

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

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 236
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05TH AUGUST, 2025

ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING

*236. SHRI NARESH GANPAT MHASKE:
SHRI RAVINDRA DATTARAM WAIKAR:

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

- (a) the data on the number of farmers and hectares of land covered under Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) along with the comparative data on input cost reduction, net income increase, and soil health improvement for farmers practicing ZBNF, State-wise and year-wise;
- (b) the details of the partnerships which have been established with State Governments, Agricultural Universities, and Civil Society Organizations for large-scale outreach of the ZBNF model and the outcomes achieved thereof;
- (c) the details of the capacity-building programs and training modules that have been introduced to educate farmers, SHGs, and extension workers;
- (d) the details of the key steps which have been taken by the Government to promote Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) across States as an alternative to input-intensive farming; and
- (e) whether the Government is considering to provide direct benefit transfer (DBT) or incentives to farmers transitioning from conventional to ZBNF methods?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN)

- (a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 236 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 05TH AUGUST, 2025 REGARDING “ZERO BUDGET NATURAL FARMING”.

(a): The Union Cabinet approved the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) on 25th November 2024 as a centrally sponsored scheme with an overall outlay of ₹2481 crore. The Mission aims to strengthen agriculture practices with scientifically backed approaches, towards sustainability, climate resilience and safe food. The Mission focuses on improving soil health, restoring ecosystems and reducing input cost to the farmers.

The scheme envisages the formation of 15,000 natural farming clusters in 7.5 lakh Ha area covering 18.75 lakh farmers and setting up 10,000 need-based Bio-input Resource Centres (BRCs) for easy availability of natural farming inputs. This will reduce the dependency on externally purchased chemical inputs. The progress of the Mission is given at **Annexure-I**. Area cover 5.37 Lakh hectare has been initiated under natural farming.

As per the study conducted by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) - Indian Institute of Farming Systems Research (IIFSR) at 20 locations across 16 States on the fields of 484 farmers, there are several benefits of Natural Farming. This include yield enhancement through intercropping with pulses, mulching using crop residues, and use of cover crops. Increase of up to 0.25% in soil organic carbon content and reduction of up to 29% in input costs of production was observed under Natural Farming conditions. Further, study conducted by ICAR - National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (ICAR-NAARM) in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra shows that Natural Farming helped in improving farmers' income by reducing cost of cultivation, and attracting better product price. The benefit cost (B:C) ratio improved by 15 to 270% across the 3 States under natural farming.

(b): Under the Mission scientists, Farmer Master Trainers (FMTs), Community Resource Persons (CRPs) and Government Officials are trained and deployed to undertake awareness generation, training, on-field demonstration and provide continuous handholding support to farmers. More than 3900 Scientists, FMTs & Government officials have been trained on Natural Farming and about 28,000 CRPs have been identified under the Mission. Till date 1,100 Natural Farming Model Farms have been developed in Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Agricultural Universities and on fields of practicing natural farming farmers for the training of farmers. Also, 806 training institutions consisting of Krishi Vigyan Kendras(KVKs),

Agricultural Universities and Local Natural Farming Institutions have been involved by States/UTs to support the implementation of the Mission.

(c): 18 Centres of Natural Farming have been identified to impart training to Scientists, FMTs and State/ District/ Block officials. Scientists and FMTs undergo 2 rounds of 4 day training each. State/ District/ Block Officials undergo 1 round of 3 day training. The training is on Principles of Natural Farming, Soil Health Management, Cropping System, Livestock integration, Exposure visit to Natural Farming fields, etc. CRPs undergo 2 rounds of 5 day training each by Scientists and FMTs at Natural Farming Model Farms. Farmers undergo 4 rounds of 1 day training per year by Scientists and FMTs at farms of practising natural farming farmers and on natural farming model farms. They are trained on methodology of natural farming, practices of improving soil organic matter such as mulching, crop rotation, pest management, crop selection, etc. BRC entrepreneurs undergo 2 rounds of 3 day training each on principles of natural farming, preparation, storage and dosage of different natural farming bio-inputs, pest & disease management practices, roles and responsibilities of BRC, business enterprise development, etc. at designated training institutions.

(d): Annual Action Plans for NMNF have been approved for all States and funds made available.

(e): Under the Mission, there is provision for an output based incentive of ₹4000/- per acre, per year to a farmer for 2 years (upto 1 acre per farmer). The incentive support is for farmers to practice natural farming, undergo training, upkeep of livestock, preparation of natural farming inputs including purchase of mixing & storage containers or purchase of inputs from Bio-input Resource Centers etc.

Progress under National Mission on Natural Farming

S No.	State/ UT	Farmers enrolled	Soil samples collected of enrolled farmers
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	250	123
2	Andhra Pradesh	34102	5130
3	Arunachal Pradesh	4474	4474
4	Assam	3750	1802
5	Bihar	35465	5228
6	Chhattisgarh	50565	42304
7	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	0	0
8	Delhi	195	0
9	Goa	1250	988
10	Gujarat	47905	862
11	Haryana	15375	0
12	Himachal Pradesh	61998	26900
13	Jammu & Kashmir	19125	17243
14	Jharkhand	9200	0
15	Karnataka	112665	87447
16	Kerala	6090	0
17	Ladakh	405	78
18	Madhya Pradesh	152248	9642
19	Maharashtra	201011	9276
20	Manipur	4400	1350
21	Meghalaya	9875	0
22	Mizoram	13125	12500
23	Nagaland	15125	0
24	Odisha	52350	12350
25	Puducherry	272	0
26	Punjab	5079	1550
27	Rajasthan	115000	68234
28	Tamil Nadu	7233	1919
29	Telangana	60446	51049
30	Tripura	2750	321
31	Uttar Pradesh	223293	60820
32	Uttarakhand	25000	1874
33	West Bengal	0	0
	Total	1290021	423464
