

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

In this last concluding chapter of the present dissertation, we intend to summarise and highlight the major findings which are as follows :

Despite 35 year's of planned economic development, which laid emphasis on industrilization of the country, the agricultural sector is still dominant sector in Kopargaoon taluka considered from both the view points of employment and production. Since there are no other major industrial activities agricultural is the only sector which absorbs a large proportion of total population in the taluka.

From the analysis of the land utilization statistics in Kopargaoon taluka our major findigs are :

- 1) Kopargaoon taluka being and interior part of the Maharashtra state, no changes in its borders did occurs. As such the geographical area of taluka did not change at all. Similarly the area under forest in the taluka remained unchanged throughout the year under study. No efforts seems to have been made to increase the area under forest either by the Government forest department or voluntary agencies

- 2) Another major land use category viz. area not available for cultivation remained constant in as much as its percentage to the total geographical area of the taluka remained constant(round about roughly 12 percent). However, the land put to non agricultural uses has been continuously increasing from 1972-73. By the end of the period under study(1980-81) the area under this land use category increased by nearly two and half times as compared to the base year. The area under barren and unculturable land use category remained almost unchanged throughout the period.
- 3) The behaviour of other uncultivated land, which includes cultivable waste lands, permanent pastures and grazing grounds and land under tree crops and miscellaneous groves, reveals an increasing trend from 1972-74. The area under cultivable waste has increased by three fold as compared to the base year. This could be ascribed to the increasing trend of farmers to convert their agricultural lands especially situated around the major towns, into non agricultural lands. The other land use category i.e. the permanent pastures and grazing grounds also reveals an increasing trend during the latter part of the period.

- 4) The total area under fallow inclusive of both current fallow's (Ploughed and harrowed but left uncropped for a year) and other fallows fluctuated rather violently from year to year. The year to year changes in the area under current fallow are mostly caused by the favourable and unfavourable of both the south-west and north east monsoon conditions. The lack of an early, timely and evenly spread precipitation in both the agricultural seasons (Kharif and rabi) causes the agricultural lands to remain uncropped for that year. The occurrence of the drought years affect severely the net sown area and also gross cropped area. As a result the area under current fallow goes up during the drought years and it comes down during the agriculturally good years. This could be substantiated by observing the respective columns of the land utilization Table No. 2.1. A little more than three fourth of the total area under cultivation, is subject to the frequent occurrence of drought conditions. Hence we observe the upward movements in the area under current fallow during the period under study.
- 5) Gross cropped area which equal the net area sown plus area sown more than once in a year shows the declining trend as the index numbers of the gross cropped area, with the exception of the a year or two, remained below the base

years level. The area sown more than once in the normal agricultural years seems to have not contributed much to the expansion of the gross cropped area. The net area sown also reveals a declining trend, as the index numbers remained below the base years level. Despite the increasing trend of the irrigated area, the area sown more than once did not show a corresponding increasing trend. This could be taken as an indication of the fact, that the farmers did not shift to the multiple cropping pattern in the irrigated areas rather they prefer to cultivate sugarcane which is perennial crop and highly water intensive. Even though R.Jowar is the major cereal, in the recent years there has been shift to the cultivation of superior cereals like rice and wheat. The performance of these two crops in respect of area and yield seem to be more satisfactory than that of R.Jowar. Since 1974-75 the farmers have been diverted their lands to the cultivation of high yielding varieties of K.Jowar. Though the majority of the farmers cultivate R.Jowar relatively on a large scale, no efforts seem to have been made to introduce high yielding varieties of R.Jowar. The local varieties and traditional methods of cultivating it are still in vogue.

The performance of bajari, an another important cereal, in respect of production and yield, seems to be rather poor as compared to that of other cereals. In recent years bajari has been yielding to other superior cereals like wheat and K.Jowar.

The area under all cereals seems to have remained unchanged. This is evident from the percentage shares of the area under all cereals to the net area sown worked out for the individual years of the period. Notwithstanding the output of the cereals taken together has been increasing since 1973-74. The year to year variations in respect of area under different cereals might have been caused by the decisions as to allocation of agricultural lands to different crops taken at micro level.

The cultivation of the cereals is still the predominant activity of the farmers considered from the point of view of the relative percentage shares of the area under cereals and the production of the cereals in the aggregate area under food-grain and aggregate production of all food grains relatively. These two respective percentages remained above 90% over the entire period.

Cultivation of pulses in the taluka seems to be quite insignificant considered in terms of the proportions of the area occupied by them and their output to the total area occupied by all food grains and their production respectively.

The recent rise in the relative prices of pulses did not bring about an expansion in the area under pulses. In respect of their production and yield there is no remarkable improvement as compared with the production and yield of improved major cereals. No attempt seems to have been made to invent high yielding varieties of pulses. Hence an imbalance in respect of agricultural production has emerged in the taluka.

The percentage of the irrigated area under government canal to the net irrigated area has been declining, where as the percentage of the irrigated by private wells has been increasing. Only during 1977-79 the percentage of the area under government canals increased as a consequence the percentage irrigated by private wells fell off. During the latter part of the period, we observe from the table, there has been an increasing tendency on the part of the farmers to reduce the dependence on the government canal by bringing the area increasingly under well irrigation. One more tendency of which we should take note of that the percentage of the area irrigated more than once in the gross irrigated area has been increasing, as the index number remained on the ascendancy during the latter part of the period. This is an indicative of the farmers in an increasing trend towards multiple cropping system. Incidentally the wells are being used for protective irrigation in the sense that when the rotation of water supply from the government canals put off indefinitely, the farmers turned towards well irrigation

as a stop gap arrangement. Since 1973-74, with the increasing area irrigated more than once, the gross irrigated area has been rising. The increasing trend towards expansion of the area irrigated more than once, which is more pronounced during the latter part of the period might have been due to the change in the government's policy regarding the water supply from the government canal. Instead of supplying water for perennially irrigated crops such as sugarcane, the water could be distributed equitably amongst the short duration food crops. Another aspect of the new water supply policy is that the government canal water should not be supplied to the big cultivators who use the water for cultivating the highly water intensive crops, to the small and marginal cultivators who could be induced to shift to double cropping especially to the cultivation of food crops twice in a year, through ensured supply of the government canal water.

Contrary to the popular belief that with the growth of irrigation facilities the area under perennially irrigated crop in our case sugarcane, increases paripasu, from the analysis of the behaviour of area under sugarcane, we may conclude that the area under sugarcane did not increase commensurately with net area irrigated in the taluka over the entire period. In point of fact the percentage of the sugarcane area did never

exceed even roughly 45 percent of the net irrigated area throughout the period. The remaining 55 percent of the net irrigated area in the taluka had not been brought under cultivation of sugarcane from the very beginning of the period of our study either due to the inadequate supply of water to the lands situated far away from the government canal, even though they come under the command area of the government canal or the farmers tendency to give preference to cultivate double crops over the cultivation of single crop on the irrigated land.

The area under edible oil seeds remained more or less constant throughout the period considered, in terms of its percentage to the net sown area of the taluka. Among the oil seeds ground-nut could be regarded as a major oil seed crops cultivated in the taluka. However, considered in terms of its area percentage to the net sown area, it occupies a very insignificant place in the over all cropping pattern of the taluka. It is interesting to note that the recent relative rise in the prices of oil seeds did not induce farmers to give preference to the cultivation of oil seeds while making allocation of agricultural lands as between the various crops grown in taluka.

By way of concluding remark, we may mention that, by and large, the over all cropping pattern in the taluka more or less remained as it was in the beginning of the period. Still the overwhelming majority of the farmers give preference to the



cultivation of cereals partly to meet their consumption requirement and partly to meet their limited monetary requirements. Hence subsistence farming still persists in Kopargaoon taluka.