

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1460
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 01/08/2025

MEASURES TO PROMOTE CROP DIVERSIFICATION IN PUNJAB

1460. SHRI SANT BALBIR SINGH:

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

- (a) the steps being taken by Government to help farmers in Punjab transition out of the traditional crop cycle;
- (b) whether there are any programs promoting crop diversification to reduce dependence on water-intensive crops like rice and wheat;
- (c) the manner in which Government is addressing challenges related to market infrastructure and farmers' access to alternative crops; and
- (d) whether there is a focus on encouraging sustainable farming practices or promoting high-value crops in Punjab?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (d): The Government of India is implementing various schemes to supplement the efforts of states/UTs for the welfare of farmers in the country. The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing the Crop Diversification Programme (CDP) under the Pradhan Mantri- Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY), in the Original Green Revolution States viz., Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh to primarily divert the area of water intensive paddy crop to alternative crops like pulses, oilseeds, coarse cereals, nutri cereals, cotton etc. Under CDP, assistance is given for alternative crops demonstration, farm mechanization and value addition, site specific activities and contingency for awareness & capacity building etc. The state of Punjab has been covered under the CDP from the inception of the scheme to help the farmers transition out of water-intensive crops – namely paddy.

The farmers are also encouraged through the state governments to grow crops such as pulses, coarse cereals, nutri cereals (Shree Anna) under the National Food Security & Nutrition Mission (NFSNM) and oilseeds under the National Mission on Edible Oil (NMEO)-Oilseeds. The Government of India also provides flexibility to the states, for state specific needs/priorities under the Pradhan Mantri – Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY).

DA&FW also implements various schemes to support the agriculture marketing infrastructure in the country. Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) a sub-scheme of Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM) is being implemented across the country for creation of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure. The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) scheme is a medium – long term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and credit guarantee support. National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) scheme is facilitating online trading of Agriculture and Horticulture commodities for transparent price discovery for farmers for their produce. Procurement of pulses and oilseeds is made at MSP as per the schemes under Pradhan Mantri - Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) scheme of DA&FW. The procurement of Notified Pulses are done under Price support Scheme (PSS) by the Central Nodal Agencies through State designated Agencies during harvesting season.

Further, the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) supports the holistic growth of the horticulture sector by increasing the production and productivity of horticulture crops in the country including Punjab. Under MIDH, the major activities being undertaken are production and distribution of planting material, vegetable seed production, area expansion, creation of community water resources, development of post-harvest management and marketing infrastructure etc. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), through its crop based institutes and All India Coordinated Research Projects (AICRPs) and in active collaboration with State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) is engaged in basic and strategic research for development of high yielding climate resilient varieties/hybrids of various crops, for development of production and protection technologies, for technology dissemination/transfer among framers/other stakeholders, *etc.* in the country. The high yielding abiotic stress tolerant varieties of various alternate crops (other than rice and wheat) namely pulses, millets, maize, etc. suitable for agro-climatic conditions of Punjab have been released by ICAR and are being promoted through training, demonstrations, etc.
