



Mains Practice Question

Q. Pesticide management in India requires broad-based reforms in order to ensure sustainable agricultural practices. Discuss. (250 words)

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Approach

- Highlight the importance of pesticides in India.
- Highlight some challenges in Pesticide Management.
- List out measures that overcome these challenges with a holistic approach.

Introduction

Pesticide usage has exponentially increased in India post-Green Revolution and is projected to grow to over 300 billion rupee market by 2024. Though their usage has ensured Food Security by enhancing productivity, there are also issues associated with their usage.

Body

Issues Associated

- Harmful effect on farmers, as direct and prolonged exposure, can cause diseases like Parkinson's; effect on consumers via. Biomagnification; effect on Environment like Eutrophication leading to low BOD in water bodies.
- Regulatory issues with Insecticides Act, 1968 and Rules, 1971 like only prosecution of manufacturers, Licensing Officer can arbitrarily stop sale for 30 days, outsourcing by large brand companies to smaller manufacturers leading to degradation of quality of products.

To tackle such issues there is a need for broad-based reforms:

- Minimal use of chemical-based pesticide as strategized under SDG targets.
- Robust Regulation of sale and manufacture: categorization based on poison levels as per WHO; compulsory usage of protective gears for those directly handling them; Polluter Pays Principle should be made applicable.
- Code of Conduct for Manufacturers by incorporating the need for balance between commercial interest and protection of the environment, farmers, end-use consumers' health.
- Capacity Building among Farmers to avoid under or over usages and also thrust on adopting organic alternatives like Bio-pesticides.
- Adopting Organic Farming like incentive through Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.

Conclusion

Such holistic measures will enable sustainable usage in the agrarian sector, along with better regulation on manufacturers. This will help in managing challenges accruing from pesticide usage in India.

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