI IRANNA KADADI:

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

- (a) the details of measures taken by Government in an effort to cultivate vibrant Startup ecosystem within the agriculture and allied industries;
- (b) the details of financial support offered to various Startups operating in this sector during the last five years;
- (c) the measures initiated by Government to support farmers in the adoption of digital technology and innovative farming techniques;
- (d) whether Government has conducted research on technologies that have practical applications for farmers, and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) Government schemes or policies in place to offer technological and scientific aid to farmers?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR)

(a) Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare is implementing "Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development" programme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) from 2018-19, to promote innovation and agri-entrepreneurship, by providing financial and technical support for nurturing startups. 5 Knowledge Partners (KPs) and 24 RKVY Agribusiness Incubators (R-ABIs) provide training & incubate startups for 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 and to facilitate in scaling up.

Besides, Government of India has launched AgriSURE scheme on 3rd September, 2024 to support start-ups for agriculture & rural enterprise through NABVENTURES Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). This initiative is a Category II SEBI registered Alternative Investment Fund, which will promote investments in innovative, technology driven, high-risk, high-impact activities in agriculture and allied areas. The total corpus of the Fund is Rs. 750 crore (Rs. 250 crore each contributed by Government of India and NABARD) and remaining Rs. 250 crore to be mobilized from Banks, Financial Institution, and other private entities.

National Agriculture Innovation Fund, a part of non-scheme of ICAR promotes vibrant startup ecosystem in agriculture and its allied field, through its 50 Agri-Business Incubation Centres (ABICs) in ICAR network institutes. These ABICs provide technology and skill upgradation, leading to promotion of viable enterprises and sustainable startups business operations to entrepreneurs/startups. No financial support is provided to these startups, only technical support is offered.

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

Financial Year	Total number of startups supported	Total fund released to startups (in installments) Rs. in crore
2019-20	58	3.13
2020-21	588	27.43
2021-22	277	20.34
2022-23	253	24.35
2023-24	532	47.25
Total	1708	122.50

(c) The Government of India has undertaken various initiatives intend to provide access to technology through various digital initiatives, such as AgriStack, Farmer Registry, Crop Sown Registry, Krishi Mapper application, Kisan-eMitra etc. Agri-startups are encouraged to work with farmers by creating drive in the farmers’ community for the adoption of their innovative techniques

(d) & (e) Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in different states support farmers in the adoption of innovative farming techniques developed by National Agricultural Research Systems. The activities include on-farm testing to identify the location specificity of technology under various farming systems; frontline demonstration to establish the production potential of improved agricultural technologies on the farmer’s fields; capacity development of farmers for knowledge and production of quality seeds, planting materials and other technology inputs. In order to develop awareness about agricultural innovations and technologies, a large number of extension activities are taken up by the KVKs, that offer technological & scientific support to farmers.
