MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION

**RAJYA SABHA**
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 2979TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.02.2014
*Excessive use of chemical fertilizers
2979. SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL
N.K. SINGH
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:-

(a) whether excessive use of chemical fertilizers has harmful effects on fertility of soil and human health, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government proposes to educate farmers regarding their balanced use and to adopt organic farming to improve the quality of soil and reduce input costs of production and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government proposes to identify areas where soil is malnourished and lacks vital nutrients and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of soil testing centres established and soil health cards issued to farmers to replenish the quality of soil, State-wise?

**Answer**
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES

(SHRI TARIQ ANWAR)

(a): There is no scientific evidence of deterioration of land with judicious use of chemical fertilizers. However, indiscriminate and imbalanced use of fertilizers coupled with low addition of organic matter over years may result into multinutrient deficiencies and deterioration of soil health as evident from results of All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on 'Long-Term Fertilizer Experiments'. There is also possibility of nitrate contamination in ground water due to excessive use of nitrogenous fertilizers particularly in light textured soils that has consequence on human health if used for drinking purpose.

(b): Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is recommending soil test based balanced and integrated nutrient management through conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic sources of plant nutrients to reduce the use of costly chemical fertilizers and to improve soil health and quality. ICAR also imparts training, organizes Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs) to educate farmers on these aspects.

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Under National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility (NPMSH&F) farmers are educated on balanced use of fertilizers through various components namely training of farmers, field demonstrations and frontline field demonstrations. Financial assistance is also provided under the scheme for promotion of organic manure, soil amendment (lime/basic slag) in acidic soils and micronutrients.

ICAR, during Tenth Plan, initiated a Network Project on Organic Farming (NPOF) with lead center at Project Directorate for Farming Systems Research, Modipuram with the objective of developing package of practices of different crops and cropping systems under organic farming in different agro-ecological regions of the country. The project is running on 13 co-operating centres including State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), spread over 12 states and is still continuing.

Under National Project on Organic Farming (NPOF), various trainings are being conducted to promote the use of organic inputs under organic management system like Certificate Course of Organic Farming, Refresher Training Course for Analysts, Training for Field Functionaries and Extension Officers who in turn educate the farmers. National Seminars are also organized under the scheme to promote organic farming.

Under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) states provide assistance for organic farming with the approval of state level sanctioning committee under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary of State Government.

(c): Indian Institute of Soil Science, Bhopal is preparing geo-referenced soil fertility maps of various districts of the country (170 districts completed) through different AICRP Coordinating Centres located at various SAUs. These geo-referenced maps can be useful in monitoring nutrient status of districts and fertilizer recommendations for balanced nutrient application in various parts of the country.

(d): Details of soil testing laboratories and soil health cards issued to farmers are given at Annexure-I and II respectively.