

SRI LANKA - Agricultural Census 2002 (Small Holdings Sector) Explanatory Notes

Please refer to the Explanatory Notes given at the end of the tables

Number and area of holdings		
	Number of holdings	Area (ha)
Total small holdings	3 264 678	1 531 461
small holdings producing:		
mainly for home consumption	1 477 308	82 119
mainly for sale	1 787 370	1 449 342

Number and area of holdings (producing mainly for sale) by size		
	Number of holdings	Area (ha)
Total	1 787 370	1 449 342
< 0.4 ha	564 379	118 969
0.4 - 0.8	541 203	283 986
0.8 >	681 788	1 046 388

Permanent crops (small holdings producing mainly for home consumption)		
		Number of scattered trees/plants
Coconut	—	5 355 739
Coffee	—	997 866
Black pepper	—	1 016 987
Cloves	—	242 983
Areca nuts	—	1 249 170
Mangoes	—	1 169 307
Oranges	—	344 495
Limes	—	542 948
Jack fruit	—	1 215 533
Plantains	—	3 777 433
Cashew nut	—	228 483
Papaya	—	1 140 474

Permanent crops (small holdings producing mainly for sale)		
	Area in compact plantation (ha)	
Coconut	208 131	—
Tea	91 668	—
Rubber	48 655	—
Cashew nut	17 487	—

Livestock (All small holdings)		
		Head/units
Cattle	—	1 065 960
Buffaloes	—	276 203
Sheep / Goats	—	329 475
Pigs	—	78 013
Chickens	—	10 202 144

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Explanatory Notes

Historical outline: The first attempt to conduct an agricultural census in the country was the Census of Production in 1921. Partial agricultural censuses were then carried out in 1924 and 1929, with the limited scope of collecting information on crop areas, production and livestock numbers at village level. Subsequently, Agricultural Censuses were conducted in 1946, 1952, 1962, 1973, and 1982. The one scheduled to be undertaken in 1992 was not conducted due to the unsettled conditions prevailed on the ground in certain parts of the country. As a result, the last census of agriculture in Sri Lanka, to which data here refer, is the one conducted, after a lapse of 20 years, in 2002.

Organization: The 2002 Census of Agriculture was organized and conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS).

Enumeration period: Data were collected during the period August to October 2002.

Reference date:

Definitions:

Agricultural Holding is the one consisting of all land and/or livestock used wholly or partly for agricultural production, operated under single management, without regard to title of ownership, legal form or size, and situated within one Divisional Secretariat (DS) Division. Any land situated outside the DS Division where the operator is resident, should be considered as a separate agricultural holding.

Estate or Plantation sector: Is an agricultural holding of 20 acres (8.1 hectares) or more in extent. In the case that different parcels may add up to 20 acres, the holding is not considered an estate because the estate should have at least one parcel reaching 20 acres in extent. Similarly, a holding with 20 acres or more of purely paddy land is not considered an estate.

Small Holdings Sector (peasant): are those holdings not falling into the category of estates.

Marginal or Inactive Holdings: are those holdings reporting an area of less than 40 perches (0.11 hectares) and having an agricultural production mainly for home consumption.

Coverage: The census covered the entire country, with the exclusion of the Municipalities of Colombo, Dehiwala, Mount Lavinia and Sri Jayawardanapura Kotte, which are predominantly used for residential and commercial purposes.

Frame:

- For the Small Holding Sector, the list frame was the one prepared for the 2001 Population Census, to investigate housing units, Institutions, collective living quarters and non-housing units in the country, and screening out the agricultural operators.
- For the Estate Sector, an inventory was prepared prior to census proper.

Methods: Two different methods of data collection were applied for the Small (peasant) farm Sector and to the Estate (plantations) Sector

- For the Small Holdings Sector, about 14260 trained enumerators visited every census unit having personal interviews with the operators.
- For the Estate Sector, information was collected through mail questionnaires by sending them to each and every operator/superintendent.

Data source: Small Holding Sector - Preliminary Data Release – web site of the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka.

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