

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:385
ANSWERED ON:23.08.2004
AVAILABILITY OF FOODGRAINS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the per capita availability of foodgrains has declined during the past five years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, year-wise and State-wise alongwith the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the remedial steps taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 385 DUE FOR REPLY ON 23RD AUGUST, 2004.

(a) & (b): There have been fluctuations in per capita availability of foodgrains due to fluctuations in foodgrains production caused by abnonnal variations in weather conditions. The figures of net per capita availability of foodgrains during the period 1998-99 to 2002-03 are given below.

Net Per Capita Availability of Food grains

(Kilograms Per Capita per Year)

Year Net Per Capita Availability

1998-1999	170.0
1999-2000	165.9
2000-2001	151.9
2001-2002	180.4
2002-2003	159.2

As may be seen from the figures given above, though the net percapita availability of foodgrains declined from 170 kilograms per year in 1998-99 to about 152 kilograms per year in 2000-01, it increased to about 180 kilograms per year in 2001-02. While there was record foodgrains production of 212.85 million tonnes in 2001-02, the severe drought of 2002 that adversely affected several States in the country led to a sharp decline in foodgrains production to 174.19 million tonnes in 2002-03, which contributed to the decline in percapita availability of foodgrains in the country in 2002-03.

The figures of per capita availability of foodgrains given in the table have been worked out at the all-India level on the basis of net production, which represents the difference between estimated gross production of foodgrains and the quantity of foodgrains not available for human consumption, i.e. seed, feed and wastage, estimated at 12.5 per cent of the gross production. As net export (e)!:port-import) of foodgrains implies reduction in domestic availability, it is deducted from net production. The difference between net production and net exports is further adjusted for change in stocks. Since increase in stocks implies decline in availability for consumption whereas reduction in stocks (except through exports) implies increase in availability for consumption, the net production is adjusted downward to allow for increase in stock while upward adjustment is made to allow for reduction in stock. The adjusted net production is then divided by population to arrive at the net per capita per year quantity of foodgrains available for human consumption.

(c): Availability does not necessarily mean access, which depends mainly on purchasing power. The Government therefore implements employment generation and welfare schemes to enhance access of the needy sections of population to foodgrains. These include the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana, the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Mid-day Meal Scheme and the Antyodaya Anna Yojana. Besides, the Government also makes arrangements through the mechanism of buffer stock to ensure food security all over the country.

In order to encourage farmers to raise production and productivity of major agricultural commodities, including foodgrains to cope with increase in demand from the growing population, the Government fixes Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) every year. Besides, with a view to raising overall production of agricultural commodities, including foodgrains, the Government have identified the following areas for focused and priority attention.

- . Doubling Rural Credit in three years, easing the burden of debt and high interest rate;
- . Dry Land Farming, promotion of Horticulture production and Water Management; Creation of additional irrigation facilities;
- . Marketing support to farmer's produce for ensuring fair and remunerative prices;
- . Assistance to the farmers under various agricultural and horticultural production programmes;
- . Insurance of crops against production loss due to natural calamities.