

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:291  
ANSWERED ON:11.02.2014  
SHRINKING OF AGRICULTURAL LAND  
Patle Kamla Devi ;Sampath Shri Anirudhan

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether agricultural land is shrinking rapidly in the urban and semi-urban areas across the country due to diversion of such land for non-agricultural purposes;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether a large area of cultivable land have been left uncultivated in various parts of the country during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the corrective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to address the issue?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 291 DUE FOR REPLY ON 11TH FEBRUARY, 2014.

(a) & (b): On account of shift in area for non-agricultural purposes, the agricultural/cultivable land across the country, including in urban and semi-urban areas, has marginally declined from 182.44 million hectares during 2007-08, to 182.03 million hectares during 2010-11. However, as a result of efforts made by the Government under various schemes/programmes to enhance production and productivity in the agriculture sector, the marginal decline in agricultural/cultivable land has not adversely affected agricultural production.

(c) & (d): As per the latest Land Use Statistics, area of cultivable land and uncultivated/fallow land during 2007-08 to 2010-11 is given in the table below:

(in Thousand Hectares)

Year	Cultivable Land	Uncultivated/Fallow lands
2007-08	182439	24979
2008-09	182459	24482
2009-10	182184	26842
2010-11	182032	24589

Source: LUS, 2010-11, Ministry of Agriculture

Keeping cultivable land fallow is a normal practice in agriculture for moisture conservation, control of weeds, pests and diseases, restoration of soil fertility, etc.

(e): As per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, land comes under the purview of State Government and therefore, it is for the State Governments to take suitable steps to check the diversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. Under the, National Policy for Farmers 2007 (NPF 2007), State Governments have been advised to earmark lands with low biological potential such as uncultivable land, land affected by salinity, acidity, etc., for non-agricultural development activities, including industrial and construction activities. National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007 (NRRP, 2007) has recommended that, as far as possible, projects may be set up on wastelands, degraded land or un-irrigated land. Acquisition of agricultural land for non agricultural use in projects may be kept to the minimum and avoided, to the extent possible, in respect of multi-cropped land. Acquisition of irrigated land, if unavoidable, may be kept to the minimum.