

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS WELFARE

**RAJYA SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1285**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 02/08/2024

**MONSOON BASED FARMING AND COARSE GRAINS**

**1285. SHRI MADAN RATHORE:**

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of farmers in the country engaged in monsoon based farming;
- (b) whether coarse grains are the main crop produced in monsoon based farming;
- (c) if so, the details of the plan to ensure a fair price for the said coarse grain crop;
- (d) whether it is also a fact that the coarse grains, that are being promoted by Government as "Shri Anna," are of better quality and nutrition; and
- (e) if so, the details of a comparative analysis regarding the health benefits of the use of coarse grains?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE  
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a): Information on percentage of farmers in the country engaged in monsoon based farming is not maintained. However, as per the latest published 'Land Use Statistics-at a Glance 2012-13 to 2021-22', about 45.07 Percent of Gross Un-Irrigated Area out of the total Cropped Area (i.e 219.23 million hectares) is based on monsoon farming.

(b) & (c): Coarse grains are primarily grown during the kharif season in rainfed areas as these crops require less water, the major coarse grains crops grown in the country include, Jowar, Bajra, Maize, Ragi and Small Millet, etc. Government through its Price Policy, ensure remunerative prices to the growers for their produce with a view to encouraging higher investment and production and to safeguard the interest of consumers by making available supplies at reasonable prices.

In this direction, Government announces Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for twenty-two (22) mandated crops including coarse grains, other than cereals such as pulses and oilseeds, and Nutri-cereals/ Shree Anna, by offering a higher MSP for these crops. The Union Budget for 2018-19 had announced the pre-determined principle to keep MSP at levels of one and half (1.5) times of the cost of production. Accordingly, Government is declaring MSPs for all mandated crops including coarse grains with a return of at least 50 per cent over all India weighted average cost of production from the agricultural year 2018-19.

(d) & (e): Shree Anna or Millets were among the first crops to be domesticated in India with several evidence of its' consumption during the Indus valley civilization. In India, Shree Anna are primarily a kharif crop, requiring less water and agricultural inputs than other similar staples. Shree Anna are important by the virtue of its mammoth potential to generate livelihood, increase farmers' income, and to ensure food & nutritional security all over the world. To create awareness among farmers and public about the cultivation practices and health benefits of millets, Government of India had announced the year 2018 as “The National Year of Millets” and UNO declared the Year 2023 as “International Year of Millets”.

Health benefits of the use of coarse grains, identified by Indian Institute of Millet Research, are given below:

- Millets also termed as Nutri-cereals, contribute substantially for food and nutritional security and are highly nutritious.
- Millets possess unique nutritional characteristics specifically have complex carbohydrates, rich in dietary fibre as well as unique in phenolic compounds and phytochemicals having medicinal properties.
- Millets are natural source of iron, zinc, calcium and other nutrients that are essential for curbing the problem of malnutrition in India.
- The comparative nutritional superiority of millets as compared to other monsoon-farming based food grains such as rice are higher protein, fibre, mineral and anti-oxidant content. Millets are good source of minerals like iron, zinc, and calcium.

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