

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2146
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 31ST JULY, 2018

CROP LOSS DUE TO PEST INFESTATION

2146. SHRI B. SENGUTTUVAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether about 30-35% of crop yield in India gets wasted due to pest infestation of crops and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether nematodes, which are parasitic microscopic worms, have emerged as the major threat to crops causing a loss of 60 million tonnes of crops, which is about 10% of the produce in the country, and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether such a large-scale loss of crop impacts on agricultural biodiversity which is paramount to food security in the country and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the proactive steps initiated by the Government to eradicate the pest infestation that affects large amounts of crop yield?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a): As per the Scientific literature, estimations suggest that on an average, crop losses vary from 10-35% annually due to weeds, pests and diseases across the country (according to various reports/ publications). However, losses due to pest and diseases are not static and vary from year to year depending upon the prevailing agro-climatic conditions (temperature, humidity, rainfall) and other predisposing factors such as susceptible crop variety, Agronomic practices etc.

(b): Yes, Madam. Nematodes have emerged as one of the major problems that causes crop losses but estimation of crop losses due to plant parasitic nematodes is relatively difficult because nematode can cause quantitative as well as qualitative crop losses. Besides direct damage, nematode serves as a predisposing factor in the development of disease complexes with soil borne-fungi, bacteria, and viruses.

(c): Yes, Madam. Crop losses caused by plant pests and disease directly or indirectly affect the components of food security include food availability (production, import, and reserves), physical and economic access to food, and food utilisation (e.g., nutritive value, safety). Plant protection primarily focused on protecting crops from yield losses due to biological and non-biological causes. The problem is more challenging with additional complexity generated resulting in shrinking of natural resources that are available to agriculture: these include water, agricultural land, arable soil, biodiversity, the availability of non-renewable energy, human labour, fertilizers etc.

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(d): The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare conducts has launched a scheme "Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in India" by adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as cardinal principle and main plank of plant protection strategy in overall crop production and protection programme. Under the ambit of IPM programme, the Government of India has established 35 Central IPM Centres (CIPMCs) in 29 States and one UT. Regular surveys are conducted in different crops and necessary advisories are issued when pest infestation reaches above moderate level. These Centers also produce bio-control agents/ bio-pesticides and release them in the fields, which manage nematodes. Human Resource Development by imparting training to Agriculture / Horticulture Extension Officers by organized 2days, 5 days training programme and Season Long Training programme (SLTP) and Farmers Field Schools (FFS) is also conducted to aware about various IPM components like non-chemical approaches like good agricultural practices, nematode suppressive crop sequence, botanicals (neem cake, castor cake, karanj cake etc.), organic amendments with decomposed farm yard manure, bio-fumigation (incorporation of brassica and some non-brassica crops like marigold, sorghum etc.), and biocontrol agent.
