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## 'Traditional farming on the cusp of disruption'

**Doubling farmer income could be a reality in next few years: Report**

**OUR BUREAU**  
New Delhi, July 1

Indian agriculture is on the cusp of a disruption based on technology, regulation, investment and stakeholder behavioural changes across consumers to farmers, making the idea of doubling farmer incomes a reality in the next few years, a research report said on Wednesday.

Agri-tech and agri-ecosystem sectors have received significant interest from the investor community making India the third-largest nation in terms of agritech funding and the number of agritech startups. Estimates indicate that \$30-35 billion of the value pool will be created in agri-tech, offtake, and agri-input delivery by 2025. These are among the findings of the report

titled *Indian Agriculture: Ripe for Disruption*, released by Bain & Company.

Commenting on the report, Prashant Sarin, a Partner at Bain & Company, India, said, "We are at a key moment when we can leapfrog from the traditional methods to a new, technology-friendly way of growing, processing, and selling food. The traditional form of agriculture will be disrupted and overhauled over time, and \$30-35 billion value will be created in new value pools across the agricultural value chain, over the next few years."

The report said the three agriculture-focused reform Bills passed in September 2020 by Parliament are intended to encourage investment in direct farmer purchase by corporates, free movement of food items from production to consumption centres, and private investment in storage. A host of new business opportunities can be uncovered when these reforms come into



operation, it said.

The APMC reforms will enable corporates to buy directly from the farmer while the Essential Commodities Act reforms incentivise investment in storage and transportation infrastructure, resulting in supply chain efficiencies. Firms can save 5 to 10 percent or more on procurement costs of food items through a concentrated national strategy.

### At inflection point

Parijat Jain, partner and leader of Bain's Agribusiness practice in India, said, "Indian agriculture is at an inflection point. The \$370-billion sector will undergo a complete transformation in the coming years on the back of significant technology interven-

tions, regulatory support and behavioural changes across consumers and farmers. Digital disruption across the agricultural and agritech value chain is enabling 'uberisation' of services, converting capital investment assets to pay-per-use models and creating online communities along with online input & output marketplaces."

Technology is driving innovations in a variety of ways across the agricultural value chain. For example, insurance, credit rating, and loans are contributing to increased funding for this sector. In farming activities, weather prediction and smart crop management are leading to higher output while sensors and the Internet of Things are enabling better tracking and visibility of farming activities. Between 2017 and 2020, India received about \$1 billion in agritech funding. Based on the discernible changes in the sector, investments in agritech over the next four to five years are poised to increase significantly.

TRIBUNE N.D 1/7/2021

## Farmers' rights groups raise concern over agri-digitisation

NEW DELHI, JUNE 30

Farmers' rights and digital rights organisations have expressed "grave concerns" over the Centre's proposals on agri-digitisation, pointing "fundamental problems" with the process being followed by it to "push digitisation in the agriculture sector".

Urging the government to not rush into the "IDEA" (India Digital Ecosystem of Agriculture) proposals, the group of 91 organisations asked it to "withdraw the MoUs signed with companies like Microsoft, Amazon, Star Agribazaar, ESRI and Patanjali".

The Agriculture Ministry consultation paper on IDEA transforming agriculture was put in the public



domain on June 1, seeking feedback by June 30.

Organisations, including ASHA Kisan Swaraj, BKU (Tikait), Internet Freedom Foundation, IT for Change, working on agricultural issues and digital rights, in their letter to the ministry flagged "fundamental problems" in the process being followed by the Centre "in pushing digitisation in the agriculture sector". — TNS

FINANCIAL EXPRESS N. D. 1/7/2021

## Above-normal rains fail to boost kharif sowing as monsoon stalled

**FE BUREAU**  
New Delhi, June 30

**THE FIRST MONTH** of the June-September monsoon season has recorded rains 10% above normal with each of the four regions — East and North-East, North-West, Central and South Peninsula — reporting surplus precipitation. However, the surplus rains could not help sowing activities as monsoon has been stalled since June 19 and is unlikely to revive before July 7, as per latest forecast.

For the country as a whole, cumulative rainfall during this year's southwest monsoon season's rainfall until June 30 has been about 10% above the Long Period Average (LPA) with actual rainfall recorded at 18.29 cm against normal of 16.69 cm, India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a statement.

"Advance of southwest monsoon in remaining parts of Rajasthan, Delhi, Haryana and Punjab is not likely till 7th July," IMD said. The stalled monsoon was mainly due to impact mid-latitude westerly winds, unfavourable Madden Julian Oscillation (MJO) and absence of formation of low pressure system over north Bay of Bengal.

"The MJO currently lies in Phase 1 (equatorial eastern Africa) with amplitude more than 1. It is likely to propagate eastwards into Phase 2 (western equatorial Indian Ocean and adjoining Arabian Sea) with amplitude close to 1 by



July 2 and further into Phase 3 (eastern equatorial Indian Ocean Bay of Bengal) from July 7. Hence, the phase of MJO is likely to gradually favour enhancement of convection and cross equatorial flow over the north Indian Ocean around July 7. Model forecasts show that easterly winds from Bay of Bengal in lower tropospheric levels are not likely to be established over north-western plains of India before July 7," the weather bureau said.

Due to stalled monsoon, the daily rainfall across the country has considerably declined. For instance, on June 29 it was 4.3% below normal and on June 30 it was 56% lower than average, a senior official of agriculture ministry said.

Groundnut acreage in Gujarat, the biggest producing state has seen a drop of 19% at about 10 lakh hectare as of June 28, largely because monsoon rainfall has been 27% lower than normal in key growing Saurashtra and Kutch

regions. However, cotton area has seen marginal fall of 2% at 11.46 lakh hectare as other parts of Gujarat have received almost normal rainfall.

Similarly in Maharashtra, there was 62% fall in kharif sowing area at 23 lakh hectare as on June 21 from the year-ago period. The state government had last week issued an advisory urging farmers not to rush for kharif sowing and wait for a while to ensure adequate showers. Other states like Uttar Pradesh and Haryana have also reported fall in overall acreage as on June 21. The rainfall deficit in Kerala is as high as 36% in all districts except Kottayam reporting deficient rains.

However, sowing area of soyabean in Madhya Pradesh, the largest producer state, has been 10 times more than last year's level at 5.17 lakh hectare as of June 21. Madhya Pradesh has received 36% more than normal rains while only nine out of 51 districts have deficient rainfall in June.

BUSINESS LINE , CHENNAI 02 JULY 2021

## Erratic monsoon affects Kharif sowing

Oilseeds, pulses, cotton acreage down; area under paddy and sugarcane up

**OUR BUREAU**

New Delhi, July 1

Kharif sowing has started on a sluggish note despite monsoon delivering a 10 per cent surplus in June, the first of the four-month rainy season.

Total acreage was down by 21 per cent as of June 25, compared with the same period a year ago as monsoon turned erratic in parts of Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat, hurting the progress of sowing.

While transplantation of paddy, the main kharif crop, has started on a positive note, the planting of pulses, cotton and oilseeds has been rather tepid, according to early set of figures released by the Agriculture Ministry.

Paddy cultivation was higher by about 4 per cent at 16.5 lakh hectare (lh) over same period past year. States such as Tripura, Madhya Pradesh,

Haryana and West Bengal have reported higher acreage under paddy, while Odisha, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra have reported lower coverage.

**Lower tur acreage**  
Area under pulses was 17 per cent lower compared with the year-ago period at 14.58 lh (17.51). Acreage under tur or arhar was down by 37 per cent at 5.85 lh compared with 8.83 lh. Tur or black mung coverage was marginally down at 2.17 lh while mungbean area is slightly higher at 5.23 lh. States such as Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have reported higher area, while Maharashtra and Telangana have registered a decline. Pulses acreage in Maharashtra was down by 4.08 lh.

Area under coarse cereals

### SLUGGISH START

Crop	2021	2020
Rice	36.15	34.62
Pulses	14.58	17.51
Coarse Cereals	34.20	43.55
Oilseeds	21.64	36.65
Sugarcane	48.16	46.85
Others	8.77	6.74
Cotton	37.14	71.89
Total	292.72	258.62

Source: Agriculture Ministry

dropped due to lower coverage of crops such as jowar, barnard and small millets. However, maize area is higher due to higher coverage in Karnataka.

Overall, the area under coarse cereals is higher in States such as Madhya Pradesh (4.27 lh) and Karnataka (1.43 lh). Lower coverage has been reported in Maharashtra (0.41 lh), Haryana (1.88 lh) and Rajasthan (0.79 lh).

Oilseeds coverage is also lower mainly due to lower acreage reported from Maharashtra (0.36 lh) and Gujarat

(4.08 lh). Groundnut cultivation is down by a fourth at 9 lh (12.14 lh) while soyabean area is 42 per cent lower at 13.45 lh (23.36 lh). Rajasthan (1.46 lh), Madhya Pradesh (1.37 lh) and Karnataka (0.58 lh) have reported higher coverage.

**Cotton area down by 48%**  
Cotton cultivation is down by 48 per cent at 37.14 lh (71.89 lh) as almost all major producing States have seen a sluggish planting. Cotton planting is down in Maharashtra (15.11 lh), Gujarat (8.15 lh), Madhya Pradesh (1.70

lh), Telangana (3.40 lh), Punjab (0.98 lh), Karnataka (0.83 lh), Haryana (0.63 lh), Rajasthan (0.60 lh) and Andhra Pradesh (0.22 lh).  
**Sugarcane acreage is higher** at about 56.16 lh (49.85 lh) as Gujarat (0.80 lh), Maharashtra (0.07 lh) and Uttar Pradesh (0.02 lh) have reported an increase in area. Though the south-west monsoon has weakened, it is expected to see renewed vigour by next week. The India Meteorological Department forecasts normal rainfall this month.

**Water storage level**  
The Central Water Commission on Thursday said that the storage level in the 220 major reservoirs in the country is 35,606 billion cubic metres that is 32 per cent of live storage capacity at full reservoir level. This is one per cent lower than the level last year and 39 per cent higher than the average level seen in the last 10 years.



## First Agri Export Facilitation Centre set up in Pune

OUR BUREAU

Pune July 2

India's first Agriculture Export Facilitation Centre (AFEC) established by the Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA) in association with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) was formally inaugurated on Friday.

It was initially launched virtually on May 15, 2021. The physical facility is now open to potential exporters of agri-food products from Maharashtra and will serve as a one-stop destination to provide them with all possible assistance. The centre was inaugurated at the hands of GS Rawat, Chief General Manager, NABARD, Pune Regional Office.

### To boost food exports

The centre aims at boosting the agricultural and food exports of Maharashtra by disseminating need-based information, providing timely guidance and organising training courses for all stakeholders. It will cater to the needs of farmers, Farmer Producing Organisations, MSMEs in agri-food processing, existing exporters, and new entrants by hand-holding them through the various stages involved in exporting products.

### Expert guidance

It will support capacity building by providing expert guidance on a range of topics like Orchard Management, Minimum Residue Level, Branding and Marketing, Packhouse and Special Export Treatments, Country-wise Protocols and Quality Parameters, Special Certifications required by specific countries, Government Export Schemes etc. Umesh Chandra Sarangi, Chairperson, Agriculture Committee, and Prashant Girbane, DG, MCCIA also graced the occasion.

## Activists red-flag farmer unique ID move

FSMI says data could be compromised; 'IDEA' supporters say it's long overdue

KV KURMANATH

Hyderabad, July 2

Activists representing the IT industry have opposed the consultation paper floated by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare that seeks to introduce IDEA or India Digital Ecosystem of Agriculture, saying the move could compromise the personal data of farmers and could exclude some of them from various government schemes.

The Free Software Movement of India (FSMI) has said that it opposed the move to create a Unique Farmer Identity (UID) for every farmer in the country based on their Aadhaar data collected for various schemes such as PM-KISAN. "The push for creating this unique identity is to

create farmer profiles and to link their personal assets to this identity. This model of creating farmer profiles and sharing this data is a direct violation of their fundamental right to privacy," Y Kiran Chandra, President of FSMI, said.

### 'IDEA long overdue'

"The usage of Aadhaar data collected for specific purposes like PM-KISAN to create UID is a contempt of the Supreme Court orders in Aadhaar judgment," he said. Ram Kaundinya, Co-founder of ThinkAg, which promotes innovation and entrepreneurship in food and agri fields, felt that the concept of IDEA was long overdue.

"With the rapid development taking place on the technolo-



gical front, it would be a shame if we do not use it to modernise our agricultural ecosystem and make it more efficient and profitable for the farmer," he observed.

"IDEA attempts this task in a grand fashion and it should succeed for the sake of our farmers. It is not easy to get such a huge project going and make it work smoothly but we have demonstrated it with several other projects like Aadhaar," he said.

Referring to the documents obtained through Right to Information Act, Chandra said the absence of proper information is concerning and "if linked to

IDEA, it completely changes the scope of this consultation".

Alleging that the Government has asked the States to furnish all the land data, he said digitisation of land is error prone. But Kaundinya said: "There are issues related to agriculture being a State subject, but I think the document makes it very clear that there is a complete involvement and role for the States."

### Interesting concepts

He concepts like 26 Value Nodes, Building Blocks, Open architecture, Interoperability, federated architecture and value and outcome-driven integrated services were very interesting.

The All-India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) has alleged that digitisation of farming and use of technology in farming was merely converting them into data gen-

erators for the private sector. "This has been unilaterally initiated without involving farmers and understanding their interests," it said.

While faulty data on land records could lead to exclusions, tenant farmers would be completely left out of the institutional credit because they don't own any land, Chandra said.

While agreeing with the premise that technology can be used to improve lives of farmers, the FSMI said technology as a tool can empower people and at the same time can exclude people due to errors in software design and implementation.

While welcoming the move to issue a unique ID to farmers, he said it was not clear if tenant farmers, share croppers and other farmers who didn't own land will also get a unique ID. "It has to be taken care of in the final plan," he pointed out.

INDIAN EXPRESS N. D. 9/7/2021

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

# Why a Cooperation Ministry

The newly formed Ministry of Cooperation, headed by Amit Shah, will aim to strengthen the cooperative movement in the country. How do cooperatives work, and why was the need for the new Ministry felt?

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS  
PUNE, JULY 6

ON MONDAY, the government announced the formation of a separate Union Ministry of Cooperation, a subject that till date was looked after by the Ministry of Agriculture. In the Cabinet reshuffle of July 7, Home Minister Amit Shah was given charge of the new Ministry.

### What will be the new Ministry's objectives?

A media release from the Press Information Bureau said the Ministry of Cooperation will provide a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country. "It will help deepen Co-operatives as a true people based movement reaching upto the grassroots. In our country, a Co-operative based economic development model is very relevant where each member works with a spirit of responsibility. The Ministry will work to streamline processes for 'ease of doing business' for co-operatives and enable development of Multi-State Co-operatives (MSCs)," it said.

In her Budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman too had mentioned the need to strengthen co-operatives.

### What is the cooperative movement?

By definition, cooperatives are organisations formed at the grassroots level by people to harness the power of collective bargaining towards a common goal.

In agriculture, cooperative dairies, sugar mills, spinning mills etc are formed with the pooled resources of farmers who wish to process their produce. The country has 1,94,195 cooperative dairy societies and 330 cooperative sugar mill operations. In 2019-20, dairy cooperatives had procured 4.80 crore litres of milk from 1.7 crore members and had sold 3.7 crore litres of liquid milk per day. (Annual Report, National Dairy Development Board, 2019-20)

Cooperative sugar mills account for 25% of the sugar produced in the country.

In banking and finance, cooperative institutions are spread across rural and urban areas. Village-level primary agricultural credit societies (PACS) formed by farmer associations are the best example of grassroots-level credit flow. These societies anticipate the credit demand of a village and make the demand to the district central cooperative



Dairy farmers with their produce at a cooperative's milk collection centre at a village in Banaskantha, Gujarat. @supendra Bena/Sapreer Aarvive

banks (DCCBs). State cooperative banks sit at the apex of the rural cooperative lending structure. Given that PACS are a collection of farmers, they have much more bargaining powers than an individual farmer pleading his case at a commercial bank.

There are also cooperative marketing societies in rural areas and cooperative housing societies in urban areas.

### How much finances do these institutions control?

NABARD's annual report of 2019-20 counts 95,238 PACS, 363 DCCBs and 33 state cooperative banks in the country. The state cooperative banks reported a total paid-up capital of Rs 6,104 crore and deposits of Rs 1,35,393 crore while the DCCBs paid-up capital stood at Rs 21,447 crore and deposits at Rs 3,78,248 crore. The DCCBs, whose main role is disbursing of short-term loans to the farming sector (crop loan), distributed Rs 3,000.34 crore in loans. The state cooperative banks, which mainly finance agri-processing industries such as sugar mills or spinning mills, disbursed Rs 1,48,625 crore in loans. (Annual Report, NABARD, 2019-20)

In urban areas, urban cooperative banks (UCBs) and cooperative credit societies ex-

isted banking services to many sectors that would otherwise have found it difficult to get into the institutional credit structure. According to Reserve Bank of India data, the country has 1,539 UCBs whose total capital in 2019-20 stood at Rs 14,933.54 crore with a total loan portfolio of Rs 3,05,368.27 crore.

### What laws govern cooperative societies?

Like agriculture, cooperation is the concurrent list, which means both the central and state governments can govern them. A majority of the cooperative societies are governed by laws in their respective states, with a Cooperation Commissioner and the Registrar of Societies as their governing authority. In 2002, the Centre passed a Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act that allowed for registration of societies with operations in more than one state. These are mostly banks, dairies and sugar mills whose area of operation spreads across states. The Central Registrar of Societies is their controlling authority but on the ground the State Registrar takes actions on his behalf.

### Why was the new Ministry necessary?

Sanjiv Babar, former managing director of Maharashtra State Federation of

Cooperative Sugar Mills, said it was necessary to restore the importance of the cooperative structure in the country. "Various studies conducted by institutions like Vikramt Mehta Institute of Cooperative Management have shown the cooperative structure has managed to flourish and leave its mark only in a handful of states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka etc. Under the new Ministry, the cooperative movement will get the required financial and legal power needed to penetrate into other states also," he said.

Cooperative institutions get capital from the Centre, either as equity or as working capital, for which the state governments stand guarantee. This formula had seen most of the funds coming to a few states such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka while other states failed to keep up.

Over the years the cooperative sector has witnessed erosion of funding. Babar said that under the new Ministry, the cooperative structure would be able to get a new lease of life.

### To what extent does the cooperative structure influence state and national politics?

Cooperative institutions be it the village-level PACS or the urban cooperative housing societies, elect their leaders democratically with members voting for a board of directors. Thus, in states such as Maharashtra, cooperative institutions have served as schools for development of leadership. In Gujarat, Amit Shah had headed the Ahmedabad District Central Cooperative Bank for a long time. Babar observed.

In the present Maharashtra legislature, there are at least 150 legislators who have had some connection with the movement. NCP chief Sharad Pawar and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar had started their respective political careers by contesting cooperative elections. The movement has given the state multiple Chief Ministers as well as ministers, many of whom have gone on to make a mark at the national level too.

No matter which party is in power in a state like Maharashtra, the purse strings of the local economy always remain with the cooperative institutions. Thus, when Devendra Fadnis of the BJP was Maharashtra Chief Minister, the financial control of most cooperative institutions remained with the NCP and the Congress. The voter base of the cooperative institutions generally remains stable.



# Pakistan Basmati exports to EU in trouble

Pesticide residue found in shipments; India-EU talks to resolve lowering of MRLs

**SUBRAMANI RAMANCOMBU**

Chennai, July 8

Pakistan has begun to face the problem of pesticide residues in its Basmati exports to the European Union (EU). This comes even as India is trying to resolve a similar issue that arose after the EU lowered the permissible maximum (pesticide) residue level (MRL) in such shipments.

Islamabad's problems with its Basmati exports, particularly due to the presence of tricyclazole pesticide in shipments, has been discussed at least a few times in the last couple of weeks in the neighbouring country.

At a seminar in Lahore on Wednesday, on 'Maximum residue levels in rice crop', fears were expressed that the EU could ban Pakistan Basmati rice exports due to higher levels of pesticide residue.

Pakistan media reported that the EU had issued over a hundred alerts in the recent past and rejected a few rice consignments. Similar seminars have been held across the neighbouring country on the pesticide residue issue.

Reports said that the EU and US had rejected 161 rice consignments due to higher levels of pesticide residue, mainly tricyclazole.

On Wednesday, India's Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar discussed the issue during a Webinar with EU officials, as Brussels has lowered the permissible level of tricyclazole in rice shipments.

**EU to resolve by mid 2022?**

Tomar told EU officials that the lower MRL for tricyclazole was affecting Indian exports of Basmati



rice to Europe.

He told the EU that all necessary studies and documents have been submitted in May this year. An official press release said the MRL will be fixed by June next year.

**Audit report**

A European Commission (EC) official, who discussed the issue with Tomar, said he would raise it with his colleagues dealing with the issue.

India has been facing problems with its Basmati exports since 2018 after an EU audit found residues in 19.3 per cent samples of the 1,128 tested. At least 45

samples exceeded the MRL.

The Federation of European Rice Millers reported last year that besides tricyclazole, excess residue of thiamethoxam and buprofezin were found in Indian Basmati shipments.

**2017 ban on Indian exports**

Indian and Pakistan farmers are facing the problem of pesticide residue as they spray more than what is required.

Pakistan exporters and government officials fear that Islamabad could face the same problem as India did when its rice shipments were banned in 2017 due to complaints of excess pesticide residue. Then, Pakistan had gained as the EU trade shifted.

Pakistan also formed a committee in 2018 to issue guidelines on the use of pesticides to increase its marketshare in the EU, but it is for the first time that complaints of tricyclazole residue have cropped up.

ECONOMIC TIMES KOLKATA 09/07/2021

# Non-Basmati Rice Exports to China Set to Increase

Rice exporter group expects exports to rise three-fold to 10 L tonne in FY22

**Sutanuka Ghosal**  
@timesgroup.com



Kolkata: Rice exports to China are expected to soar three-fold this year going by a spike in orders from the neighbouring country for non-basmati broken rice, which they use in making noodles and wine, exporters said.

"In FY21, China had started sending import queries from November; but in the current fiscal, we are seeing that the country has become active from the very beginning, and they are placing substantial orders with the Indian rice companies," Vinod Kaul, executive director of All India Rice Exporters Association (AIREA), told ET.

"According to our conservative estimates, exports to China this fiscal will be around 10 lakh tonnes, compared to three lakh tonnes in FY21," he said. "Our prices are competitive too, which is attracting China to buy rice from us."

As per industry insiders, Indian exporters have offered broken rice at \$300-350 per tonne to Chinese buyers, lower than ruling global prices of \$390-400 per tonne.

However, exporters are facing acute shortage in availability of

containers to ship the rice. "Also, the freight cost has gone up significantly," Kaul said. "It is a global phenomenon and we do not see an immediate respite."

As for basmati rice, many Indian exporters are participating in tenders being floated by Iran's Government Trading Corporation. However, private sales of basmati rice to the West Asian country have come to a grinding halt due to payment issues, industry insiders said.

"People are getting the payments for basmati exports from Iran, but they are delayed," a leading basmati exporter from Haryana said on condition of anonymity. "Shippers raised a hue and cry when they

were delayed. The concern over late payments remains. We are hoping that the government will sort out the payment issues soon."

There was an almost 4% increase in basmati exports to 4.45 metric tonnes and a 160% surge in non-basmati to 13.09 metric tonnes in FY21, according to data with Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

In value terms, while the non-basmati rice segment more than doubled to \$4.8 billion (₹35,448 crore), even higher than basmati, there was a drop of 7% to \$4 billion (₹29,849 crore) in the case of aromatic varieties.

HINDUSTAN TIMES N.D 12/07/2021

# Section of rice exporters to get a 6-month breather on pesticide inspection

**Rajeev Jayaswal**

letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** The government has given a fresh six-month breather to pandemic-hit exporters by allowing them exemption from mandatory inspection of pesticide residue before exporting both basmati and non-basmati rice to European destinations, barring the European Union (EU) and four other countries in the region.

While the government's certificate of inspection is already compulsory for exporting rice from India to 27 EU countries and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland; its mandatory requirement for the remaining 23 European countries have been extended from July 1, 2021, to January 1, 2022, an official said requesting anonymity.

Thus, exporters get a six-month breather to export rice without the certificate of inspection by Export Inspection Council (EIC) or Export Inspections Agency (EIA) for European countries, such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Monaco, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom (UK) and Vatican City, he said.

EIC is India's official export certification body that ensures the quality and safety of products before export.

It also provides mandatory certification for various food items such as fishery products, dairy products, honey, egg products, meat and meat products. It also certifies other food

**THE INSPECTION WAS TO BE MADE MANDATORY FOR OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, BUT IT WAS DEFERRED DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

and non-food products voluntarily. EIC has global acceptance and it is assisted by EIAs.

"To ensure adherence to EU norms on pesticide residues, EIC/EIA certification has been made mandatory for Basmati/non-Basmati rice export to EU countries and 4 other European countries - Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland," a commerce ministry spokesperson said.

The need for inspection was felt after some consignments of rice to the EU were rejected because of pesticide residue mainly because the EU in January 2018 imposed stringent norms for chemicals such as tricyclazole and buprofezin.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) had made EIC testing mandatory for rice exports to the EU in November 2019, which led to a decrease in the number of alerts.

The inspection was to be made mandatory for other European countries, but it was deferred due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



● REORGANISATION

# Finmin gets bigger with DPE in its fold

**Separate ministry for cooperation carved out from ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare**

**FE BUREAU**  
New Delhi, July 7

**WITH REORGANISATION** OF some ministries for synergy, the finance ministry will get bigger with the addition of the department of public enterprises (DPE) to it. A separate ministry for cooperation has been carved out from the ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare.

The whole exercise is aimed at removing operational bottlenecks due to multiple command centres and thereby imparting more efficiency and

speed to decision-making.

The DPE of the ministry of heavy industry and public enterprises is the sixth department in the ministry of finance, which hitherto housed the departments of economic affairs, expenditure, revenue, financial services and, investment & public asset management.

Among other mandates, the DPE coordinates matters of general policy affecting all central public sector enterprises (CPSEs), evaluates and monitors their performance and undertakes review of capital projects and expenditure in CPSEs.

Increasingly, there is a sense that the CPSEs are hamstrung by the need to report to multiple departments/ministries on operational issues. Currently, the DPE issues general guidelines for these firms, but their implementation rests with 45 different administrative ministries. If information has to be



collated on how the guidelines such as closure of sick CPSEs, monetisation of assets or investment are being followed by 250-odd PSUs, one has to reach out to all administrative departments, delaying crucial policy decisions. Unlike in India, China's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC) performs investor's responsibilities, supervises and manages the state-owned enterprises.

The newly carved out ministry of cooperation will largely function as a regulator of the

cooperative sector, performing similar functions like the corporate affairs ministry that oversees companies, while the agriculture ministry continues to deal with procurement and credit in which a large number of cooperatives are also involved.

According to the notification issued by the government, the new ministry will deal with general policy in the field of cooperation and coordination of cooperation activities in all sectors while other ministries concerned will be responsible for cooperatives in the respective fields.

This clears an initial confusion as to which ministry will govern fertiliser major Iffco or Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation, popularly known as Amul; these entities will be respective administrative departments for fertilisers and dairy sectors. Similarly, the procurement of oilseeds and pulses, undertaken though

agriculture cooperative Nafed, will remain with the agriculture ministry.

The ministry of cooperation will basically oversee the Central Registrar of cooperative societies that regulate and govern all multi-state cooperative societies. The step assumes significance as some of the finance companies were allegedly converted to multi-state cooperatives to evade the regulating authorities like the RBI and Sebi.

A separate ministry will definitely help as the cooperative never got importance in the agriculture ministry that it deserved and there were then 10 staff working in the cooperative division, a senior official said. Besides, it will also handle the affairs of the National Cooperative Development Corporation, which normally funds cooperatives to undertake government schemes.

BUSINESS LINE , CHENNAI 10 JULY 2021

## Agro-chemical industry in for 'positive growth' in Q1

**K V KURMANATH**  
Hyderabad, July 9

The ₹48,000-crore agro input industry is likely to post a 'positive' growth in revenues in the first quarter of this financial year. A strong demand for agro-chemical products in the domestic and international markets are among the top reasons for industry experts to forecast a positive growth in the first quarter.

"A strong demand in the export segment and higher global commodity prices would drive the revenue growth in the quarter," Varshit Shah, an analyst with research firm Emkay Globa, has said.

Giving a review of the firms under its coverage, he pointed out that all agro-chemical companies have passed on the impact of higher raw material prices to the consumers.

"We expect agrochemical companies in our coverage to deliver 10.8 per cent year-on-year growth," he said.

Insecticides (India) Limited Managing Director Rajesh Aggarwal, however, has said that it would be difficult for the industry to achieve a double digit growth in the quarter. "It is very difficult for the industry to achieve that but what I can say is that it will be a positive first quarter. There is a good demand in the domestic and international markets for agro-chemical products," he said.

Kalyan Goswami, Director-General of Agro Chem Federation of India (ACFI), has felt that the first quarter could be an 'average quarter' for the industry.

"Due to earlier advance sales and delayed monsoon, sales and consumption are yet to pick up. We are expecting rains to pick up in the second week of July, triggering demand in the second quarter," he said. "We are sure that the on-going kharif season will see a positive growth in sales and consumption of agri inputs," he said.

THE HINDU, KOCHI 12 JULY 2021

## Digital tech to the aid of farm sector

Kerala Food Platform will help fetch better price for produce and ensure quality

**HIRAN UNNIKRISHNAN**

Digital technology is now coming to the rescue of Kerala's beleaguered farming sector as well. According to K. Vasuki, Director of Agriculture, plans are about to roll out a digital platform for the farming sector, connecting all stakeholders and managing supply chains. The project is part of an e-governance initiative to establish an agriculture information management system and take the services of the department online.

"The concept of this platform, envisaged as a one-stop solution for farmers and customers, stems from the indefinite number of social media groups for local markets. Discussions are under way with the Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (KDISC), which is integrating all stakeholders in the agriculture chain," said Ms. Vasuki. The future modules may also include an e-commerce platform for farm products.

P.V. Unnikrishnan, member secretary, KDISC, said the digital network named



Bright days ahead: A pineapple farm at Cheruvally, near Erumeti, in Kottayam. The introduction of a digital platform for procurement and grading of crops is expected to open up a new avenue for farmers, especially those cultivating perishables.

Kerala Food Platform would ensure safe-to-eat and quality produce via supply chain traceability. The platform, piloted at the Pallakkal Cooperative Bank in Ernakulam, is being adapted to the requirements of the Agriculture Department to enable procurement and connect with the wholesale buyer network. "It will allow for the aggregation of local produce, besides its sorting, grading and quality checking. Using blockchain tech-

nology, it will align the diverse players in the agriculture eco-system," he said. Routing the produce S.S. Nagesh, chief of the agriculture division, Kerala State Planning Board, said the system would help absorb the excess in homestead farming. "A digitised supply chain opens up a new avenue for homestead farmers, especially those cultivating perishables. The assured return

at a right point of time will serve as an incentive for farmers to join the network," he said. The produce of farmers who register on the network will be routed to the area where it will fetch the maximum price. The transportation and marketing will be through co-operative societies.

"That it incorporates the provision to trace supply chain enables better farming management practices, he added.

HT MINT N.D 8/7/2021

## Assured prices fuelling the agricultural boom

BY ARJUN SRINIVAS, HOWINDIALIVES.COM

This rabi marketing season has seen the highest ever procurement of wheat by government agencies. At 43 million tonnes, this is 53% higher than the average for the past five rabi seasons. It underscores the prime role played by the government in procurement of farm produce. This becomes important in the context of the three farm laws that were introduced last year but whose implementation was put on hold amid ongoing farmer unrest.

These new laws seek to offer farmers more avenues to sell their produce beyond those designated by the government. The concern is it could mean the government, which offers price guarantee for 23 main crops, could reduce its presence as a buyer. Further, without a price floor coded into law, private players with greater pricing power could end up dictating terms to farmers.

A price floor was a key demand of the ongoing farmer agitation, which started in mid-November 2020, almost coinciding with the start of the rabi sowing season. The protests, while national in scope, are spearheaded by farmers from Punjab and Haryana. These are agrarian states where farmers have historically benefited the most from government procurement.

The rabi sowing season in 2020 was sandwiched between two deadly waves of the covid-19 pandemic. Agriculture being less affected by the pandemic, and two successive years of good monsoon drove the record sowing of wheat: 34.6 million hectares, or 14% more than the average of the previous five years. Seven of the top eight wheat-producing states, led by Madhya Pradesh, sowed more land with wheat. This led to India recording its highest ever wheat production in a full season.



ECONOMIC TIMES KOLKATA 13/07/2021

# Agri Exports to Cross \$40 b in FY22

Strong global demand for sugar, cotton, oilcakes driving the gains: Nabard

Sutanuka.Ghosal  
@timesgroup.com

**Kolkata:** India's agricultural exports will cross \$40 billion in FY22 driven by strong global demand for sugar, cotton, oilcakes, oilseeds and non-basmati rice and due to better understanding of the global markets by the Indian farming community, according to GR Chintala, chairman, National Bank for Rural and Agriculture Development (Nabard).

"Producers have understood the overseas market requirements and the quality of products that are in demand. This is driving agri exports from India. China has emerged as a major buyer of agriculture products in the world markets. Also, we are in the midst of a commodity super

BUMPER AGRICULTURE EXPORTS	
Agri Exports	Year
\$38.43 b	2017-18
\$38.74 b	2018-19
\$35.16 b	2019-20

**17%**  
Rise in agri exports in FY22



**FPOs playing a key role in increasing exports**

Farmers' benefits have increased as FPOs give inputs at competitive prices, hire machinery and add value to produce to garner better prices in the markets

**8000** Number of FPOs in the country

**4,868** FPOs are funded by Nabard

cycle," said Chintala. After remaining stagnant for the past three years at \$38.43 billion in 2017-18, \$38.74 billion in 2018-19 and \$35.16 billion in 2019-20, the export of agriculture and allied products (including marine and plantation products) jumped to \$41.25 billion in 2020-21.

This represented a stunning 17% rise. On the other hand, overall exports from India

suffered a 7.2% fall to \$256.34 billion, down from the \$313 billion in 2020-21. Chintala said Farmer Producer Organisations (FPO) are playing a key role in increasing exports from the country. There are about 8,000 FPOs in the country, of which 4868 FPOs are funded by NABARD and its subsidiaries. The farmers' benefits have increased by 20% to 40% after they joined

FPOs because they get the inputs at competitive prices, hire machinery and add value to their produce to garner better prices in the markets.

To ensure farmers obtain a minimum support price (MSP) for their produce, Nabard has strengthened procurement operations of various state governments. "In FY21, we had disbursed around ₹50,000 crore on procurement head. This year we aim to increase it by another ₹5,000 crore—₹10,000 crore," the Nabard chairman added.

Nabard has come out with a new product called Rural Infrastructure Assistance (RIAS) for eastern India states. "We are seeing that a number of eastern India states are keen to borrow under RIAS to set up medical infrastructure," Chintala said.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS N. D. 13/7/2021

## PM calls for post-harvest revolution in farm sector

FE BUREAU  
New Delhi, July 12

**PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA** Modi on Monday stressed the need for a post-harvest revolution in agriculture, and credited farmers for ensuring record crop production despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

"With the ever-increasing agricultural production, there is a need of post-harvest revolution and value addition," Modi said in a message read out at the foundation day of Nabard.

"We are striving relentlessly to intensify our speed and scale to achieve this. We have been taking comprehensive steps to get a complete solution, from irrigation to sowing, harvesting and earnings that are technology enabled," he said.

### Farmers' hard work made agri, allied sectors resilient to Covid crisis, says Tomar

**THE AGRICULTURE** and allied sectors remained strong during the pandemic, registering a growth of 3.5 per cent in 2020-21, mainly due to the hard work of farmers, skills of scientists and government's farmer friendly policies, Union minister Narendra Singh Tomar said on Monday. "Our agriculture and rural sector, which has been showing strength for years, has stood strong even during this pandemic and has contributed to the Indian economy. The tireless hard work of the farmers, the skill of the scientists and the farmer friendly policies of the government and the resolve of the progress of the villages showed a new ray of hope in the Corona crisis," the agriculture minister said. — PTI

Speaking at the same function, chief economic advisor Krishnamurthy V Subramanian said in view of the surplus production, the

government has already amended the Essential Commodities Act so that there is no harassment of those who store agriculture commo-

ties. The EC Act was one of the three contentious farm laws enacted by the Centre last year, but the Supreme Court has suspended implementation of these legislations since January amid farmers' protest.

"There is a big difference between storage and hoarding, while the EC Act equated both as one and the same. The relevance of such a law is quite low when the country has a surplus," Subramanian said.

Citing the Economic Survey presented last year, he also said the EC Act has not had much effect on controlling prices. Storage is an important aspect to ensure stability in prices all through the year when harvests of many of the crops come as per seasonality, but demand is round-the-year, he said.



## Paddy coverage likely to reach 3.2 lakh hectares

About 2.83 lakh hectares has been covered so far this kuruwai season

T. RAMAKRISHNAN  
CHENNAI

Having achieved a higher paddy coverage so far this kuruwai cultivation season than in the previous year, the Agriculture Department hopes to touch the 3.2 lakh hectare-mark at the end of the season.

About 2.83 lakh hectares has been covered so far, and nursery has been prepared for 1,305 hectares, including 805 hectares in the Cauvery delta region. According to the Department's calculation, this will help to transplant the crop on 40,000 hectares. Eventually, the delta region is expected to account for 1.54 lakh hectares and the non-delta region 1.65 lakh hectares.

If the Department's plan comes off, this year's performance will be better than that of 2020, when the coverage was marginally more than three lakh hectares. However, it will be lower than what the State accomplished during 2011 (about 3.36 lakh hectares) and 2015 (approximately 3.24 lakh hectares).

An important factor that has contributed to a greater coverage this time is the availability of water. As on

Crop cover		
Paddy coverage* during Kuruwai/Kar/Somavari season		
District/Region	Coverage as of July 19	
	2020	2021
<b>Cauvery delta</b>		
Cuddalore	0.149	0.162
Tiruchi	0.029	0.03
Karur	-	-
Ariyatur	0.016	0.018
Pudukottai	-	-
Thanjavur	0.413	0.384
Nagapattinam	0.045	0.07
Mayiladuthurai	0.355	0.364
Tiruvavur	0.283	0.336
<b>TOTAL (Cauvery delta)</b>	<b>1.29</b>	<b>1.364</b>
<b>Non-delta</b>		
Southern districts (Kar)	0.1	0.17
Northern districts (Somavari)	0.87	1.061
Remaining non-delta areas (Kuruwai)	0.088	0.234
<b>TOTAL (Non-delta)</b>	<b>1.058</b>	<b>1.465</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>2.348</b>	<b>2.829</b>

SOURCE: STATE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

\* IN LAKH HECTARES

July 20, the combined live storage of 15 major reservoirs in the State was around 104 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft), equivalent to 52% of the total capacity. Unlike in the previous years,

water is released from many of the reservoirs even during the kuruwai cultivation season, a senior official points out. The moderate rainfall during the northeast monsoon of 2020 and unseasonal

heavy rainfall in January this year led to a comfortable position in the groundwater table.

Though the realisation of Tamil Nadu's share of the Cauvery water so far this month was much lower than the stipulated quantity, the revival of southwest monsoon in the recent days has given a sense of hope to agriculturists and officials alike. The Kabini reservoir, according to information available here, is about 90% of its capacity, and Karnataka officials are expected to release much more in the days to come than what they did.

Till July 15, the cumulative receipt of the Cauvery water for the month was 4.1 tmc ft against the prescribed 15.11, as assessed by the Central Water Commission at Bilingudi on the inter-State border. What the State realised between June 1 and July 15 was about 11.8 tmc ft, a shortfall of 12.5 tmc ft.

One more reason for the optimism of the Agriculture Department is the DMK government's decision to provide a kuruwai package of 761.09 crore to benefit over 2.07 lakh farmers in the delta region.

## Q1 farm exports up 44% at \$4.8 billion

Shipments of maize, wheat increase by 415%

VISHWANATH KULKARNI

Bengaluru, July 22

Building on last year's robust growth, exports of agri-products under the portfolio of Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Development Authority (APEEDA) registered a 44 per cent increase in the first quarter of current financial year on higher overseas demand. This is notwithstanding challenges such as the supply chain issues triggered by the Covid second wave induced lockdown during April and May across the country and higher freight rates.

According to quick estimates, exports of farm products monitored by the APEEDA touched \$4.817 billion during April-June 2021 compared with \$3.338 billion in the same period a year ago.

Shipments of rice — basmati and non-basmati — grew 25 per cent at \$2.398 billion against \$1.914 billion in the year-ago period. Rice is the largest product in APEEDA's portfolio. Details of

Surging shipments	(Exports of APEEDA products in \$ million)		
	Q1 FY21-22	Q1 FY 20-21	% change
Fruits & vegetables	637.7	584.5	9.1
Cereal preparations & Misc processed items	527.7	311.1	69.6
Meat, dairy and poultry products	1,022.4	483.5	111.5
Rice	2,398.5	1,914.5	25.3
Other cereals	231.4	44.9	415.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,817.9</b>	<b>3,338.5</b>	<b>44.3</b>

Source: DGCIS, APEEDA

the rice volumes shipped during the quarter were not available, while demand continues to be robust for the cereal.

### Cereals and livestock

Other cereals, including wheat and maize, registered a whopping 415 per cent increase during the quarter. Exports of other cereals stood at \$235.3 million compared with \$44.9 million in the first quarter last year, APEEDA said.

Exports of livestock products, including meat, dairy and poultry, gained 11.5 per cent during the quarter topping the \$1-billion mark.

The value of livestock products during the quarter stood at \$1.022 billion compared with \$483.3 bil-

lion in the year-ago period. Cereal preparations and miscellaneous processed products registered 69.6 per cent growth to exceed the half a billion mark during the review period. Exports of cereal preparation and other processed items stood at \$527.7 million against \$311.1 million.

### Fruits and veggies

Fruits and vegetable exports increased by 9.1 per cent to \$637 million in the first quarter compared with \$584.5 million in the same period a year ago.

During the last fiscal, exports of APEEDA products increased by 25 per cent to \$19.96 billion on robust growth in shipments of products such as rice and wheat.

## 27 pesticides under scanner for ban

12 pesticides barred, 6 phased out: Centre tells RS

OUR BUREAU

Mangaluru, July 23

As many as 27 pesticides are under consideration for ban, and the Government has appointed an expert committee to look into this issue, Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, told the Rajya Sabha on Friday.

The pesticides are: Acephate, Atrazine, Benfuracarb, Butachlor, Captan, Carbendazim, Carbofuran, Chlorpyrifos, 2,4-D, Deltamethrin, Dicofol, Dimethoate, Dinocap, Diuron, Malathion, Mancozeb, Methomyl, Monocrotophos, Oxyfluorfen, Pendimethalin, Quinalphos, Sulfosulfuron, Thiodicarb, Thiophanat emethyl, Thiram, Zineb and Ziram.

He said the Anupam Varma



12 pesticides were completely banned

Committee had reviewed 66 pesticides. Accordingly, following due procedure, 12 pesticides were completely banned and six pesticides were phased out.

DDT, the use of which for agriculture purpose has been completely banned from May 1989, was allowed to continue to be used for public health programme. "In addition, 27 aforementioned pesticides have further been identified to be banned," he said, adding the pesticide Fenitrothion is already banned for use in agriculture. The pesticide Endo-

sulfan has not been reviewed, being under consideration of the Supreme Court. As many as 18 pesticides were recommended to be continued.

So far, the government has banned or phased out 46 pesticides and four pesticide formulations for import, manufacture or sale in the country. In addition, five banned pesticides are allowed to be manufactured for export only, eight pesticide registrations have been withdrawn, and nine pesticides have been placed under restricted use, he said.

### Farmers using e-NAM

In a separate reply, the Minister said 8.78 lakh farmers have used National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform to sell their agricultural produces till June-end of 2021-22. A total of 37.73 lakh farmers used it during the financial year 2020-21.



HANS INDIA, HYDERABAD 27 JULY 2021

# NACL Ind's ₹65-cr pesticides plant expansion

SANTOSH PATNAIK  
VISAKHAPATNAM

NACL Industries Limited (formerly Nagarjuna Agrichem Limited), which has an agrochemicals manufacturing (pesticides) plant at Arinama Akkivalasa village in Etcherla mandal of Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh will expand its capacity with an investment of Rs 65 crore.

The company's existing project cost is Rs.398.71 crore. The management has decided to expand the existing capacity from 30 TPD to 70.1 TPD. It also envisages inclusion of bio-based agrochemicals and captive co-generation power plants with a capacity of 6 MW. The plant is spread over 104 acres with a green belt area of 74 acres. The formulation plant of the company is located at Ethakota in East Godavari district.

NACL has PAN India presence with over 50 products covering all major crops and most of the regions with 58 stock points to ensure faster evacuation. Based on its proposal received from the company for clearance from the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board has announced the holding of a public hearing



at the project site. The hearing, which is mandatory as per the court directions, will be held on August 25.

An official of APCCB said suggestions, views and objections can be submitted within 30 days of notification. Those interested can participate in the public hearing at the designated venue following Covid-19 guidelines. The executive summary of the draft Environment Impact Assessment is on display at the offices of Collectorate, District Industry Centre, APCCB and other offices. According to the company's website, the plant at Srikakulam has six manufacturing blocks involved in production of insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, and fine chemicals.

The company boasts of having a state of the art zero liquid discharge plant and incinerator for total effluent treatment and water recovery.

HANS INDIA, HYDERABAD 27 JULY 2021

# 'Exports to drive recovery'

Covid 2nd wave may have more lasting damage on economy: Moody's Analytics

NEW DELHI

THE second wave of Covid-19 may have a more lasting damage on the Indian economy and exports will once again be the foundation for recovery, Moody's Analytics said on Monday.

In its report titled 'APAC Economic Outlook: The Delta Roadblock', Moody's Analytics said social distancing is weighing on the current quarter, but economic recovery will resume by the year-end. The Delta variant of Covid-19 is among factors now adversely affecting economies of the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, but the economic hit from the current round of movement restrictions in the region will not be as severe as the recessions in the second quarter of last year. In India, where exports make up a relatively small share of the economy, high commodity prices have boosted the value of exports. This is one factor that helped reinvigorate India after its



first devastating wave of Covid-19.

"While its second wave, which is now coming to an end, may have more lasting damage to the economy as the pandemic's one-two punch hit small enterprises very hard, exports will once again be the foundation for recovery," it said. With regard to vaccination, Moody's Analytics, which is a financial intelligence company, said India is struggling to accelerate its

pace of inoculation. The global economic recovery is continuing at a solid pace, but parts of Asia will not reflect this in the near term given heightened social distancing restrictions now in place, particularly in Southeast Asia as the Delta variant of Covid-19 spreads across the region, it said. Moody's Analytics said global GDP this year will be in the range of 5-5.5 per cent, well above its 3 per cent potential growth rate as recovery continues from last year's pandemic recession. "Global trade continued its rapid recovery well into this year's second quarter. Global industrial production also is still rising, although now at a slower pace than merchandise trade as tie-ups in global supply chains slow many manufacturing processes," it added.

TELANGANA TODAY HYDERABAD 30/7/2021

# 11 new crop varieties in TS

New varieties have high levels of nutrients and some are good for diabetic persons

YUNRAJ AKULA  
HYDERABAD

Assessing its status as the Seed Capital of India, Telangana is all set to release 11 more new varieties of crops for farmers.

This comes after the Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University (TTSAU) developing 11 new varieties including five in rice, two in sorghum and one each in pigeon pea, green gram, soybean and sesamum.

From enhanced attributes including on aspects of seed dormancy, grain yield and resistance to pest threats apart from cooking quality, the varieties also have high levels of nutrients, some of them which are good for people with diabetes as well.

The State Varietal Release Committee recently approved all the 11 varieties for release. They will now be sent to the Central Sub-Committee on Crop Standards for release of varieties notification.

According to TTSAU Vice-Chancellor Prof V Vinona Rao, after approval of the Central Varietal Release Committee, the seeds would go for mass production by seed producing agencies apart from the university and would be made available to all farmers soon.

## 5 RICE VARIETIES

1. BajendranagarVari-1 (DRI 11718)
2. BajendranagarVari-2 (DRI 15435)
3. KampanagarVari-1 (DPS 2612)
4. KusarnagarVari-2 (DRI 16303)
5. WarangalVari-2 (WGL 362)

## 2 SORGHUM CROPS

1. TandurJanam-1 (DIT 148)
2. PalamJanam-1 (DPS 512)

## Redgram

WarangalKamli-2 (WGL 255)

## Greengram

Mahilipetara-01 (DRI 316)

## Sesamum

Jagtapalli-2 (KS 2494)

The 11 new varieties have already been recommended by farmers in the State and after approval of the Central Varietal Release Committee, the seeds would go for mass production by seed producing agencies.

Prof Vinona Rao also said the university had focused on Agro-Phyto

## EYEING RICH REAP

5 Five varieties in rice, two in sorghum and one each in pigeon pea, green gram, soybean and sesame

47 varieties of crops developed by TTSAU in seven years

Seeds to go for mass production after nod from Central Varietal Release Committee

Variety to launch Agri-Hub to impart entrepreneurship skills to youngsters

QR codes developed for rice seeds to trace seed origin, quality etc.

QR coding will be extended to other crops this season

Prof Rao also said the university had focused on Agro-Phyto

tooklates This Rabi season where crops can be grown under solar panels. This method, which is in initial stages of research in the US, France and Germany, will help reduce loss of water from crops besides increase efficiency of solar panels, he said.

SENTINAL GUWAHATI 28/7/2021

# Agriculture Department gears up to curb black marketing of fertilizers

STAFF REPORTER

**GUWAHATI, July 27:** Talking about the reports of irregularities in the fertilizer business, Assam Agriculture Minister Atul Bora on Tuesday stated that the Agriculture Department has taken various steps to crack down on the black marketing of fertilizers.

Bora said that the government also directed the Directorate of Agriculture Department to enquire into the irregularities. The Minister asserted that there have also been reports that the farmers are procuring urea at much higher rates than the actual rates. During an inquiry,

the Agricultural Department with assistance from the District Administration has detected various such irregularities, said Bora.

Based on the inquiry, out of a total of 344 wholesale dealers of fertilizers in the State, the Department has issued show-cause notices to 30 dealers. Moreover, it has suspended the licenses of three shops, sealed one and issued a warning to one wholesale shop. Similarly, out of 1,615 retail dealers, the department has issued show-cause notices to 380 such dealers for committing irregularities. The license of three retail dealers has been suspended. While 16 retail shops have been sealed, a

warning has been issued to one shop.

Meanwhile, aiming to tackle the menace of black marketing of fertilizers, the agricultural department has decided to take the following steps -

The retailers cannot use Point of Sale Machines (PoS) while selling fertilizers.

"It has been reported that many retailers are willing not using the PoS machines while selling fertilizers. Thus, the agricultural department has directed that the retailers use the PoS machines and also provide receipts to the customers. If the retailers don't use the PoS machines then the shop's license will be cancelled," said Bora.



are selling fertilizers without having retail ID. The fertilizer manufacturing companies should provide the retail ID to the retailers. If a retailer fails to get a retail ID from the respective company then the license of his/her shop will be cancelled," said Bora.

The Agriculture Department has directed the retail sellers to put up banners mentioning the prices of the fertilizers. The retail sellers can only sell the items in only authorized areas. Or else, their license will be cancelled. On the issuance of new licenses, Bora said that from now on licenses will be provided to retailers concerning the number of farmer families and the total requirement of fertilizers in the specific area. "According to an order of the Central government, the retailers should have the following qualification to sell fertilizers - Degree in Agricultural Science or Chemistry, Diploma in Agricultural Science. If the retailers have no such degree then he/she must have undergone training from the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management, National Institute of Plant Health Management, or any such recognized institution," Bora underlined.

The Minister pointed out that there have been allegations that a section of wholesalers are distributing fertilizers under the name of specific companies at railway rack points. Thus, the department has taken various efforts to curb this practice, he said. "A wholesaler can only take 200 metric tonnes (MT) of fertilizers from a specific company

at a rack point. The Central government has directed the companies to provide fertilizers to the State based on the monthly requirement. However, the companies have not been able to follow the directions. Due to this reason, there has been a shortage of fertilizers and the unscrupulous traders are selling fertilizers at higher rates," said Bora.

Lastly, Bora opined that there are fewer numbers of railway rack points in Assam. "The State needs at least 16 railway rack points. But there are only seven rack points due to which the supply of fertilizers is not timely," Bora added.



# AGRI SECTIONS WITH MINIMUM STATE INTERVENTION GROW FASTEST

## Decadal Story

Growth in horticulture and foodgrain production (in mt)

\*Production is in bn; 2020-21 is estimated  
 \*\*2011-12 to 2018-19  
 \*\*\*Till 2019-20  
 #in mn bales, 1 bale=170 kg  
 Note: Vegetables, fruits, total horticulture data is per 2nd Advance Estimates, foodgrain is per 3rd  
 Sources: Gov and trade officials

	2011-12	2020-21	% chg
Vegetables	156.32	196.26	(25.55)
Fruits	76.42	102.76	(34.47)
Total horticulture	257.3	329.9	(28.22)
Foodgrain	259.29	305.44	(17.80)
Oilseeds	29.79	36.56	(22.73)
Sugarcane	361.03	392.79	(8.80)
Cotton#	35.2	36.49	(3.66)
Milk	127.9	208.0	(62.63)
Fish***	8.66	14.16	(63.51)
Eggs*	66.6	116.0	(74.17)
Meat**	5.5	8.11	(47.45)

The Union government recently released the second Advance Estimates for horticulture production for 2020-21, which once again showed that output there has been higher than foodgrain. The data shows that over the past 10 years, not only horticulture but the production of eggs, meat, milk and also fruits and vegetables have been faster than conventional foodgrain.



In the broader foodgrain category, pulses are an exception as its production has risen by almost 48 per cent over 10 years. Interestingly, in all the crops where growth has been robust, government intervention in the form of direct purchases at a pre-fixed price or controls is almost negligible. The faster growth in milk, fish, eggs, meat also brings into question the manner in which they have been marketed, while growth in fruits and vegetables is perhaps the result of better quality seeds. SANJEEB MUKHERJEE

ECONOMIC TIMES MUMBAI 30/07/2021

## DCM Shriram Plans to Shift its Focus to Value-added Goods

Nehal.Challawala  
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: DCM Shriram is betting on newer value-added businesses, such as specialty chemicals and other downstream segments, to drive growth in a chemicals market where several pockets have been commoditized, crimping profits and underscoring the need to differentiate for building sustainable competitive advantage.

The company has already invested in capacities to make Epichlorohydrin and Hydrogen Peroxide. Although not specialty chemicals, these are value-added products for its core chemicals business. It will soon also manufacture epoxy. It is also investing in a research and development laboratory for developing more specialty chemicals.

"We are looking at various chemistries - value-add chemistries, intermediate chemistries, and even base chemistries. Because while we want to go up the value chain, at the same time we are looking at going up the scale levels also," Vikram Shriram, vice chairman and managing director told ET.

The business conglomerate has its fingers in several pies like chemicals, sugar, alcohol, fertilisers and even PVC doors and windows under the Fenesta brand. But spinning off businesses into independent companies was not on the cards.

"Our board has raised this is-

sue once or twice, but we have not had a discussion or any serious look at restructuring the group," said Ajay Shriram, chairman and senior MD.

The company presently has several new projects ongoing at an investment of ₹2,350 crore. These include an investment of ₹2,100 crore in the chemicals business towards a new power plant, capacity expansion for caustic soda and aluminium chloride and investments in the epichlorohydrin and hydrogen peroxide

### EXPLORING OPTIONS



Co has already invested in capacities to make value-added products for its core chemicals business

business. The company was also spending ₹150 crore on a new distillery.

DCM Shriram pared its debt from ₹1,167 crore a year ago to ₹122 crore at the end of the June quarter due to several positive factors. The government recently cleared all the pending dues of fertiliser companies. The company also had low sugar stocks, which helped with additional cash flow. That, coupled with other internal accruals, drove down debt.

HINDU COIMBATORE 29/7/2021

## TNAU showcases drone technology for pesticide application

Field trials conducted in districts to arrive at standard operating procedure

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
COIMBATORE

Soon farmers in Tamil Nadu could be using drones to spray pesticides or apply fertilizers or nutrients to crops.

And, this could be in the near future as the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University is ready with the technology and standard operating procedure, crop-wise. Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare M.R.K. Panneerselvam in the presence of Agriculture Production Commissioner C. Samayamorthy, senior officials and Vice-Chancellor N. Kumar, viewed the demonstration at the university on Wednesday.

The university said the Department of Remote Sensing and GIS study since 2018 on the use of drones had helped it identify the right type of drone, the concentration of pesticide, herbicide, nutrient, etc., standardise the spray volume and speed for paddy maize, pulses, sugarcane, tomato, tapioca, vegetables and a few other crops.



Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare M.R.K. Panneerselvam (third right) viewing a demonstration on using drone to spray pesticides at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in the city on Wednesday. -S. SIVA SARAVANAN

It had conducted field trials in Coimbatore, Perambalur, Tiruvannamalai, Salem and a few other districts to arrive at the standard operating procedure.

The drones that it had ordered after customisation ran on petrol, had the capacity to carry up to 16 litres of pesticide and could fly non-stop for three hours.

The study had revealed that the drone could accomplish in a few hours the task that two labourers required a day to do - spray pesticides or apply fertilizers on a hectare, the university said.

The advantages identified during the field trials were that the farmers could use the drones for localised application of pesticides or fertilizers for effective crop management and they could do it within a very short time.

Early application of the pesticides or fertilisers would help the farmers save crops.

If they were to depend on labourers for the same it could take time and the time difference could prove critical in saving crops.

As for using the drones on

coconut, arecanut or other plantation crops, the university officials said it was in the pipeline.

At present the university was engaged in standardising the drone application on a few more crops and thereafter it would concentrate on plantation crops.

The farmers could hire the drones to spray pesticides or apply fertilisers but it was for the Agriculture Department to take a call. At the university,

Mr. Panneerselvam viewed the use of drone on a mango orchard.



**Address:**

207, Prakash Deep Building, 7 Tolstoy Marg, New Delhi- 110001

**Contact Us:** 011-43065365

**Email:** [info@acfiindia.com](mailto:info@acfiindia.com)

**Visit Us:** [www.acfiindia.com](http://www.acfiindia.com)

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