

(d) Uneven distribution of rainfall in monsoon 2011 led to flood and drought in some parts of the country affecting production of some crops. Due to heavy rainfall during August 2011, rice crop was damaged in low lying areas of West Bengal and parts of Assam and Meghalaya. Floods in the 8 districts of Coastal Orissa in September 2011, caused damage to kharif crops except paddy due to submergence in flood water. Excess rainfall in September caused damage to some crops specially cotton in the Malwa Region of Punjab. In Haryana, due to flood in Yamuna Nagar district around 477 acre of paddy and 504 hectare of sugarcane was adversely affected. In Varanasi district of East Uttar Pradesh, flash flood occurred during August and standing crops were partially affected.

On the other hand, due to deficient rainfall in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh during July-August, early sown groundnut had shown wilting symptoms. Due to poor rainfall in September in the above region, many late sown crops at pod formation/pod development stage suffered from moisture stress affecting their productivity. Due to dry spell in September, sugarcane production in North Coastal Zone of Andhra Pradesh also suffered.

However, despite problems of floods and dry spells in some parts of the country mentioned above, the overall production prospects in the country during Kharif 2011 have been encouraging and as per 1st Advance Estimates for 2011-12, there has been record production of rice, foodgrains, oilseeds and cotton at all-India level during the Kharif season.

Sowing limit of arable land

†1254. SHRI NARESH CHANDRA AGRAWAL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that sowing limit of arable land has become very less due to divisions in families after independence and it is no more remunerative;

(b) if so, the details of such lands as per departmental statistics and whether Government is preparing any scheme to make them profitable; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT):
(a) to (c) The first Agriculture Census, under which data on the structure of agricultural operational

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

holdings are collected, was conducted in 1970-71. According to Agriculture Census data, the average holding size of the agricultural land in the country has declined from 2.28 hectares in 1970-71 to 1.23 hectares in 2005-06. Profitability from agriculture production depends on a number of factors which includes, inter alia, efficiency in use of inputs, weather conditions, availability of credit, yield levels etc. However, there has been a steady increase in agricultural output over the years, though the total cultivable area is more or less unchanged at about 141 million hectares. The foodgrains production has also increased from 234.5 million tonnes in 2008-09 to 241.6 million tonnes in 2010-11.

In order to make agriculture a profitable venture, the Government of India has launched several schemes to increase investments in agriculture sector, for accelerating agricultural growth and to raise farm incomes, such as, the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Development and Strengthening of Infrastructure facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seed, National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM), Gramin Bhandaran Yojana etc. In addition, Government has substantially improved the availability of farm credit; implemented a rehabilitation package for areas with higher agrarian stress; implemented a massive programme of debt waiver; introduced better crop insurance schemes; improving the income earning opportunities of farmers through Minimum Support Price (MSP) policy etc.

Farmers' suicide in Vidarbha

†1255. SHRI OM PRAKASH MATHUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of farmers who committed suicide in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra due to extreme poverty;
- (b) whether Government has provided any financial support to their widows or families; and
- (c) whether Government has formulated any scheme to waive off their bank loans which were due on them at the time of their death?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARISH RAWAT): (a) to (c) As reported by Government of Maharashtra, 1188 farmers in Vidarbha region districts included

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