



Pawar stresses on high yield seeds

Crop rotation may be made compulsory to achieve improved production

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The minister for agriculture Sharad Pawar has called for developing high yielding varieties of oilseeds and pulses. Pawar stressed on the development of appropriate plant types, exploitation of heterosis in selected crops for development of commercial hybrids and application of biotechnological tools for gene transfer and transgenic development in achieving globally competitive yields.

He was speaking at the meeting of the consultative committee attached to his ministry. The inter-session meeting was called to discuss the "Development of high yielding varieties of oilseeds and pulses".

The minister said that strategies of improving production of oilseeds and pulses

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include the successive development of high yielding varieties in these crops. The national agricultural research system under the guidance of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has brought out more than 200 high yielding varieties of oilseeds and pulses crops.

In the past 5 years, the system has produced 10,200 quintals of breeder seed of

oilseeds and pulses crops as against the indent of only 79,400 quintals seed.

Production of oilseeds in India has increased from 10.83 million tonnes in 1985-86 to 27.26 million tonnes in 2005-06. Still, Pawar noted that the yields of oilseeds crops in the country is poor when compared to other major producing countries. At present Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat,

Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh account for about 80% of the total production of oilseeds in the country.

Pawar informed that production of pulses has remained stagnant at around 14 million tonnes from 1985-86 (13.36 million tonnes) to 2005-06 (13.92 million tonnes). The minister added that the success achieved in respect of oilseeds could be replicated in the case of pulses too by broadening the genetic base of improved varieties.

During deliberations members expressed concern at the current oilseeds and pulses situation in the country. It was suggested that crop rotation be made compulsory to achieve improved crop production and to balance the fertility of soil. The members also emphasized effective technology transfer methods to farmers.