INTRODUCTION

In the past, agriculture has played and will continue to play a dominant role in the growth of Indian economy in the foreseeable future it represents the largest sector producing around 28 percent of the GDP, is the largest employer providing more than 60 percent of jobs and is the prime arbiter of living standards for 70 percent of India’s population living in the rural areas. These factors together with a strong determination to achieve self-sufficiency in food grains production have ensured a high priority for agriculture sector in the successive development plans of the country. Although agriculture contributes only 21 percent of India GDP, its importance in the country’s economy, social and political fabric goes well beyond these indicators.

The rural areas are still home to some 72 percent of the India’s 1.1 billion people, a large number of whom are poor. Most of the rural people depend on rain-fed agriculture and fragile forest for their livelihoods. The sharp rise in food grain production during India’s Green Revolution of the 1970’s enabled the country to achieve self-sufficiency in food grains and stave off the threat of famine. Agricultural intensification in the 1970s to 1980s saw in increased element for rural labour that raised rural wages and, together with decaling food prices, reduced rural poverty. Sustained although much slower, agricultural growth in the 1990s reduced rural poverty to 26.3 percent by 1999-2000.

Since then, however the slowdown in agricultural growth has become a major cause for concern. India’s rice yields are one-third of china’s and about half of those in Vietnam and Indonesia. With the exception of sugarcane, potato, soybean and tea. The same is true for most other agricultural commodities. Agriculture plays a vital role in the Indian economy. Over 70 percent of the rural households depend on agriculture along with fisheries and forestry accounts for one-third of the Nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is its single largest contributor.

Agricultural exports constitute a fifth of the total exports of the country. In view of the predominant position of the agricultural sector, collection and maintenance of agricultural statistics assume great importance. Agriculture as the largest private enterprise in India is the lifeline of the economy. Agriculture provides the underpinning
for our food and livelihood security and support for the economic growth and social transformation of the country. During 2008-2009 the agricultural sector contributed to approximately 15.7 percent of India’s GDP (at 2004-2005 prices) and 10.23 percent (provisional) of total exports besides providing employment to around 58.2 percent of the work force. In the recent past, the impact of various foods, financial and economic crises has been felt across the world.

This has compromised the lives, livelihood and food security of the people. Therefore, there is a compelling case for increased investment in the sector. The continued high growth of agriculture is essential to meet the food and nutritional security requirements of the people and provide livelihood and income in rural areas. Agriculture will continue to have the pride of place in national policies and plans, since the nation’s food security depends on the performance of the agricultural sector. The overall target of GDP growth in the country for the eleventh plan is a 9 percent annum with an annual average growth rate of 4 percent in agriculture, 10-11 percent in industry and 9-11 percent in the services sector. The strategy for accelerating agricultural growth to 4 percent per annum in the eleventh plan requires action in terms of bringing technology to the farmers, improving the efficiency of investment, increasing systems support and rationalizing subsides, diversifying while also protecting food security concerns, and fostering inclusiveness through a group approach, by which the poor will get better access to land, credit and skills.

India is the primary agricultural country about 70 percent of the population depends upon agriculture for their livelihood. Therefore the production assumes special importance in importing the standard of living of this section of population.

Maharashtra state has been divided into seven divisions those are Marathwada, Kokan, Amravati, Nagpur and Pune. Osmanabad district is one of the districts in Marathwada, it is known as backward area in Maharashtra.

Osmanabad district is not fairly industrialized. The economic position is very low. At present the living of standard is very poor. Agriculture constitutes the most important segment of the economy.

In Osmanabad district nearly 70 percent of population depends upon agriculture for their livelihood and out of that 85 percent lives in village. Their property depends
upon agriculture development which has two important dimensions that are ‘Production and Marketing’. Nearly 19000 acres field is planted by soybean; hence the marketing of soybean for the people of Osmanabad district has special importance. In the point of view the present research study is being undertaken.