

Agriculture



The new Government accorded high priority to development of Agriculture as two thirds of the State's population are dependent on agriculture and 95% of the cultivable land is with the small and marginal farmers.

Agriculture Department is entrusted with this vital task. It formulates appropriate policy to make their farming economically viable in a sustainable manner.

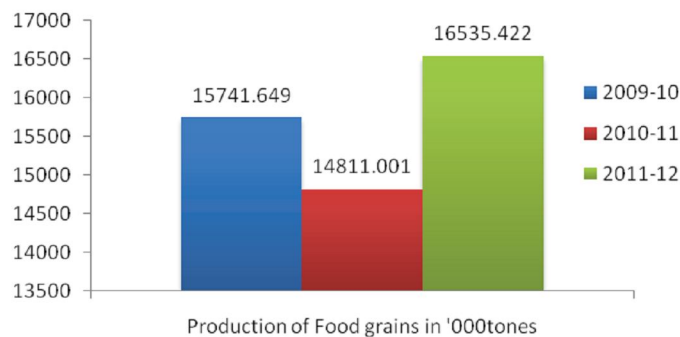
The performance of the Agriculture department over the last three years in the various sectors is as follows: -

1. **Production of Food Grains:** The following table indicates the production of various Agricultural produce over the last three years. There has been a significant increase in the production of cereals : -

Sl. No.	Name of the Crop	Total Production '000 tones		
		2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 - 12
1	Cereals (Rice)	14340.61	13389.61	15044.00
2	Wheat	846.66	874.42	908.00
3	Maize (Total)	385.22	352.32	363.50
4	Barley	2.35	2.79	2.80
5	Jowar	0.63	0.01	0.70
6	Bajra	0.02	0.02	0.03
7	Small millets	1.83	1.35	1.94
8	Ragi	13.90	13.83	16.00
	Total Cereals	15591.22	14634.35	16336.97
9	Pulses (Kharif + Rabi)	150.43	176.52	198.45
	Total Food-grains (Cereals + Pulses)	15741.65	14810.87	16535.42
11	Total Oilseeds (Kharif + Rabi + Rabi summer)	726.72	703.27	751.35
12	Jute *	9324.97	8137.47	8558.61
13	Cotton **	3.26	1.09	3.50
14	Sugarcane	1000.81	1134.06	1175.00
15	Potato	13838.13	13421.00	10700.00

* Jute yield rate is in bales of 180 Kg/ha. & the Production is in '000 bales

** Cotton yield rate is in bales of 170Kg/ha. & the Production is in '000 bales

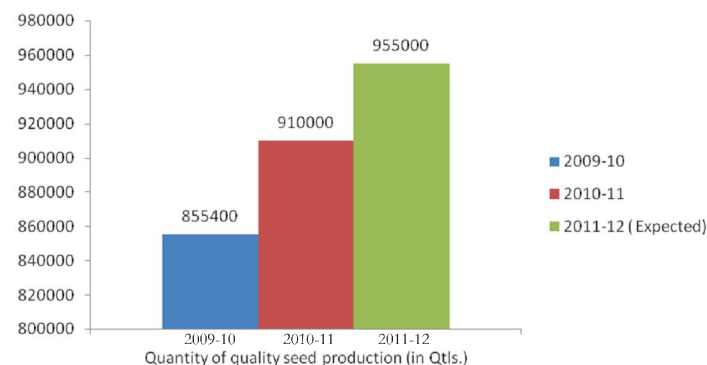


2. **KCC:** A special drive was launched for issue of KCCs during the year. More than 7 lac KCCs were issued as shown in the table below:



3. **Seed Production:** Efforts have been made to increase the quantity and quality of seeds; 95500 MT were produced.

Seed production. The comparative figures for the three years are :



4. **Fertilizers:** Inspite of the major increase in prices since 2010 in non urea fertilizers, the availability of fertilizers was a top priority for the state Government. To ensure availability at MRP special drive was undertaken. The following indicates the details of the enforcement carried out : -

Sl. No.	Year	Number of Shop Inspected	Number of Action Taken					
			Suspension	Cancellation	Lodge FIR	No. of seizures of fertilizers	Show causes issued	No. of A.L. revoked
1	2009-10	2648	5	3	Nil	Nil	249	5
2	2010-11	2121	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	262	1
3	2011-12	9845	357	116	27	18	5262	117

5. There has been a significant increase in production and consumption of **Organic Inputs** during 2011-12 in comparison to the preceeding years of 2009-10 and 2010-11, as indicated in the following table :

Sl. No.	Name of organic Inputs	Quantity in concerned Year		
		2009 -10	2010 -11	2011-12
1	Bio -fertilizers	950.0 MT	1025.0 MT	1110 .0 MT
2	Organic manures	37.8 Lakh MT	40.90 Lakh MT	42.40 Lakh MT
3	Vermicompost	21.0 Lakh MT	22.20 Lakh MT	23.8. Lakh MT
4	Green Manuring	6.44 Lakh Hac.	6.45 Lakh Hac.	6.85 Lakh Hac.
5	Compost (City + Rural)	84 .0 Lakh MT	85.40 Lakh MT	87.70 Lakh MT

As a part of the strategy to improve the economic viability of Agricultural production major thrust is being given on :

1. **Increasing Productivity and Alternate cropping :**
There is a major thrust in motivating the Farmers to move away from the traditional crops of Paddy and Potato to enable the farmers to realize better price for their produce. The crops involved are :
 - a. Pulses;
 - b. Oilseeds;
 - c. Wheat;
 - d. Maize etc.;
2. **Improvement in quality of seed and its availability:** In this connection, on one hand decision has been taken to strengthen the seed certification system, efforts are being made to improve the infrastructure and consequently the quality of the Seed Testing. Steps are being taken to develop the Red Laterile Zone of West Bengal into a Seed hub.
3. **Improved Cultural practices:** All out efforts are being made to improve extension, by expanding demonstration centres (DCs) as well as Farmer visits to the DCs.

For delivering these benefits to the farmers, a mission mode approach has been envisaged in the following sectors: -

1. Credit & Insurance.
2. Soil Health Improvement
3. Watershed Management Mission
4. Improvement in the Quality of Seeds.
5. Increased Farm Mechanization.
6. Better Plant Health Management.
7. Issuance of Farmer Advisories
8. Rewarding the best farmer in each block as 'Krishak Ratna' every year.
9. Disaster Management.

As a part of these, various schemes have been taken up or are proposed to be taken up as a part of the policy decisions taken by the Government. Some of these are:

1. DCs covering 67,000 Ha, involving 2.25 Lakh farmers were taken up for Paddy and Wheat in 2011 - 12. It has been decided to establish Agricultural Production Centres (Krishi Utpadan Kendras) in every Block. These shall centre around demonstration centres for the staples and alternative crops. It is expected that around 2.20 Lakh Hectares of farmland involving around 6 Lakh farmers shall be taken up under DCs this year. These DCs shall have :
 - a. 100 % coverage of all Farmers under the KCC ;
 - b. Providing free of cost Crop Insurance coverage ;

- c. Supply of quality inputs, free of cost ;
 - d. On the spot guidance through dedicated Subject Matter specialists ;
 - e. Buy back guarantee of the Staples produced at MSP (Minimum Support Price)
2. Efforts shall be made to ensure a further coverage of 15 Lakh Farmers under the KCC thereby making available access to Institutional Finance to at least 25 Lakh Farmers. These shall also be brought under subsidized Crop Insurance cover, with the Government providing free cover for non commercial crops, and a subsidized cover for Potato. As a part of this process, notifications for insurance shall be introduced at the level of GPs and steps taken to ensure that CCEs are suitably carried out.
 3. Soil amelioration has been a major activity. This shall continue to be a major intervention this year, with emphasis on reclaiming acidic soils. A sms based Fertilizer advisory has been developed for Farmers. Improvement shall be effected in connection with efficiencies in application of Fertilizers. Integration of FMS (Mobile Fertilizer Management System) with Soil advisory shall be done along with an increased coverage of institutional soil testing to enable better soil advisories.
 4. Meteorological data collection shall be automated and coverage shall be increased.
 5. Pest surveillance operations shall be taken up. Preliminary work has already started in this connection.
 6. The extent of Farmers' Advisories shall be extended and issuance universalized.
 7. IWMP (Integrated Watershed Management Program) has been sanctioned and the work on Watershed management shall begin in right earnest now. The Department intends to ground projects covering an area of about 3.23 Lakh Hectares and further proposes projects covering area of 2 Lakh Hectares. Efforts shall also be made to ensure introduction of micro water irrigation in water stressed areas.
 8. Farm mechanization will be given a boost by ensuring that more implement hubs are set up in every block.
 9. Extension shall be given a fillip with the engagement of Subject Matter Specialists as well as 'Krishak Bandhus'.
 10. To improve the quality of education in the Agricultural Sector, Colleges shall be set up at the district level.
 11. To get better focus on the activities of the Department, the Agriculture Directorate is being reorganized.