



Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare

For Prelims: Minimum Support Price, National Mission for Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN), Soil Health Card, Kisan Credit Cards (KCC).

For Mains: Initiatives and Policies to promote Agriculture in India, Use of Technology in Agriculture.

Why in News?

Recently, the **Year-end-review of the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW)** was released.

- The Year-end reviews of the [Ministry of Panchayati Raj](#), [Ministry of Environment](#), [Forest and Climate Change](#), [Ministry of Education](#), [Ministry of Tourism](#), Ministry of Rural Development and [Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways](#) were also released.

What are the Key Initiatives/Achievements of MoA&FW?

Record of Food Grains and Horticulture Production

- **Highest-ever Food Grain Production:** As per 4th advance estimates, food grain production has increased from 308.65 million tonnes in January 2022 to 315.72 million tonnes in December 2022.
- **Highest-ever Horticulture Production:** As per 3rd advanced estimates, [horticulture](#) production during 2020-21 was 331.05 million tonnes which increased to 342.33 million tonnes during 2021-22.

Increase in Minimum Support Price (MSP)

- The [Government has increased the MSP](#) for all mandated Kharif, [Rabi](#) and other [commercial crops](#) with a return of at least **50% above the weighted average cost of production in India from 2018-19**.
 - The **mandated crops include 14 crops of the kharif season, 6 rabi crops and 2 other commercial crops**.

Launch of the National Mission for Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)

- In August 2021, the government announced the [NMEO-OP scheme](#) for self-reliance in edible oil and involves an investment of over Rs. 11,000 crore (over a five-year period).

Income Support to Farmers Through PM KISAN

- [Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi \(PM-KISAN\)](#) scheme was launched in 2019 which is an income support scheme to farmers **providing Rs. 6000 per year in 3 equal installments**.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

- **PMFBY**, a crop insurance scheme was launched in 2016 to provide insurance coverage and financial support to farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crops **as a result of natural calamities, pests & diseases.**

Institutional Credit for Agriculture Sector

- The benefit of concessional institutional credit through **Kisan Credit Cards (KCC)** at **4% interest per annum** has also now been extended to **Animal Husbandry** and **Fisheries** farmers for meeting their short-term working capital needs.

Providing Soil Health Cards to Farmers

- **Soil Health Card Scheme** was introduced in the year 2014-15 **to optimize the usage of nutrients.**
- Regulations for the promotion of biostimulants are issued.
 - **Nano urea** is included under fertilizer control order.

Promotion of Organic Farming in the Country

- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) was initiated in 2015-16 to promote **organic farming** in the country.
- Under **Namami Gange Programme**, farmers in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Jharkhand have taken-up organic farming on either side of the river Ganga to control river water pollution as well as to fetch additional income to farmers.
- The government also proposes to **promote sustainable natural farming systems through the scheme Bhartiya Prakratik Krishi Padhati (BPKP).**
 - The proposed scheme **aims at cutting down cost of cultivation, enhancing farmer's income** and ensuring resource conservation and, safe and healthy soils, environment and food.
- **Mission Organic Value Chain Development in North East Region (MOVCDNER)** has been launched. It is a sub-mission under **National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)** which aims to develop certified organic production in a value chain mode.
- In addition, to facilitate organic certification at affordable cost and easy-to-adopt approaches, a **New Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) certification was launched in 2015.**
 - This PGS system is **unique and is the largest participatory organic certification programme in the world.**
- A **Jaivikkheti portal** has been initiated **to assist the small and marginal farmers in selling their organic products** directly to consumers.
- In addition, **quick certification of default organic areas such as islands, remote, hilly areas** have been initiated under **the Large Area Certification programme.**
 - Sikkim is the **first state in the world that is 100% organic.**

Agri Infrastructure Fund

- Since the inception of the **Agri Infrastructure Fund (AIF)**, various agriculture infrastructures were created and some of the infrastructure is at the final stage of completion.
 - It is a financing **facility launched in July 2020 to create post-harvest management infrastructure** and community farm assets, with benefits including 3% interest subvention and credit guarantee support.

Promotion of FPOs

- A new **Central Sector Scheme for the Formation & Promotion of new 10,000 FPOs** launched in 2020 with a budget outlay of Rs 6865 Crore till 2027-28.

A National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM)

- **National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM)** has been launched in 2020 as part of the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**.
 - NBHM **aims for the overall promotion & development of scientific beekeeping in the country** to achieve the goal of '**Sweet Revolution**' which is being implemented through the National Bee Board (NBB).

Per Drop More Crop

- **Per Drop More Crop (PDMC)** scheme launched during 2015-16 which **aims to increase water use efficiency at the farm level** through **Micro Irrigation technologies** i.e. drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.

Agricultural Mechanization

- **Agricultural mechanization is extremely vital to modernize agriculture** and reducing the drudgery of farming operations.
 - During the period from 2014-15 to March, 2022 an amount of Rs. 5490.82 crore has been allocated for agricultural mechanization.
- The **number of machines and equipment provided to farmers on subsidy was also increased**.
- In order to support the efforts of the Government of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and the **National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi to address air pollution due to crop residue burning, funds have been released to these States** during the period from 2018-19 to 2021-22, for crop residue management through mechanization interventions.
- Looking into the **unique advantages of Drone technologies in agriculture, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) released the for use of drones** in pesticide and nutrient application in the public domain, which provide concise instructions for effective and safe operations of drones.
- The Ministry in 2022 has issued revised guidelines for the **"Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization" (SMAM)** scheme in a move aimed at making **drones** more accessible to farmers.
 - The **funding guidelines will make this technology affordable by assisting in the purchase, hiring and demonstrations of agriculture drones**.

Setting up of E-NAM extension Platform

- **National Agriculture Market (eNAM)** is a pan-India electronic trading portal that networks the existing **Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities**.

Improvement in Farm Produce Logistics, Introduction of Kisan Rail.

- **Kisan Rail** has been **launched by the Ministry of Railways** to exclusively cater to the movement of perishable agricultural and horticultural commodities.
 - **First Kisan Rail was started in July 2020.**

The Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) - Cluster Development Programme

- The **Cluster Development Programme (CDP)** is designed to leverage the geographical specialisation of horticulture clusters and **promote integrated and market-led development of pre-production, production, post-harvest, logistics, branding, and marketing activities**.
 - MoA&FW **has identified 55 horticulture clusters, of which 12 have been selected for the pilot phase of the CDP.**

Achievement in Export of Agri and Allied Agri- Commodities

- The country has witnessed a **significant increase in the export of agri and allied commodities**. As compared to previous year 2020-21, the Agri and allied export has increased from 41.86 billion

USD in 2020-21 to 50.24 billion USD in 2021-22 i.e. an increase of 19.99%.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q1. Under the Kisan Credit Card scheme, short-term credit support is given to farmers for which of the following purposes? (2020)

1. Working capital for maintenance of farm assets
2. Purchase of combine harvesters, tractors and mini trucks
3. Consumption requirements of farm households
4. Post-harvest expenses
5. Construction of family house and setting up of village cold storage facility

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 5 only
(b) 1, 3 and 4 only
(c) 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
(d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Ans: (b)

Q2. Consider the following statements: (2017)

1. The nation-wide 'Soil Health Card Scheme' aims at expanding the cultivable area under irrigation.
2. Enabling the banks to assess the quantum of loans to be granted to farmers on the basis of soil quality.
3. Checking the overuse of fertilizers in farmlands.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 3 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q. How is science interwoven deeply with our lives? What are the striking changes in agriculture triggered off by science-based technologies? **(2020)**

Q. Given the vulnerability of Indian agriculture to vagaries of nature, discuss the need for crop insurance and bring out the salient features of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). **(2016)**

Source: PIB