

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 1939
ANSWERED ON 23/12/2022

DEATH OF FARMERS FROM PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE POISONING

1939. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state :-

- (a) the number of farmers who lost their lives due to indiscriminate use of Pesticides and herbicides in farming during last 5 years, Year wise;
- (b) the steps taken by Government to tackle deaths from pesticides and herbicide poisoning, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has studied the increased dependence on herbicides and pesticides on GM crops;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ; and
- (e) the steps taken to protect farmers from increased pesticide and herbicide poisoning in GM crops farming?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a),(b) & (e): There is no information available on number of farmers who have lost lives due to indiscriminate use of pesticides and herbicides in farming during the last 5 years.

The pesticides are registered under the Insecticides Act, 1968 and Rules, 1971 only after ensuring the efficacy and safety of the pesticides based on the field trials conducted at State Agriculture Universities/ICAR institutes and lab studies conducted at NABL /ISO:17025/ and GLP accredited laboratories. Based on the studies, Registration Committee approves the details of doses, crops, precautionary measures, antidotes etc on Label and Leaflets. The registered pesticides if used as per Label and Leaflets do not pose any harm to human beings, animals, living organisms other than pests. Steps are being taken by the Government on regular basis to advice farmers regarding the approved dosage and their manner of use. Further, with the objective of educating, orienting and training of farming community about the judicious use of pesticides and their use as per the directions given in the label and leaflets, Central and State Governments through their field agencies ensure that farmers are provided right knowledge/ information about the recommended pesticide use. Further, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare through its Central Integrated Pest Management Centres located in 28 States and 2 UTs, KVKs, ICAR etc. is propagating the Integrated Pest Management approach.

(c) & (d): There is no increased dependence on pesticide and herbicide due to GM crop. Bt cotton is the only crop released for commercial cultivation in India where 65% reduction in use of pesticide for control of Helicoverpa has been reported. In India, as of now, no herbicide tolerant GM crop has been released. Hence no such study could be undertaken.
