

Long Answer Questions

Q.1. How does social inability to buy food also play a role in food insecurity?

Ans. (i) The SCs, STs and some sections of the OBCs, who have low land productivity are prone to food insecurity.

(ii) The people who are affected by natural disasters and have to migrate to other areas in search of work are also amongst the most food insecure people.

(iii) Malnutrition among women can even put the unborn baby at the risk of malnutrition.

(iv) A large proportion of pregnant and nursing mothers, and children under the age of 5 years are also among the food insecure population.

Q.2. How did India aim at self-sufficiency in food grains after independence?

Ans. (i) After independence, the Indian policy makers adopted all measures to achieve self-sufficiency.

(ii) India has adopted a new strategy in agriculture called the 'Green Revolution', which is introduced in the production of rice and wheat.

(iii) Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India officially recorded the success of the Green Revolution by releasing a special stamp entitled 'Wheat Revolution'.

(iv) The success of wheat was later replicated in rice.

(v) The highest rate of growth was achieved in Punjab and Haryana where food grains production jumped to an all-time high.

(vi) Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh on the other hand, recorded significant increase in rice yield.

Q.3. What is 'buffer stock'? Why was it created by the government?

OR

Mention the activities of Food Corporation of India (FCI).

Ans. Buffer stock is the stock of food grains, namely wheat and rice procured by the government through Food Corporation of India (FCI).

(i) The FCI purchases wheat and rice from the farmers in states where there is surplus production.

(ii) The farmers are paid a pre-announced price for their crops. This price is called Minimum Support Price (MSP).

(iii) The MSP is declared by the government every year, before the sowing season to provide incentives to the farmers for raising the production of these crops.

(iv) The purchased food grains are stored in granaries by the government.

(v) This is done to distribute food grains in the deficit areas and among the poorer strata of society, at a price lower than the market price also known as Issue Price.

(vi) This also helps to resolve the problem of shortage of food during adverse weather conditions or during the periods of calamity.

Q.4. What is the Public Distribution System?

Ans. (i) When the food procured by the FCI is distributed through government regulated ration shops among the poor sections of the society, it is called the Public Distribution System (PDS).

(ii) Ration shops are now present in most localities, villages, towns and cities.

(iii) Ration shops are also known as 'Fair Price Shops', which keep stock of food grains, sugar, kerosene oil for cooking.

(iv) Items such as these are sold to people at a price lower than the market price.

(v) Any family with a ration card can buy a stipulated amount of these items every month from a nearby ration shop, depending on the number of family members.

Q.5. What is the 'rationing system'?

Ans. (i) It was introduced in India in the 1940s after the Bengal Famine.

(ii) The rationing system was revived in the 1960s due to food shortage in India.

(iii) Due to high incidence of poverty in the mid-1970s reported by NSSO, three food intervention programmes were introduced:

(a) Public Distribution System (PDS) for food grains; already existed but strengthened later on.

(b) Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) introduced in 1975 on an experimental basis.

(c) Food For Work (FFW) Programme launched in 2004 in 150 most backward districts of the country to intensify the generation of supplementary wage employment.

Q.6. What are some of the important features of the PDS?

Ans. (i) It is the most effective government policy in stabilising prices and making food available to consumers at affordable prices.

(ii) It helps in averting widespread hunger and famine by supplying food from surplus regions of the country to the deficit areas.

(iii) The prices have been under revision in favour of poor households in general.

(iv) Minimum Support Price announcement has increased the food production and provided income security to farmers.

Q.7. Who are food insecure in India? What is their social composition? How are they scattered over in the country?

Ans. (i) Although a large section of people suffer from food and nutrition insecurity in India, the worst affected groups are landless people with little or no land to depend upon, traditional services petty self-employed workers and destitutes including beggars. In the urban areas, the food insecure families are those whose working members are generally employed in ill-paid occupations and casual labour market.

(ii) The social composition along with the inability to buy food also plays a role in food insecurity. The SCs, STs and some sections of the OBCs, who have either poor land base or very low land productivity are prone to food insecurity. The people affected by natural disasters who have to migrate to other areas in search of work, are also among the most food insecure people. A large proportion of pregnant and nursing mothers and children under the age of 5 years constitute an important segment of the food insecure population.

(iii) The food insecure people are disproportionately scattered in our large areas in the country.