

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1974
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH MARCH, 2025

PROMOTION OF SOILLESS AGRICULTURE

1974: SHRI VISHNU DAYAL RAM:

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

(a) whether the Government has introduced any financial assistance, subsidies or incentives to promote soilless agriculture such as hydroponics, aeroponics and aquaponics;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including eligibility criteria and disbursement mechanisms; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण राज्य मंत्री (SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) & (b): Government is implementing Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic and medicinal plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and bamboo. All States and UTs are covered under MIDH.

Under the revised guidelines of MIDH scheme, provision has been made for providing assistance to promote soilless agriculture such as hydroponics and aeroponics. Details of cost norms alongwith the pattern of assistance are as under:

S. No.	Name of the Component	Cost Norms	Pattern of Assistance
1	Hydroponics and Aeroponics	Rs. 350/- per Sq.mt. Above rates will be 15% higher in the case of NE & Himalayan States, Scheduled areas, vibrant villages, Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands.	Assistance @ 50% for a maximum area of 1000 sqm per beneficiary or on pro-rata basis for smaller areas.

Government is also implementing Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) with an objective to address the existing gaps in post-harvest management infrastructure in the country. AIF provides concessional loans through lending institutions, capped at an interest rate of 9%, with an additional 3% interest subvention for loans up to 2 crore. The AIF also supports precision farming and modern agricultural practices, including soilless cultivation techniques such as hydroponics and aeroponics.

Eligible beneficiaries under the AIF Scheme include Farmers, Agri-entrepreneurs, Start-ups, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), Marketing Cooperative Societies, Farmer Producers Organizations (FPOs), Self Help Group (SHG), Joint Liability Groups (JLG), Multipurpose Cooperative Societies, Central/State agency or Local Body sponsored Public Private Partnership Projects, State Agencies, Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC), National & State Federations of Cooperatives, Farmer Produce Organizations (FPO), Federations of FPOs and Federations of Self Help Groups (SHGs). Eligible beneficiaries need to maintain minimum of 10% of the project cost as promoter's contribution for the project.

Apart from the above, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)- Institutes and Universities are engaged in development and standardization of technologies for Hydroponics and Aeroponics for different regions of the country. ICAR- Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), Bangalore, ICAR- Central Potato Research Institute (CPRI), Shimla and ICAR- Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture (CISH), Lucknow are providing trainings and demonstrations to interested stakeholders to create awareness among farmers for adoption of Hydroponic & Aeroponics. Agriculture/ Horticulture Universities are also educating farmers about the benefits of these technologies in water scarce areas of the country.

(c) Does not arise
