

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH & EDUCATION

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3352
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01/01/2019

BT COTTON

3352. SHRI M.K. RAGHAVAN:
DR. K. GOPAL:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the genetically engineered BT cotton failed to live up to the promise 10 years of high yield, pest resistance and reduction in insecticide use, if so, whether it is also a fact that with the high cost of BT seeds, the farmers are unable to withstand crop losses;
- (b) whether the farmers have also been asked to revert to traditional style of cultivation and if so, whether it is a fact that Genetic Engineering has failed and also failed to provide livelihood security to farmers, in detail; and
- (c) whether it is also true that it has failed as a sustainable agriculture technology and has also failed to provide livelihood security for cotton farmers who are mainly resource poor, small and marginal farmers and if so, the details thereof?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि और किसान कल्याण मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री
(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

- (a) Bt cotton technology was originally meant for controlling Bollworms per se, in cotton and the Bt technology is still offering good control for bollworms (except Pink Bollworm *Spodoptera litura*) for the past 16 years. Even now more than 88% of cotton area under cotton is covered under Bt cotton only.

Further, the consumption of pesticide use has come down to 54%. The reduction in pesticide use in cotton was significant until 2011. However, the usage increased for the control of sucking pests.

Government has slashed the cost of Bt cotton seeds considerably to benefit farmers. The price of Bt cotton has cut by 7.5% from Rs. 800/- to Rs. 740 per packet of 450g each. In case of single gene Bt cotton hybrid the cost of seed is Rs. 635/- for 450g packet. Hence, cost of Bt cotton seed is not an issue to withstand crop losses.

(b) In the current Kharif season (2018-19) around 88.27% of the 122.38 lakh cotton area is under Bt cotton. Farmers are being advised to follow integrated crop nutrient management, integrated pest management and optimum or higher plant density in the fields to achieve higher yield.

Current issue in Bt cotton is the breakdown of resistance of BG II cotton to pink bollworm and susceptibility to sucking pests. ICAR-CICR and SAUs along with state Department of Agriculture has launched awareness programme for pink bollworm management for sustainable cotton cultivation.

(c) Not Applicable.
