PREFACE

First comprehensive Agriculture Census was carried out in India with agricultural year 1970-71 (July-June) as the reference period as part of World Agriculture Census Programme. The operational holding is considered to be the fundamental unit of decision making in all programmes of agricultural development. In keeping with the international practice, basic unit of enumeration was taken as ‘Operational holding’ as distinct from ‘Ownership holding’ in India.

Encouraged by the utility of data generated by the first agriculture census for use in planning and policy formulation, the National Commission on Agriculture (1976) recommended that the Agriculture Census be carried out once in five years. Accordingly, the second Agriculture Census was conducted with 1976-77 as the reference year. An Input Survey was also conducted as part of this census to provide State level estimates of consumption of various inputs by different size classes of holdings.

The third Agriculture Census, with 1980-81 as the reference year, further amplified the scope of the census by collecting separately details about the holdings operated by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Besides, the sample size for the Input Survey was increased to cater to the requirements of disaggregated data for micro and macro level planning. The Agriculture Census 2005-06 is eighth in the series.

This gigantic task of the Census could not have been accomplished without cooperation of the States and Union Territories. Lakhs of Patwaris/Village Assistants/Inspectors of State Governments were involved in collection of primary data at village level. The State Agriculture Census Commissioners and State Technical Officers have taken great pains to ensure accuracy of field data and its timely completion as far as possible. I express my thanks to all these officers of the States/Union Territories who participated in the programme.

I would like to place on record my appreciation for the excellent work rendered by officers and staff of the Agriculture Census Division of the Ministry under the able guidance of Dr. Vidya Dhar, Agriculture Census Commissioner, Government of India, in bringing out the Report.

The assistance provided by the National Informatics Centre, New Delhi/DOEACCs in computerizing the Agriculture Census 2005-06 data, is also appreciated.

I hope the Report would be useful to all those who are concerned with the development of agriculture sector.

(S. Bhavani)