Food Irradiation | Uttar Pradesh | 03 Jun 2024

Why in News?

The government of India plans to use radiation processing (Food Irradiation) to extend the shelf life of a 100,000 tonne onion buffer stock in 2024, aiming to prevent shortages and price hikes.

India, a major onion exporter, is facing a 16% decline in onion output for the 2023-24 season, bringing production down to an estimated 25.47 million tonnes.

Key Points

- Food irradiation is the process of exposing food and food products to ionising radiation, such as gamma rays, electron beams, or X-rays.
 - In India, irradiated food is regulated in accordance with the Atomic Energy (Control of Irradiation of Food) Rules, 1996. lision
- Significance:
 - It is used in food processing to help ensure food safety.
 - Seasonal overstocking and long transport times lead to food waste.
 - India's hot, humid climate is a breeding ground for spoilage-causing insects and microbes.
 - Seafood, meat, and poultry can harbour harmful bacteria and parasites that make people sick.

Onion Production in India

- India is the second-largest (after China) onion-growing country in the world, famous for its pungent onions available year-round.
- Major Onion Producing States:
 - Maharashtra, Karnataka, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu are the major onion-producing states.
 - Maharashtra ranks first in Onion production with a share of 42.53% followed by Madhya Pradesh with a share of 15.16% in 2021-22 (3rd Advance Estimate).
- Export Destination: Major export destinations of Indian onion include Bangladesh, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

India to Import Wheat After 6 years | Uttar Pradesh | 03 Jun 2024

Why in News?

India, the world's second-largest wheat producer, plans to begin wheat imports after a six-year gap to replenish depleted reserves and control rising prices, driven by three consecutive years of

disappointing crops.

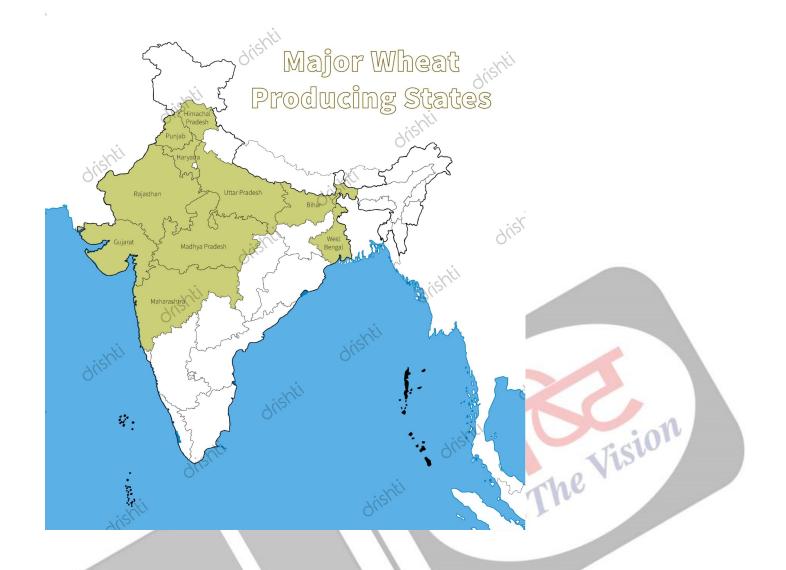
Key Points

- India's wheat production has declined in the last 3 years due to unfavourable weather conditions, leading to a sharp drop in wheat output.
- The government estimates this year's wheat crop to be 6.25% lower than the previous year's (2023) record production of 112 million metric tons.
- The government's target for wheat procurement the year 2024 was 30-32 million metric tons, but it has managed to buy only 26.2 million tons so far.
- Domestic wheat prices have stayed above the government's <u>minimum support price (MSP)</u> of 2,275 rupees per 100 kg and have been on the rise recently.
 - So, the government **decided to remove the 40% import duty on wheat to allow private traders** and flour millers to import wheat, primarily from Russia.

Wheat

- This is the second most important <u>cereal crop</u> in India after rice and main food crop, in the north and north-western part of the country.
- Wheat is a <u>rabi crop</u> that requires a cool growing season and bright sunshine at the time of ripening.
 - Success of the <u>Green Revolution</u> contributed to the growth of Rabi crops, especially wheat.
- Top 3 Wheat Producers in World (2021): China, India and Russia.
- Top 3 Wheat Producers in India (in 2021-22): Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab
- Government Initiatives:
 - Macro Management Mode of Agriculture, <u>National Food Security Mission</u> and <u>Rashtriya</u> <u>Krishi Vikas Yojana</u> etc.

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