

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1226

ANSWERED ON:29.11.2011

AREA UNDER FOODGRAINS CULTIVATION

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the net sown area of certain foodgrains have declined in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the details of sown area of different foodgrains in the country during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise and crop-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to increase the sown area of foodgrains in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI HARISH RAWAT)

(a) & (b): Area sown under the major foodgrains crops has increased in the recent past except during 2009-10 which was a drought year. Crop-wise and State-wise details of area coverage under major foodgrains crops during the last three years and the current year, i.e., 2008-09 to 2011-12 are given in the Annexure.

(c): In order to increase agricultural land in the country, Government of India is implementing various Schemes/ Programmes such as; (i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR), (ii) Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers (RVP & FPR), (iii) Reclamation & Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS) and (iv) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSA).

Further, with a view to prevent the use of agricultural land for non- agricultural purposes and sustaining food security across the country, the Ministry of Agriculture has formulated a National Policy for Farmers-2007 (NPF-2007), which envisages that prime farm land must be conserved for agriculture except under exceptional circumstances, provided that the agencies that are provided with agricultural land for non-agricultural projects should compensate for treatment and full development of equivalent degraded/wastelands elsewhere. Further, for non-agricultural purposes, as far as possible, land with low biological potential for farming should be earmarked and allocated.

Similarly, Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Land Resources has developed a National Rehabilitation & Resettlement Policy, 2007 which envisages that only the minimum area of land commensurate with the purpose of a project may be acquired and, as far as possible, projects may be set up on wasteland, degraded land or un-irrigated land. Acquisition of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes in the projects may be kept to the minimum; multi-cropped land may be avoided to the extent possible for such purposes and acquisition of irrigated land, if unavoidable, may be kept to the minimum.