

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3521
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 10TH DECEMBER, 2019

IMPACT OF SOIL HEALTH CARD SCHEME

3521. SHRI AJAY KUMAR MISRA TENI:

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

- (a) whether the Government has formulated a scheme to provide soil health card to farmers after testing soil for maintaining fertility of agriculture land and decreasing the cost of agriculture;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any study has been made by the Government after soil testing and providing soil health cards;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and whether the demand of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has decreased after that; and
- (e) if not, whether the Government proposes to conduct a study?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): Government has been implementing Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme since 2015 to provide soil test based crop-specific nutrient recommendations to all the farmers in the country every 2 years. The soil samples are collected from a grid size of 2.5 ha in irrigated and 10 ha in un-irrigated area. Each sample is tested for 12 parameters namely macro-nutrients (Nitrogen, Phosphorous & Potassium), secondary nutrient (Sulphur), micro-nutrients (Zinc, Iron, Copper, Boron & Manganese) and others (Electrical Conductivity, pH & Organic Carbon). Soil Health Card provides information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendations on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its productivity.

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During cycle-I (2015-17) 10.74 crore soil health cards and during cycle-II (2017-19) 11.51 crore soil health cards were distributed to farmers. Under Model Villages programme during current year (2019-20), 11.50 lakh soil health cards have been distributed to farmers. Application of fertilizer as per SHC recommendation avoids excessive use of fertilizers, leading to decrease in cost of cultivation.

(c) to (e): Two studies have been made by the Government of India through National Productivity Council (NPC) and National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE) on impact of Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme during 2017. The findings of studies is given below:

I. NPC study

- As a result of application fertilizer and micro nutrients as per the recommendations on Soil Health Cards, it was reported that there has been a decrease of use of chemical fertilizer application in the range of 8-10%.
- Overall increase in yield of crops to the tune of 5-6% was reported due to application of fertilizer and micro nutrients as per recommendations available in the Soil Health Cards.

II. MANAGE study

- There is some reduction in fertilizer use, especially nitrogen and increase in bio-fertilizers and other micro-nutrients use. Overall, paddy farmers reduced use of urea by 9%, DAP/SSP by 7%, but increased use of Potassium by 20%. This is a healthy sign of moving towards balanced use of fertilizers. All the three crops showed a decline in costs per acre by about 4 to 10 percent. There was substantial decline in fertilizer use especially urea and DAP in paddy and cotton resulted in decreased cost of cultivation per unit area.
- Costs were reduced due to low fertilizer use and increase in crop yields has also been reported.
- Increase in the use of gypsum and other micro nutrients to some extent is observed.
