



Use of TB Drugs on Crops

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Why in News

Recently, the Registration Committee (RC) under the **Central Insecticides Board and Registration Committee (CIBRC)** has recommended to ban the use of **antibiotics streptomycin and tetracycline**.

Key Points

- The RC recommended to **ban antibiotics streptomycin and tetracycline with immediate effect** on crops where **other options are available** for bacterial disease control.
- Where **no alternatives** are available, use of these antibiotics should be **phased out by 2022-end**. Till then, the antibiotics could be used on crops strictly as per the label claim i.e. streptomycin sulphate (9%) and tetracycline hydrochloride (1%).
- The RC acknowledged that diseases in crops can be managed by using **integrated pest management** and other practices.
- **Issues Involved:**
 - **Rampant Misuse:** Although streptomycin use is allowed for eight crops by the CIBRC, it was found to be used on many more crops in practice.
 - **Antibiotic Resistance:** Exposure to antibiotics can lead to development of **antibiotic resistance** in humans and animals.
 - **Benefits of Streptomycin:**
 - It has important use for previously treated **tuberculosis (TB)** patients.
 - It is also used in multidrug-resistant TB patients and in certain cases of TB meningitis (brain TB).
 - The **World Health Organization (WHO)** recognises streptomycin as a critically important medicine for human use.

Integrated Pest Management

- It is an **ecosystem-based strategy** that focuses on **long-term prevention of pests or their damage** through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties.
- Pesticides are used only after monitoring and according to established guidelines. **Treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism.**
- Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner **that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment.**

Central Insecticides Board & Registration Committee

- The Central Insecticides Board & Registration Committee (CIBRC) was set up by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** in the year 1970 to regulate the import, manufacture, sale, transport, distribution and use of **insecticides.**
- The insecticides are regulated under **Insecticides Act, 1968 and Insecticides Rules, 1971.**
- The **Central Insecticides Board (CIB)** advises the Central Government and State Governments on technical matters arising out of the administration of Insecticides Act and to carry out the other functions assigned to the Board by or under Insecticides rules.
- To **import or manufacture** any insecticide, registration is required at the **Registration Committee.**

Source: DTE