

## INDIA - Agricultural Census 1986 - Explanatory Notes

**Historical outline:** India has been participating in every World Census of Agriculture (WCA) round since 1930. In 1930, 1950, and 1960, data required by the WCA were collected through sample surveys carried out by the Directorate of National Sample Survey which gave estimates for the country as a whole and for single States. The 1970-71 Census is considered the first comprehensive Census of Agriculture conducted in India. Following the decision to conduct the census on a quinquennial basis, agricultural censuses were successively undertaken in 1976-77, 1980-81, and the one here reported, in 1985-86.

**Organization:** Agricultural Census is a Central Plan Scheme implemented by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC) in the Ministry of Agriculture of India. The Agricultural Census Division in the DAC is headed by a Joint Secretary who is designated as the Agricultural Census Commissioner. Each State and Union Territory (UT) of the Country is provided with a technical unit consisting of full-time officers and other staff, entrusted with agricultural census operations.

**Enumeration period:** The census was carried out in 1985-86.

**Reference date:** All data refer to the agricultural year July 1985 to June 1986.

**Definition:** The Operational Holding is defined as the land wholly or partly used for agricultural production and operated as one technical unit by one person, alone or with others, without regard to title, legal form, size or location.

**Coverage:** The census covered the 29 States and Union Territories of the Country.

**Frame:** In some States and Union Territories the frame was given by the existing comprehensive Land Record System. In the States and UTs for which a comprehensive Land Record System did not exist, the list of all villages in each Patwari Circle or in each Revenue Inspector Circles, or, in turn, in Tehsils, (administrative subdivisions of the District), was used.

### Methods:

- In the States/UTs reporting Land Records information on number and area of operational holdings was collected on a complete enumeration basis, through retabulation of information available in the village Land Records, while information on other items was collected on a sampling basis: 20% of the villages selected randomly constituted the base. In these 20% villages, information on items different from number and area of holdings was compiled from the Relevant Revenue Records in respect of all resident cultivators.
- In the States/UTs not reporting Land Records a stratified two-stage sampling design was applied: at first stage, the village, at second stage, the operational holding.

From each District of the States, 20% of the villages were selected by a simple random sampling method. All operational holdings in the villages were listed in 5 major categories: Marginal (below 1 Ha), Small (1-2 Ha), Semi-Medium (2-4 Ha), Medium (4-10 Ha), Large (10 Ha and above). 25% of the holdings were selected from each of the first four categories, on the basis of circular systematic sampling methods, while all holdings were considered in the fifth category. For smaller States/UTs, the sample size could be larger than 20%.

**Data source:** Ministry of Agriculture - Department of Agriculture and Co-operation - All India Report on Agricultural Census 1985-86, New Delhi, 1992.

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