

Developing Agricultural Research Institutes

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Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar today said the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)/ National Agricultural Research System (NARS) has taken several initiatives for innovation/ development of new technologies in the farm sector across the country like Genetic enhancement of plants/ animals/ fish for higher productivity, mechanization of agriculture and food system, enhancing value, safety and income through food processing, development of energy efficient technologies, farming practices, and promoting technology transfer to the farmers and other stake holders.

In a statement laid on the table of the Rajya Sabha in reply to a question, Shri Tomar said, during the last eight years (2014-2022), ICAR has released a total of 2122 crop varieties of food crops, oil seeds, pulses, commercial crops, horticultural crops, potential crops and fodder crops which has not only stabilized the production but also increased the productivity and production of food grains in India. The new technologies developed have significantly enhanced the production of food grains, fruits, vegetables, milk, meat, egg and fish; and addressed the farmers' specific needs despite land resource limitations, increasing weather uncertainties, and emerging more virulent pests and pathogens. These agricultural technologies helped in increasing production of cereals, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane and milk from 234.87, 17.15, 275.11, 3623.33, 146.31 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 288.03, 27.69, 376.96, 4318.12 and 209.96 million tonnes in 2021-22 respectively. The egg production increased from 78.48 billion in 2014-15 to 129.53 billion in 2021-22. Further, the strong collaboration of ICAR with government and non-governmental agencies, academic and scientific institutions, industry, and farmers has helped Indian agriculture to sustain natural resources, improve food supply and dietary nutrition profile, and make it globally more efficient and competitive.

Shri Tomar said the course curricula are revised periodically to make it relevant to the changing requirements of the farming communities. Rural Area Work Experience (RAWE) has been made essential part of Under Graduate Programmes in Higher Agricultural Educational Institutions which is directly related to the farmers of the respective region. Further, ICAR has been periodically revisiting Syllabi for Degree Programmes after following due process and stake-holders consultations.

He informed that the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has 103 research institutes including four deemed universities, which undertake teaching, research and extension activities. ICAR has also strong collaboration with the State Agricultural Universities (SAU) through 74 All India Coordinated Research Projects (AICRP) and Network Projects for testing the technologies developed by the ICAR research institutes/ centres. Further, keeping in view the emerging threats of climate change to agricultural sector, a project 'National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA)' has also been implemented since 2011 with an aim to enhancing resilience of Indian agriculture to climate change.

ICAR has established 731 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) at district-level to refine the technological interventions suited to various agro-climatic conditions, he said.

SNC/PK/MS

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