Agriculture is the most dominant sector in the State of Assam. The vast majority of the people in the State live in the countryside in the midst of abject poverty. Similarly most of the workers depend for their livelihood solely on agriculture. Being endowed with fertile land and abundant rainfall, Assam has immense potentialities for increasing its agricultural productivity. But unfortunately, the agricultural sector in the State remains backward in relation to most of the States in the country in spite of various efforts undertaken by the government through successive five years plans.

In a land-scarce economy like Assam which is chronically affected by regular floods, a systematic study of agricultural productivity is an imperative necessity for raising the volume of agricultural output to sustain the living standard of the poor peasants. Agricultural breakthrough through higher productivity leads to attain self-sufficiency in feeding the people and factories adequately, expansion of domestic market for industries, exportable agricultural surplus to earn foreign exchange and increased savings and consequent capital resources. Hence it is thought necessary to
take up this problem "A critical study of Agricultural Productivity in Assam, 1951-78", for the purpose of thorough investigation and research.

In this study an attempt has been made to investigate into the trends and behaviour of agricultural productivity in Assam during the period from 1951 to 1978 with special reference to certain major crops. Due to non-availability of up-to-date data, the period of sixth five year plan has not been included in the study.

The concept of agricultural productivity used here is in terms of yield per hectare, because the concept has its own theoretical merits, besides being most suitable to the data available, and it highlights the need for full utilization of the land, the most scarce factor in an economy which is experienced with high growth rate of population. The study is mainly based on data collected from various official reports, records, documents and publication relating to agriculture.