

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3208
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28/03/2025

DECLINING SOIL ORGANIC CARBON (SOC) LEVELS IN KARNATAKA

3208. SHRI BABUBHAI JESANGBHAI DESAI:
SHRI IRANNA KADADI:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that over half of Karnataka's farmland suffers from low Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) levels, adversely affecting crop productivity and environmental health;
- (b) if so, the measures being taken to address the decline in SOC levels, particularly concerning the excessive use of chemical fertilizers and the reduction in organic manure application;
- (c) whether there are plans to promote use of fermented organic manure as an alternative to chemical fertilizers to improve soil health and reduce import costs; and
- (d) if so, the details of such plans, including any collaborations with State Governments and agricultural institutions in Karnataka?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) & (b): Government is aware that Karnataka's farmland suffers from low Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) levels. In order to address the issue, 1.77 crore Soil Health Cards (SHCs) have been issued to farmers from year 2014-15 till date. SHCs provide recommendations on judicious use of fertilizers, including secondary and micro nutrients along with organic manures & bio-fertilizers, for improving soil organic carbon and soil health. In Karnataka, 39,021 demonstrations, 4,557 farmers training programme and 164 farmers melas have been organized for awareness generation about SHC. Since 2021-22, Government of Karnataka is implementing Organic Carbon Mission Programme to increase organic carbon content in the soil under which green manure seeds are distributed to farmers at 75% subsidised rate through Raitha Sampark Kendras. Under Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) programme, green manure seeds, biofertilizers and organic fertilizers viz., organic manure, vermicompost, phosphate rich organic manure (PROM), city compost and in-edible de-oiled cakes are distributed to farmers at 50% subsidized rate in Karnataka. To promote cultivation of crops requiring less fertilizer under "Raithasiri" scheme an incentive of Rs. 10000/ha (Maximum 2 ha) is being provided to millet growing farmers, based on crop survey, through direct benefit transfer in Karnataka.

(c) & (d): Government is promoting use of Fermented Organic Manure/Liquid Fermented Organic Manure (FOM/LFOM) to improve soil health. Under GOBAR-dhan (Galvanizing Organic Bio Agro Resources Dhan) scheme, there is a provision of Market Development Assistance (MDA) of Rs.1500/- per tonne to promote the production of FOM/LFOM. In Karnataka, 7 Compressed Bio Gas (CBG) plants have been identified out of which 2 units are notified under Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985 to sell FOM/LFOM in bulk directly to farmers.
