

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

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 324
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH AUGUST, 2026

INDISCRIMINATE USE OF PESTICIDE

*324. DR. BHOLA SINGH:

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

- (a) Whether the Government has conducted any assessment regarding the problem of excessive or indiscriminate use of pesticides in fruit and vegetable cultivation and the detection of pesticide residues exceeding the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) in agricultural produce reaching markets;
- (b) If so, the details thereof along with the number of samples found with excessive pesticide residues during the last three years, State-wise;
- (c) the mechanism in place for monitoring pesticide residues and establishing traceability of the farm or production source of non-compliant produce;
- (d) the steps taken to promote the judicious use of pesticides, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and to create awareness among farmers; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to strengthen monitoring and take strict action against the misuse of pesticides leading to pesticide residues in agricultural produce exceeding the prescribed limits and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE & 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 REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 324 DUE FOR REPLY ON 11TH AUGUST, 2026
REGARDING USE OF PESTICIDE.**

(a) to (c) : The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is implementing the "Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National Level" (MPRNL) project since 2005-06. The objective of the project is to assess the levels of pesticide residues in vegetables, fruits, spices, cereals, pulses, herbs, tea, milk, egg, meat, fish/marine and water etc. collected from retail outlets, wholesale markets, Co-operatives, Agricultural Produce Market (APMC) markets, farm gate and organic outlets. These samples are collected by the 40 participating laboratories and analysed for the possible presence of pesticide residues.

During last three years i.e. 2023-26, under the MPRNL Project a total of 70,652 samples of fruits and vegetables were collected from 23 states and union territories including Karnataka, Telangana, Punjab, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Jharkhand, Chandigarh, Delhi and Chhattisgarh and tested for pesticide residues. Pesticide residues above the Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) fixed by the FSSAI were detected in 2,223 (3.1%) samples only. State-wise details are at **Annexure I.**

Under the MPRNL Project to ensure traceability, GPS coordinates of the sample collection point are recorded by the laboratories. In case of the farmgate samples, traceability of the growing area is established.

(d): The reports generated under MPRNL project are shared with concerned State/UT Agricultural Departments for creating awareness and training programmes for the farmers about safe and judicious use of approved pesticides on the crop as per label claim recommended by the Registration Committee (RC).

The DA&FW through its 48 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres (CIPMCs) & Locust-cum-Central Integrated Pest Management Centres (LCIPMCs) located across the country conducts various training on plant protection measures such as Farmer Field Schools (FFSs), 2-day Human Resource Development (HRD) programs, seed treatment campaigns and safe and judicious use of pesticides awareness programs etc. Major emphasis is given on upgrading the skill of farmers on Agro-Ecosystem Analysis (AESAs) based decision making to protect crops by integrating all IPM practices. In these awareness programs, farmers are being advised to use the Registration Committee (RC) approved pesticides with dosage as per label claim and to adopt Good Agricultural practices.

During 2021-22 to 2025-26, a total of 1,353 Farmers Field School programmes were conducted, benefiting 46,969 farmers; total 680 two-days HRD programmes were conducted, benefiting 37,664 farmers; total 2,384 Safe & Judicious Use of Pesticide Awareness Campaign were conducted, benefiting 76,702 farmers; and total 2,548

numbers of Seed Treatment Campaign were conducted, benefiting 81,048 farmers. Additionally, One-day training program titled "Ensuring Food Safety: Understanding and Managing Pesticide Residue in Urban Agriculture and Marketing" was successfully conducted in two States Assam (Guwahati) on 08.10.2024 and in Gujarat (Vadodara) on 27.11.2024 benefiting 113 and 185 participants respectively.

As a major digital initiative, the Government launched the National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS) which is an Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning-based platform comprising a mobile app and web portal that provides real-time pest identification, surveillance and expert advisories. The system promotes IPM by recommending bio-control agents and bio-pesticides as the preferred option, while advising Registration Committee approved pesticides only when necessary and at recommended doses.

DA&FW has implemented Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Support to State Extension Programs for Extension Reforms" (ATMA) in 734 districts of 28 states & 5 UTs in the country. The scheme promotes decentralized and farmer-friendly extension system in the country. The objectives of the Scheme is to support State Government's efforts and to make available latest agricultural technologies and good agricultural practices in different thematic areas of agriculture and allied areas including promotion of Judicious use of pesticides and Integrated Pest Management to farmers through different extension activities viz; Farmers Training, Demonstrations, Exposure Visits, Kisan Mela, Mobilization of Farmers Groups and organizing Farm Schools etc.

Further, the DA&FW has also implemented Centrally Sponsored Scheme Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) for holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits and vegetables. The Mission envisages production and productivity improvement of horticulture crops including fruits and vegetables through various interventions. Capacity buildings of farmers and technicians are also provided for adopting improved technologies. Scheme also envisages creation for post harvest management and marketing.

(e) : MPRNL project is implemented through 40 participating laboratory (including 5 new laboratories) covering 22 States. Currently, continuation of the project has been approved till 2028-29. Further, 21 States have constituted committees at State level for monitoring of pesticide residue and effective implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Integrated Pest Management among all stake holders to reduce/avoid pesticide residue issue in various agricultural commodities.

Further, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), the nodal agency for food safety is mandated to lay down science-based standards for various articles of food products including fruits and vegetables and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

To regulate food businesses engaged in the sale of food products, FSSAI has prescribed standards for various food products under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations. FSSAI has also notified Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011 which prescribes limits for pesticide residues, heavy metals, toxins, etc. present in food products. Under the sub-regulation 2.3.1 of Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulation, 2011, FSSAI prescribes the maximum residue limits (MRLs) of pesticides on food commodities based on the dietary risk assessment using internationally accepted protocols.

The MRL is the maximum level of a pesticide residue that is legally tolerated in or on food or feed when pesticides are applied correctly in accordance with Good Agricultural Practices and the data received from CIB&RC (Central Insecticides Board Registration Committee). The residue of pesticides in the food commodities should not be beyond certain limits and under Section 3(zz)(xii) of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, the food is considered unsafe if it contains pesticides in excess of quantities specified by the FSSAI regulations.

Annexure I**State-wise data of fruits and vegetables monitored under MPRNL Project (2023-26):**

S. no.	State/ UT	No. of Samples Analysed	Samples above FSSAI* MRL
1.	Karnataka	9176	334
2.	Telangana	8198	486
3.	Punjab	6580	55
4.	Gujarat	6035	170
5.	Himachal Pradesh	5765	92
6.	Maharashtra	5295	260
7.	Kerala	4130	82
8.	Tamil Nadu	3601	81
9.	Rajasthan	3564	111
10.	Haryana	2371	152
11.	Uttarakhand	2190	50
12.	Andhra Pradesh	2104	134
13.	Madhya Pradesh	2081	66
14.	Uttar Pradesh	1819	64
15.	West Bengal	1585	5
16.	Jammu & Kashmir	1489	58
17.	Odisha	1362	0
18.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1169	1
19.	Assam	604	1
20.	Jharkhand	566	0
21.	Chandigarh	492	2
22.	Delhi	447	19
23.	Chhattisgarh	29	0
	Total	70,652	2,223

*Gazette notification No. 1-SP(PAR)- Notification-pesticide/stds-FSSAI/2017 dated 24 December, 2018
