

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**QUESTION NO 12.11.2010**

**ANSWERED ON**  
**USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND FOR OTHER PURPOSES .**

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Shri T.M. Selvaganapathi

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that the agricultural growth remains central to poverty reduction;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that 60 per cent of Indian population depend upon agricultural activities;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that food production in terms of figures may have increased but there has been drastic reduction of areas used for farming due to diversion of agricultural land for other purposes; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken by Government to prevent usage of agricultural land for other purposes?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION)

(SHRI K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): The share of agriculture in Gross Domestic Product is currently (2009-10 at 2004-05 prices) at 14.6 per cent.

Despite the declining of share of agriculture in the country's GDP, nearly 58.2 per cent of the work force is depending on agricultural activities. Hence the growth in agriculture is critical for poverty reduction in the country.

(c): Production of foodgrains has increased from 208.60 million tonnes in 2005-06 to 234.74 million tonnes in 2008-09. The total agricultural land at all-India level marginally declined from 183.19 million hectares in 2003-04 to 182.44 million hectares in 2007-08. There are several factors that determine the area under agriculture such as weather, farmers' preference for cultivation depending on the profitability of the crops, availability of alternate economic opportunities etc. Normally fertile agriculture land is not allowed to be converted to non- agricultural use excepting in special cases.

(d): In order to increase the agricultural land area in the country, the Government is implementing various Programmes/Schemes, such as,

- (i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA),
- (ii) Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers (RVP & FPR),
- (iii) Reclamation & Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS) and
- (iv) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA). At all-India level, the barren and unculturable land area has declined from 17.46 million ha. in 2005-06 to 17.29 million ha. in 2007-08 as a result of the efforts made under different programmes of the government.