

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3129

ANSWERED ON:20.12.2004

DECLINING OF PER CAPITA AVAILABILITY OF FOODGRAINS

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the per capita availability of foodgrains in the country during the last three years and till date;
- (b) whether the per capita availability of foodgrains in the country has declined during the last three years;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefore; and
- (d) the effective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to meet the shortage of per capita availability of foodgrains?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA)

(a): The per capita availability of foodgrains during the last three years, for which figures have been compiled, is given below:

Year	Per capita availability in kilograms per year
2000-01	151.9
2001-02	180.4
2002-03	159.2

(b) & (c): There have been fluctuations in per capita availability of foodgrains due to fluctuations in foodgrains production caused by abnormal variations in weather conditions. The severe drought of 2002, that adversely affected several States in the country, led to a sharp decline in foodgrains production in 2002-03 which contributed to the decline in per capita availability of foodgrains in the country.

(d): 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;
- ? Marketing support to farmers` 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.