

Prospects 1999-2000

8.7 The estimated production of rice at 87.5 million tonnes in 1999-2000 is 1.5 million tonnes higher than 1998-99 production of 86 million tonnes despite damage to the rice crop in Orissa (Box 8.1). This is an increase of 1.7 per cent in production. The estimated production of coarse cereals is 29.2 million tonnes as against 31.5 million tonnes produced last year, a decline by about 2.2 million tonnes or about 7 per cent compared to 1998-99. The coarse cereals suffered both on account of lower area coverage due to rainfall deficiency in initial phase of monsoon and productivity fall in later phase of monsoon. The production of pulses this year is expected to be 13.6 million tonnes as against 14.8 million tonnes produced last year. This is a decrease of 1.2 million tonnes (8.2 per cent). Higher output of rice is unlikely to offset fully the decline in production of coarse cereals and wheat. Hence estimated foodgrains output of 199.1 million tonnes in 1999-2000 would be lower by about 4 million tonnes representing a decrease of 1.9 per cent over the preceding year. Overall, the growth in 1999-2000 of agriculture and allied sectors is likely to be only 0.8 per cent compared to a growth of 7.2 per

cent last year. This outcome may turn out to be better than predicted as the widespread rainfall in the second week of February in the northern states augurs well for the rabi crop prospects, especially wheat.

8.8 The kharif production is largely dependent on the monsoon rain whereas rabi output depends both on assured irrigation as in Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and post-monsoon rainfall as in Andhra Pradesh, parts of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The gap between production of kharif and rabi foodgrains narrows down whenever there is a good monsoon season.

8.9 The oilseeds production in 1999-2000 is expected to be 21.6 million tonnes compared to 25.2 million tonnes produced last year. This is ascribed mainly to a large decline in groundnut production in Gujarat. The overall production of cotton is likely to be marginally lower at 12.1 million bales compared to 12.2 million bales achieved last year.

8.10 The production of foodgrains in the country during the last four years and the current year's likely production is given in Table 8.4.

BOX 8.1 Cyclonic Damage in Orissa

- Important kharif crops sown in Orissa are rice, oilseeds and pulses. Due to the recent super cyclone in the state of Orissa, districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Khurda, Mayurbhunj, Nayagarh, Puri and Dhankanal have been worst affected. These districts account for about 40 per cent of crop area as well as production. Loss of output in Kharif crops in these affected districts is expected to be quite substantial. Decline in Kharif rice production is likely to be 8 lakh to 10 lakh tonnes.
- Among rabi crops, sowing of rabi rice may not be affected as it usually starts in Orissa in the first week of December. However, sowing of other rabi crops such as groundnut, castorseed, linseed, sunflower may be adversely affected as usual start time of sowing of these crops is between the second week of October to the first week of November.

TABLE 8.4
Foodgrains Production
(Million Tonnes)

Crop	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000*
Rice	77.0	81.7	82.5	86.0	87.5
Wheat	62.1	69.4	66.3	70.8	68.7
Coarse Cereals	29.0	34.1	30.4	31.5	29.2
Pulses	12.3	14.2	13.0	14.8	13.5
Foodgrains	180.4	199.4	192.3	203.0	199.1
Kharif	95.1	103.9	101.6	103.3	103.2
Rabi	85.3	95.5	90.7	99.7	95.9

* Estimated.