

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5338
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05TH APRIL, 2022

“YELLOW LEAF DISEASE IN ARECANUT CULTIVATION”

5338. SHRI NALIN KUMAR KATEEL:
SHRI RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN:

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Arecanut, which is mainly cultivated in Karnataka and Kerala, is contributing a significant share of revenue for these States but many farmers in Arecanut growing regions are in distress due to widespread yellow leaf disease affecting arecanut plants;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken/been taken by the Government to manage and control this disease;
- (c) the projects and research work carried out on medicinal and alternate use of arecanut;
- (d) whether the Government will assure the farming community that it will stand by them; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): Karnataka is the largest producer of arecanut in India. It accounts for 78.64% production in India. Kerala accounts for 7.33% of arecanut production in India. Yellow Leaf Disease (YLD) of arecanut is caused by phytoplasma. YLD has been noticed in all districts of Kerala and six taluks of Karnataka (Koppa, N. R. Pura, Sringeri, Mudigere, Sullia, and Madikeri). Once infected, the yield starts declining.

The State Governments of the Karnataka and Kerala have taken following Steps to manage and control the disease:

- a. Assisting farmers to adopt integrated nutrient management (INM) and integrated pest management (IPM) for the arecanut crop as suggested by Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI) and State Governments.

- b. The Government of Karnataka has set up Arecanut Research Station at Shringeri to carry out research on Yellow Leaf Disease (YLD) and to create awareness among farmers regarding management of this disease.
- c. Kerala Government has provided an arecanut package to farmers for rejuvenation of arecanut plantation.
- d. Assisting farmers to switch on other alternate crops like oil palm, Coconut, pepper, Banana, minor fruits etc.

(c): Arecanut Task force Committee constituted under Karnataka State Govt. has entrusted M.S. Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Bangalore to study the health effects of Arecanut consumption and its alternative uses. ICAR-CPCRI is collaborating with medical institutions like K S Hegde Medical Academy (Nitte University), Mangalore for developing value added products utilizing the anti-bacterial properties of arecanut. The Kerala Agriculture University is also carrying out research on the uses of arecanut.

(d) & (e): Government of India has taken various steps in arecanut sector viz rehabilitation/replanting programme and research studies for identifying measures for control of YLD.

Assistance is given under various schemes like MGNREGA, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana, Sub Mission on Agricultural Mechanization and National Horticulture Mission. Bee-keeping activity is encouraged by providing assistance for purchase of Beehives and colony to increase arecanut yield by better pollination and resulting farmers can also get additional income from honey.

At present, the Directorate of Arecanut and Spices Development (DASD) implements frontline demonstration programmes in association with ICAR-CPCRI to promote multiple species cropping in existing arecanut gardens to augment the farmers' income from unit area. The Directorate is also demonstrating the following improved technologies to manage the diseases/pests and to increase the productivity of Arecanut:

- Promoting technology of multi-species cropping in arecanut gardens through establishing frontline demonstration plots and conducting training programmes.
- Demonstrating the effect of the new fungicide *Mandipropamid*, in management of fruit rot in selected areas of Kerala and Karnataka.
- Demonstration of integrated management of inflorescence dieback disease in arecanut (with Propiconazole 25% EC)
- Frontline demonstration plots are being established to popularize the use of EPN (*Entomopathogenic Nematode*) in management of root grubs in Arecanut.
- Demonstration of Arecanut Dwarf Hybrids to promote its advantages among progressive farmers.
