

### Crop prospects 2004-05

8.4 Erratic monsoon rainfall in 2004 caused a substantial fall in kharif foodgrains production (Table 8.3). The second advance estimates of foodgrains production released by the Agriculture Ministry on January 19, 2005, puts the kharif foodgrains production at 102.9 million tonnes, which is short of last year's production by nearly 9 million tonnes. Good post-monsoon rains, especially during October 2004, which helped a build up of soil moisture,

and the prevalence of cool weather conditions through rabi season, improved the prospects of rabi foodgrains, and is expected to help offset the loss in kharif foodgrains production partly. The Agriculture Ministry has projected rabi foodgrains production at 103.5 million tonnes, up 3.5 million tonnes from the last season. The overall foodgrains production for the 2004-05 season is, thus, estimated at 206.4 million tonnes, which is nearly 6 million tonnes less than last year.

Crop/Year	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04*	2004-05**
Rice	89.7	85.0	93.3	72.7	87.0	87.8
Wheat	76.4	69.7	72.8	65.1	72.1	73
Coarse Cereals	30.3	31.1	33.4	25.3	37.8	31.9
Pulses	13.4	11.1	13.4	11.1	15.2	13.7
Food grains						
Kharif	105.5	102.1	112.1	87.8	112.0	102.9
Rabi	104.3	94.7	100.8	86.4	100.0	103.5
Total	209.8	196.8	212.9	174.2	212.0	206.4
*4 <sup>th</sup> advance estimates.      ** 2 <sup>nd</sup> advance estimates. Source: Ministry of Agriculture.						

8.5 The kharif shortfall in rice production is expected to be made up in rabi rice production. The total rice production at 87.7 million tonnes is likely to be nearly one million tonnes more than the last year. The production of wheat at 73 million tonnes is also likely to be higher by a similar margin as compared to last year. There is, however, likely to be a shortfall in the production of both coarse cereals and pulses, which are essentially rainfed crops. The shortfall is likely to be particularly pronounced in the case of coarse cereals. The estimated decline of nearly 6 million tonnes in the production of coarse cereals is largely responsible for the decline in the overall foodgrains production in the current year (2004-05).

8.6 Oilseeds production, estimated at 24.8 million tonnes, is marginally less than last year's level (Table-8.4). However, maintenance of production of oilseeds almost at the same level as last year's (which was a record), despite deficient and erratic rainfall, is a matter of satisfaction and is, in a way, endorsement of the Government's recent tilt in the price policy announcements towards the deficient crops of oilseeds and pulses. The production of cotton is also expected to rise significantly mainly because of the remunerative prices that accrued to the farmers last year, attracting the farmers to the

cultivation of cotton. However, the decline in the production of sugarcane continued for the third year in succession, mainly because of the deficient rainfall in the sugar producing regions of Maharashtra.

#### *The international year of rice*

8.7 Rice is life for thousands of millions of people. In Asia alone, more than 2,000 million people obtain 60 to 70 percent of their calories from rice and its products. It is of significant importance for food security in an increasing number of low-income food-deficit countries. However, rice production is facing serious constraints including a declining rate of growth in yields, depletion of natural resources, labour shortages, gender-based conflicts, institutional limitations and environmental pollution. Overcoming hunger, poverty and malnutrition - while protecting the environment - requires collective action by all stakeholders. The diversity of the regions, people, and resources connected within the world's rice-based systems requires a diverse approach for global rice-based development that includes participation from the local to the international level. The United Nations General Assembly had, after having recognised the importance of this crop, declared 2004 as the "International Year of Rice" (IYR) (Box 8.1).

**Table 8.4 : Commercial crop production**

(Million tonnes)

<b>Crop</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04@</b>	<b>2004-05@@</b>
Groundnut	5.3	6.4	7.0	4.4	8.3	6.5
Rapeseed/ Mustard	5.8	4.2	5.1	3.9	5.8	7.6
Soya bean	7.1	5.3	6.0	4.6	7.9	7.8
Other oilseeds	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.2	3.1	3.0
Total nine oilseeds	20.7	18.4	20.7	15.1	25.1	24.8
Cotton*	11.5	9.5	10.0	8.7	13.8	17.1
Jute & Mesta**	10.6	10.6	11.7	11.4	11.2	9.7
Sugarcane	299.3	296.0	297.2	281.6	236.2	234.2

\*Million bales of 170 kgs each;      \*\* Million bales of 180 kgs each  
@ 4th advance estimates      @@ 2<sup>nd</sup> advance estimate  
Source: Ministry of Agriculture.

### **Box 8.1 : The International Year of Rice (IYR)**

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2004 the International Year of Rice (IYR). The theme of the IYR - "**Rice is life**"- reflects the importance of rice as a primary food source, and is drawn from an understanding that rice-based systems are essential for food security, poverty alleviation and improved livelihood. Rice is the staple food of over half of the world's population. In Asia alone, it is observed, more than 2 billion people obtain 60 to 70 per cent of their energy intake from rice and its derivatives; it is the most rapidly growing food source in Africa and is of significant importance to food security in an increasing number of low-income food-deficit countries. Rice-based production systems and their associated post-harvest operations employ nearly 1 billion people in rural areas of developing countries and about four-fifths of the world's rice is grown by small-scale farmers in low-income countries. Efficient and productive rice-based systems are, therefore, essential to economic development and improved quality of life, particularly in rural areas.