

## CHAPTER II

### FOOD PRODUCTION.

The final forecasts for the current years rice production that have now become available indicate that a further rise has been recorded in the yield of rice in the State.

It has often been remarked that the drive for increased food production has not been taken seriously in Kerala where production of rice has allegedly remained static at about the same level over the last few years. These observations are based on the Final Forecasts of the Department of Statistics. The forecasts are based on some rough and ready statistical methods capable of giving quick results. These forecasts are later on revised in the light of some surveys that are carried out in a more scientific manner. One of them is a Land Utilization Survey conducted annually to make possible objective estimates of acreage under different crops; the second is a survey that involves sample cutting of actual crops standing in the fields in different parts of the State permitting the formation of an estimate of the average yield per acre of a crop. The following table shows these revised estimates for the years 1955-56 to 1958-59. The table also provides the Final Forecast for 1959-60, partly revised in the manner described above.

TABLE —2.1

#### Acreage, mean yield and Production of Rice in Kerala.

<i>year</i>	<i>Area in lakh acres</i>	<i>Mean yield of paddy per acre (lbs.)</i>	<i>Production of rice (lakh tons)</i>
1955-56	18.76	1580	8.69
1956-57	18.83	1581	8.73
1957-58	18.95	1639	9.10
1958-59	18.99	1687	9.39
1959-60	...	...	9.82

(The figures for all years excepting 1959-60 are based on the Land Utilisation Survey conducted by the Department of Statistics. The figure for 1959-60 is its Final Forecasts, partially revised in the light of the Land Utilization Survey.)

2.2. It is seen that rice production in Kerala has gone up during each of the preceding five years. This is a remarkable achievement even in comparison with that of the whole of India. For, for the whole of India the food production statistics does not show any systematically rising trend but oscillates violently (See table 2.2)

TABLE—2.2

### Production of Foodgrains and Rice in India.

Year	Foodgrains (Million tons)	Rice
1952-53	58.3	22.5
1953-54	68.7	27.8
1954-55	67.0	24.8
1955-56	65.8	27.1
1956-57	68.7	28.3
1957-58	62.5	24.9
1958-59	73.5	29.7

The difference is accounted by the fact that the Kerala State is much less affected by the vagaries of nature than many other parts of India. But this must also mean that whatever increase in production has taken place is due entirely to the development efforts of the State. This of course is not true of India where bumper harvests are recorded every now and then due to unusually favourable seasonal conditions.