

## Pulses : Growth, Regional Distribution and Area Responses

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Experiments conducted in mid-sixties indicated that proper use of new seeds coupled with scientific inputs such as chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides could help raising the production levels of many agricultural commodities. Adopting these innovations the economy raised its foodgrains production level from 89.36 million tonnes in 1964-65 to 108.42 million tonnes in 1970-71. But in the four subsequent years the 1970-71 level was never achieved. This led many economists to talk about stagnation in agricultural production. In 1975-76 the pendulum reversed its direction giving raise to a significant increase in foodgrains production. This and the continuous increase in production levels achieved in the years that followed has led to an air of optimism - the 129.87 million tonnes of foodgrains production achieved in 1980-81, despite erratic rainfall in several parts of the country and the estimated 134 million tonnes of foodgrains production for the year 1981-82 has made many to genuinely believe now that the country has finally solved forever its long sustained food problem. In general this does not appear as an unjust contention. However, it needs to be appended with an unencouraging note related to pulses, since over years the production level of pulses has remained stagnant, around 11 million tonnes. Indeed the net 9.77 million tonnes supply of 1980-81 indicates that the supply is short of the requirements by about 0.43 million tonnes. If the present trend continues with the future also, other things being same, by the turn of the century the economy is likely to face with a deficit of 3.45 million tonnes. Accordingly, the achievements accomplished by the agricultural sector may not be considered as that satisfactory. Therefore, there exists a timely need to examine the ways and means of averting potential short-supplies of pulses. For obvious reasons, these need to be examined in relation with the mechanics that have been governing the current production process. These aspects, however, were left untouched in numerous empirical studies conducted with reference to Indian agriculture. Hence, a modest attempt is made in this paper to understand the *modus operandi* of the observed pulses production.