

Agriculture production

1.64 The Directorate of Economics & Statistics in its second advance estimates of agricultural production (February 7, 2007) has placed total foodgrains production at 219.3 million tonnes, marginally higher than the 217.3 million tonnes in 2006-07 (final estimate). While the production of *khari* foodgrains is expected to be 5.3 million tonnes (4.8 per cent) higher than the production in 2006-07, *rabi* production is expected to be lower by 3.3 million tonnes. The production of cereals is expected to be 205 million tonnes as against 203.1 million tonnes in 2006-07 (final estimate). The production of pulses, however, is expected to remain almost at the last year's level. The production of oilseeds is also expected to increase from 24.3 million tonnes in 2006-07 to 27.2 million tonnes in 2007-08. Similarly, the production of cash crops, particularly cotton, is likely to remain buoyant.

1.65 There has been a loss of dynamism in the agriculture and allied sectors in recent years. A gradual degradation of natural resources through

overuse and inappropriate use of chemical fertilizers has affected the soil quality resulting in stagnation in the yield levels. Public investment in agriculture has declined and this sector has not been able to attract private investment because of lower/unattractive returns. New initiatives for extending irrigation potential have had a limited success during the Tenth Five Year Plan and only a little over 8 million ha could be brought under irrigation and only three-fourths of that could be utilized. The agricultural extension system has generally not succeeded in reducing the gap between crop yields that could have been obtained through improved practices. The Government of India has launched the National Food Security Mission and the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana to rejuvenate agriculture and improve farm income. Since these programmes have only been launched in the current year, it is not possible to assess their impact. A second green revolution, particularly in the areas which are rain-fed, may be necessary to improve the income of the persons dependent on the agriculture sector.