



CHANGING PATTERN OF LAND UTILIZATION AND CROPPING IN AGRICULTURALLY DEPENDENT DISTRICT IN KERALA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture is an important sector of the Indian economy. Although its contribution in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has reduced from 30 percent in 1990-91 to less than 15 per cent in 2011-12, it has greater role in the developmental scenario of the nation (Government of India, 2012). In the nation an average individual still spends almost half of total expenditure on food and half of nation's work force is still engaged in agriculture for livelihood. Being both a source of livelihood and food security for a vast majority of low income, poor and vulnerable sections of society, performance of agricultural sector assumes greater significance in view of the proposed National Food Security Bill. Many policy makers have been attracted to study the problems of land use in the country with a view to finding out ways and means for food security and employment. Such studies are ranging from registers of land use surveys to isolated topical or regional descriptive accounts of land use variations both in space and time. A rational assessment of land and its scientific utilization has become important. It is possible only if the whole complex of land use is studied at the district, Tahsil or even village level by taking into account the local physical and socio-economic conditions (Muhammed, 1978). The study of land use in its spatial context is essential to understand the area of optimum land use and productive areas. Rao and Vaidyanadan (2005) pointed out that a comprehensive study of land use is immense value to ensure better returns from the land to meet future requirements for food, and industrial raw materials and for successful planning of agricultural growth, organized urbanization, regional development, employment generation and thereby to accelerate the process of development in the country. It is also useful for planners to evaluate the possibilities and limitations of development to avoid or restrict disagreeable trends of land exploitation to adjust the forms of land use in to intensive and productive.

KEYWORDS: *Agriculture, Land Use, Agricultural Growth, Livelihood, Food Grains, Food Crops.*