

Department of Food and Public Distribution also provides financial assistance in form of grant-in-aid to State Governments of North Eastern Region and Jammu & Kashmir for construction of intermediate storage godowns for foodgrains under its Plan Scheme.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) through Central Sector Scheme of Cold Chain, Value Addition and Preservation Infrastructure, also provides financial assistance to various stakeholders including Central/State Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) @ 50% of the total cost of plant & machinery and technical civil works in general areas and 75% for North Eastern region and difficult areas subject to a maximum grant-in-aid of Rs. 10 crore per project.

(c) Under Storage component (erstwhile Grameen Bhandaran Yojana) of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure (AMI) Sub-scheme of Integrated Scheme for Agricultural Marketing (ISAM), since inception in April, 2001, till the end of March, 2015, a total of 583 godowns with a capacity of 34,96,782 MT have been sanctioned and a subsidy of Rs. 13501.99 lakhs has been released in the State of Telangana. In the State of Andhra Pradesh, a total of 1225 godowns with a capacity of 48,33,180 MT have been sanctioned and a subsidy of Rs. 17982.68 lakhs has been released.

The cold storage capacity created under National Horticulture Mission (NHM) up to 31.03.2015 in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana is 3.37 lakh MT and 2.54 lakh MT respectively.

The storage capacity with Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State Agencies as on 31.3.2015 for Central Pool foodgrains in the States of Telangana is of 1.02 lakh MT and in Andhra Pradesh 17.96 lakh MT respectively.

Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) is also operating 28 Warehouses with a total storage capacity of 12.03 lakh MT in the State of Andhra Pradesh 18 warehouses with a total storage capacity of 16.08 lakh MT in the State of Telangana.

Reduction in agricultural land

1409. SHRI GARIKAPATI MOHAN RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the agricultural land in the country is shrinking constantly, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is also a fact that farmers are leaving cultivation and migrating to urban areas in search of livelihood; and

(c) if so, the measures taken by Government to resolve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA) : (a) As per the latest report on Land Use Statistics for 2011-12 compiled by Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, total agricultural land on the country has marginally declined to 182.0 million hectares in 2011-12 as compared to 182.4 million hectares in 2007-08. The decline in agricultural land has been mainly due to diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes such as urbanization, roads, industries, housing etc.

(b) As per Population Census conducted by the Registrar General of India, the total number of agricultural workers in the country increased from 234.1 million (127.3 million cultivators and 106.8 million agricultural labourers) in 2001 to 263.0 million (118.7 million cultivators and 144.3 million agricultural labourers) in 2011.

(c) Government has taken several steps to revitalize agriculture sector and improve the conditions of farming community on sustainable basis by increasing investment, improving farm practices, rural infrastructure and delivery of credit, technology and other inputs. To increase production, productivity and profitability of agriculture profession various crop development programmes/schemes are being implemented through State Governments.

In order to ensure remunerative prices to farmers for their produce, Govt. also announces Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for major agricultural crops for kharif and rabi marketing seasons every year.

Drought in Maharashtra

1410. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that drought has adversely hit more than 90 lakh farmers in Maharashtra, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the financial assistance and other relief measures provided by the Central Government and the State Government to the affected farmers and their livestock?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA) : (a) and (b) State Governments initiate necessary relief measures to farmers in the wake of eligible/notified natural calamities from State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) which is readily available with them. Additional financial assistance to State Government, over and above SDRF, is considered from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) on receipt of relief memoranda from State Governments and in accordance with extant norms and procedures.

During Kharif 2014, Government of Maharashtra reported 26 districts in the State