

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2438
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 13/03/2026

PLAN/POLICY TO SUPPORT FARMERS IN MAHARASHTRA

2438. SHRI IMRAN PRATAPGARHI:

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

- (a) whether Government has any specific scheme or policy to promote the expansion of cotton cultivation in Maharashtra, particularly in rain-fed and drought-prone regions;
- (b) the financial, technological and Minimum Support Price (MSP) related support being provided to cotton farmers in the State;
- (c) whether Government has formulated any targeted plan for improving production, processing and export of bananas from Bhusawal region;
- (d) the steps being taken to provide cold storage, value addition and market access for Bhusawal banana growers; and
- (e) whether any assessment has been conducted on the effectiveness of these schemes and their impact on farmers' income?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI BHAGIRATH CHOUDHARY)

(a) & (b): Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is implementing the cotton development programme under the National Food Security and Nutrition Mission (NFSNM) in 15 major cotton growing states including Maharashtra from 2014-15 to increase production and productivity of cotton. The scheme is being implemented in 13 districts of Maharashtra during 2025-26. Rs. 104.14 crore have been released to the state for all crops including cotton under NFSNM for 2025-26. Under NFSNM, thrust has been given on transfer of technology through demonstrations and training thereby benefitting to the farmers.

A special project on cotton entitled 'Targeting technologies to agro-ecological zones- large scale demonstrations of best practices to enhance cotton productivity' of ICAR-Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur is being implemented in major cotton growing states including Maharashtra under NFSNM from 2023-24 to enhance productivity of cotton. An amount of Rs. 6032.35 lakhs has been allocated for special project on cotton during 2025-26 covering 10 major cotton growing states including Maharashtra. High Density Planting System (HDPS) and Closer Spacing (CS) technologies have been demonstrated in 10 districts and 15 districts, respectively in Maharashtra during 2025-26.

Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) under the Ministry of Textiles is central nodal agency for undertaking Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations of cotton in the country including the state of Maharashtra. CCI, in coordination with the Ministry of Textiles, liberalized the norms for opening procurement centres. As a result, the MSP procurement network in the state of Maharashtra expanded to 168 centres, compared to 128 centres during 2024-25, across 21 districts under its Branch Offices at Akola and Aurangabad. As on 05.03.2026, CCI has procured about 130 lakh quintal of seed cotton (equivalent to 26.13 lakh bales), valuing Rs. 10,400 crore, through 5.84 lakhs transactions of farmers in the State of Maharashtra.

(c) & (d): Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme is being implemented from 2014-15, for holistic growth of the horticulture sector including banana. All States and Union Territories including Maharashtra are covered under MIDH scheme. Under the MIDH area expansion component for establishment of new orchards using tissue culture plants, in Maharashtra, the project cost for banana cultivation through planting material is Rs. 1.57 lakh, out of which 40% subsidy (Rs. 0.63 lakh) is provided for an area up to 2.00 hectares per beneficiary.

Banana is an important crop in Jalgaon District and is cultivated in approximately 65,000 to 70,000 hectare areas including in Bhusawal Tahsil. Banana Cluster Development Programme is being implemented by Maharashtra State Horticulture and Medicinal Plants Board. The aim is to improve production, post-harvest infrastructure, processing, and export of bananas from the region. Under this programme, a Cluster Grant Allocation of Rs. 199.99 crore has been approved for the banana crop cluster in Jalgaon District.

(e): Yes, assessment of improvement in cotton productivity under special project was done. In 2023-24, the average increase in yield in HDPS demonstrations plot was 30.40% over conventional farmer's practice. In Closer Spacing demonstrations, the average increase in yield was 39.15% over conventional farmer's practice. In 2024-25, the average increase in yield in HDPS demonstrations plot was 39.81% over conventional farmer's practice. In Closer Spacing demonstrations, the average increase in yield was 32.45% over conventional farmer's practice.
