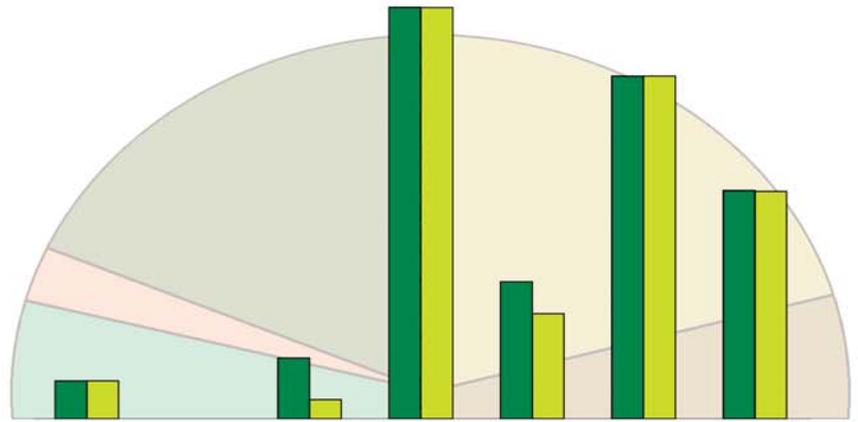# Introduction

Brief History

The Institute made a modest beginning in 1930 as a small Statistical Section in the then Imperial Council of Agricultural Research to assist the State Departments of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry in planning their experiments, analysis of experimental data, interpretation of results and also rendering advice on the formulation of the technical programmes and examining the progress reports of the schemes funded by the Council. The activities of the Section increased rapidly with the appointment of Dr. PV Sukhatme as Statistician to the Council in 1940 and researches were initiated for developing objective and reliable methods for collecting yield statistics of principal food crops. The efficiency and practicability of these methods was demonstrated in different States for estimating yield by crop cutting experiments. The result was such that, in the course of a few years, the method was extended practically to the entire country to cover all principal food and non-food crops.

Research in sampling theory and training of field staff and statistical staff were the activities initiated in this period resulting in the re-organization of the Statistical Section into a Statistical Branch in 1945 with appropriate expansion in its strength. The designation of Statistician was changed to Statistical Advisor. The Statistical Branch was renamed as Statistical Wing in 1949. The Statistical Wing soon acquired international recognition as a centre for research and training in the field of Agricultural Statistics. During 1952 on the recommendations of two FAO experts, Dr. Frank Yates and Dr. DJ Finney, who visited the Council on the invitation of the Government of India, activities of the Statistical Wing were further expanded and diversified. Subsequently, in recognition of its important role as a training and research institution, the Statistical Wing was re-designated as the Institute of Agricultural Research Statistics (IARS) on 02 July 1959. An important landmark in the development of the Institute was the installation of an IBM 1620 Model-II Electronic

Computer in 1964. Another major landmark for the Institute was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi in 1964, consequent to which new courses leading to M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees in Agricultural Statistics were started in collaboration with IARI in October 1964. In April 1970, the Institute was declared as a full-fledged Institute in the ICAR system and is since then headed by a Director. On 01 January 1978 the name of the Institute was changed to Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI) emphasizing the role of 'Agricultural Statistics' as a full-fledged discipline by itself.

The main thrust of the Institute is to conduct basic, applied and adaptive research in Agricultural Statistics and Computer Application, to develop trained manpower and to disseminate knowledge and information produced so as to meet the methodological challenges of agricultural research and also to improve the quality of agricultural research in the country. Through the untiring and concerted efforts of the scientists, the Institute has made its presence felt in the National Agricultural Research System (NARS). The Institute is also becoming progressively a repository of information on agricultural research data and has taken a lead in the country in developing a data warehouse on agricultural research data. The Institute also occupies a place of pride in the National Agricultural Statistics System and has made several important contributions in the strengthening of the National Agricultural Statistics System, which has a direct impact on the national policies. The methodology for agricultural crop insurance based on small area statistics is one of the recent important contributions of the Institute.

As the activities of the Institute started expanding in all directions, the infrastructure facilities also started expanding. Two more buildings 'Computer Centre' and 'Training-cum-Administrative Block' were constructed in the campus of the Institute in the years 1976 and 1991, respectively. A third generation computer Burroughs B-4700 system was installed in March 1977. A large number of computer programs for specific problems as also general purpose application softwares were developed. The Burroughs B-4700 system was replaced in 1991 by a Super Mini COSMOS-486 LAN Server with more than hundred nodes consisting of PC/AT's, PC/XT's and dumb terminals all in a LAN environment. Later, COSMOS-486 LAN Server was replaced by a PENTIUM-90 LAN Server having state-of-art technology with UNIX operating system. Computer laboratories equipped with PCs, terminals and printers, etc. had been set up in each of the six Scientific Divisions as well as in the Administrative Wings of the Institute.

For undertaking research in the newer emerging areas, a laboratory on Remote Sensing (RS) and Geographic Information System (GIS) was created in the Institute. The laboratory was equipped with latest state-of-art technologies like computer hardware and peripherals, Global Positioning System (GPS), softwares like ER Mapper, PC ARC/INFO, Microstation 95, Geomedia Professional, ARC/INFO Workstation and ERDAS Imagine with the funds received through two AP Cess Fund projects. This computing facility has further been strengthened with the procurement of ARC-GIS software under NATP programme.

Recently an Agricultural Bioinformatics Lab (ABL) fully equipped with software and hardware has been created to study crop and animal biology with the latest statistical and computation tools.

The LAN at IASRI has steadily been strengthened and the three buildings of IASRI have been connected using fiber optics cable as backbone and connectivity has been established for 413 nodes, the LAN being switch manageable. E-mail and Internet facilities are being provided to the scientists/technical/administrative staff of IASRI. The Intranet services consisting of E-mail, notice board, details of the account holders, search facility, etc. are also available over the LAN to all the users. The notice board facility is being used for information dissemination among the users of the Institute.

Keeping pace with the emerging technologies in the area of Information Technology (IT), from the year 1998 onwards the computer hardware and software have been constantly upgraded/replaced with newer platforms, new software and upgrades. Currently the internet services are being provided through three secure servers, two of them being high-end servers with multiple CPU capabilities on a 2 Mbps leased line with 1.5 Mbps bandwidth provided under the NATP projects. The computing environment in the Institute has latest PCs, note book computers, laser printers both colour and B/W inkjet printers, scanners, CD-writers and video projectors. Software packages that are needed for application development, statistical

data analysis, network securities, etc. are being made available to the scientists and staff of the Institute. Some of the important softwares that are available in the Institute are SAS, SPSS, SYSTAT, GENSTAT, GLIM, Data warehouse software – Cognos, SPSS clementine, Irwin, MS Office, MS Visual Studio, Macro-Media, MS Project, STAR3, E-views, Gauntlet Active Firewall, Trend Micro Antivirus, etc. The latest versions of software package STATISTICA NEURAL NETWORKS, Gauss Software, Minitab 14, Maple 9.5, Matlab Eviews Std 5.0, Systat, Statistica, Sigma Plot and Lingo Super have been recently added to the library of software packages. Web Statistica software package has also been added to the list of software packages. All the administrative and accounts sections of the Institute have been provided with PCs, printers and UPS.

The Institute continued to provide selective information documentation services to scientists in the ICAR Institutes and Agricultural Universities on references to documents relating to areas of their specific interest. The bibliographic databases in Biotechnology and Animal Science Research are being maintained in the Bio-Informatics Laboratory providing Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) services on VETCD, BEASTCD and AGRICOLA databases of the Food and Agriculture Organisation under United Nations.

The Institute functioned as a Centre of Advanced Studies in Agricultural Statistics and Computer Application during October, 1983 to March 1992 under the aegis of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This programme aimed at developing a Centre of Excellence with adequate infrastructure and facilities to undertake advanced training programmes and to carry out research on various aspects of Agricultural Statistics and Computer Application. Under this programme, a number of distinguished statisticians and computer experts from abroad visited the Institute with a view to interacting with the scientists of the Institute, giving seminars/ lectures and suggesting improvements in the research programmes of the Institute.

Another Centre of Advanced Studies (CAS) programme in Agricultural Statistics and Computer Application was established during the VIII Five Year Plan in 1995.

During the year 2004 training programmes were organised by the Institute under this programme, so far 39 training programmes have been organised. In all a total of 700 participants have been benefited.

A course leading to M.Sc. degree in Computer Application in Agriculture was initiated from the session 1985–86, which was subsequently changed to M.Sc. (CA) from the session 1993–94. The Institute has so far produced 163 Ph.D. and 277 M.Sc. students in the discipline of Agricultural Statistics and 73 M.Sc. students in the discipline of Computer Application.

For the benefit of statisticians and other workers for whom the knowledge of statistics is essential, the Institute had been organizing four professional courses in statistics namely Professional Statisticians' Certificate Course (PSCC), Senior Certificate Course (SCC), Junior Certificate Course (JCC) and Post Graduate Diploma in Agricultural Statistics. The PSCC and SCC courses were of one year duration while JCC was of six months duration. The Post Graduate Diploma Course was of one year duration, in which the students were required to conduct research for one year. These courses were providing a linkage of the Institute with State Departments of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. Due to some reasons these courses were discontinued. Later on, in view of growing demand from various quarters, the Institute revived the Senior Certificate Course in 'Agricultural Statistics and Computing' in 1997 with appropriate changes in the course curriculum in Agricultural Statistics with adequate exposure of Computer Application.

The Institute has achieved international recognition for its high quality research and teaching work in the field of Agricultural Statistics and Computer Application. A number of research workers from the Institute have served as consultants and advisors in Asian, African and Latin American countries. Also, a number of statisticians and students of the Institute are at present occupying high positions in universities and other academic and research institutions of USA, Canada and other countries.

The Standing Finance Committee had approved the X Plan budget of the Institute. The total outlay of Rs. 825 lakhs was sanctioned under the X Plan budget of the Institute.

Organisational Set-up

The Institute has following six Divisions, two Units and three Cells to undertake research, training, consultancy, documentation and dissemination of scientific output.

Divisions
- Sample Survey
- Design of Experiments
- Biometrics
- Forecasting Techniques
- Econometrics
- Computer Applications

Units
- Research Co-ordination and Management Unit (RCMU)
- Institute Technology Management Unit (ITMU)

Cells
- Training Administration Cell (TAC)
- Consultancy Processing Cell (CPC)
- Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Cell (PMEC)

Staff Position (as on 31 March 2008)

Manpower	No. of posts sanctioned	No. of posts filled
Director	1	1
Scientific	130	75
Technical	232	113
Administrative	109	*105
Auxiliary	14	9
Supporting	85	68
Total	**571**	**371**

*After reduction the cadre strength of three administrative posts (three Steno Grade-III) would be effective from the date of superannuation.
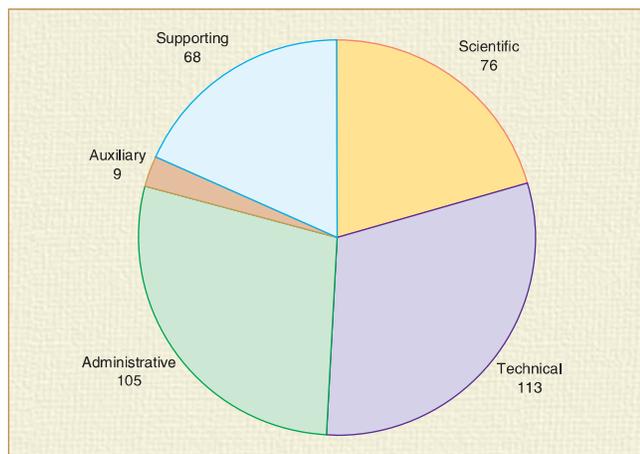
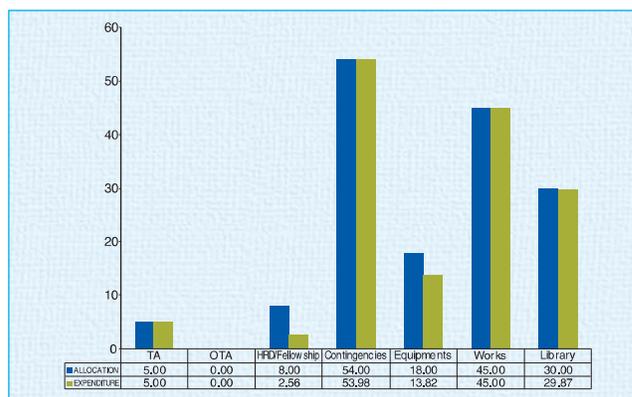**Staff Strength in Position as on 31 March 2008**

Financial Statement

Through regular monitoring, the Institute was able to ensure optimal utilization of funds available in the budget. The actual utilization of the budget both under the plan and non-plan is furnished below:
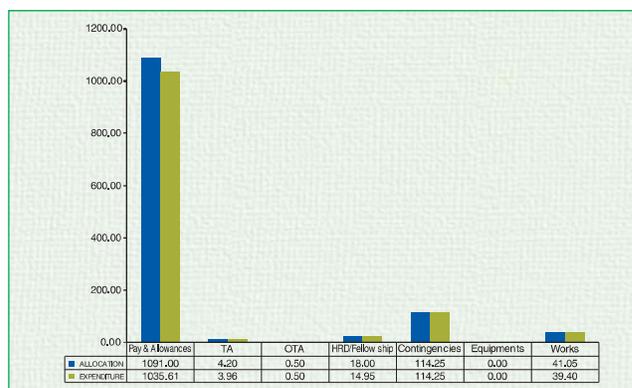
Budget Allocation vis-à-vis Utilization (2007–08)

(Rupees in Lakhs)

Head of Account	Allocation		Expenditure	
	Plan	Non-Plan	Plan	Non-Plan
Pay & Allowances	0.00	1091.00	0.00	1035.61
TA	5.00	4.20	5.00	3.96
OTA	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.50
HRD/Fellowship	8.00	18.00	2.56	14.95
Contingencies	54.00	114.25	53.98	114.25
Equipments	18.00	0.00	13.82	0.00
Works	45.00	41.05	45.00	39.40
Library	30.00	0.00	29.87	0.00
Total	**160.00**	**1269.00**	**150.23**	**1208.67**

	TA	OTA	HRD/Fellowship	Contingencies	Equipments	Works	Library
ALLOCATION	5.00	0.00	8.00	54.00	18.00	45.00	30.00
EXPENDITURE	5.00	0.00	2.56	53.98	13.82	45.00	29.87

Budget for the Year 2007-08 (Plan)

	Pay & Allowances	TA	OTA	HRD/Fellowship	Contingencies	Equipments	Works
ALLOCATION	1091.00	4.20	0.50	18.00	114.25	0.00	41.05
EXPENDITURE	1035.61	3.96	0.50	14.95	114.25	0.00	39.40

Budget for the Year 2007-08 (Non-Plan)