



## Nurturing India's Cotton Sector

**For Prelims:** [National Food Security Mission \(NFSM\)](#), [Minimum Support Price](#), [Kasturi Cotton India](#), Cott-Ally Mobile App

**For Mains:** Issues with the Cotton Sector, Growth & Development

**Source:** [PIB](#)

### Why in News?

Recently, the Union Minister of State for the Ministry of Textiles highlighted the significant strides taken to **empower [cotton](#) farmers and promote the [cotton sector](#).**

### What are the Indian Government Initiatives Related to the Development of the Cotton Sector?

- **Cotton Development Programme Under [National Food Security Mission \(NFSM\)](#):**
  - Implemented by the **Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare** in 15 major cotton-growing states: **Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh & West Bengal** from 2014-15.
  - Aims to enhance **cotton production and productivity in major cotton-growing states.**
  - Includes demonstrations, trials, distribution of plant protection chemicals, and training.
- **MSP Formula for Cotton:**
  - Introduced a formula of 1.5 times the cost of production (A2+FL) for [Minimum Support Price \(MSP\) calculation](#).
  - Ensures economic interest of cotton farmers and availability of cotton to the textile industry.
  - Increases **MSP rates to support farmers' income.**
  - For cotton season 2022-23, **MSP of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) grade cotton had increased by about 6%** which has further been **increased by 9% to 10% for ensuing cotton season 2023-24.**
- **[Cotton Corporation of India \(CCI\)](#):**
  - Appointed as a Central Nodal agency for **MSP operations when Fair Average Quality grade seed cotton (kaps)** fall below the MSP rates.
  - Safeguards farmers from distress sales.
- **Branding and Traceability:**
  - Launched [Kasturi Cotton](#) to promote Indian cotton with a brand name.
  - Aims to ensure **quality, traceability, and branding of Indian cotton.**
- **Large-Scale Demonstrations Project:**
  - Sanctioned by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare under NFSM.
  - Focuses on best practices to enhance cotton productivity.
  - Focus on innovative technologies, such as **High Density Planting System (HDPS) and**

### the value chain approach.

- Sanctioning of a project titled "Targeting technologies to agro-ecological zones-large scale demonstrations of best practices to enhance cotton productivity."
- **Textile Advisory Group (TAG):**
  - Constituted by the Ministry of Textiles to facilitate coordination among stakeholders in the cotton value chain.
  - Addresses issues related to productivity, prices, branding, and more.
- **Cott-Ally Mobile App:**
  - Developed to provide farmers with knowledge through a user-friendly interface.
  - **Key Features:**
    - MSP Rate Awareness.
    - Nearest Procurement Centers.
    - Payment Tracking.
    - Best Farm Practices.
- **Committee on Cotton Promotion and Consumption (COCP):**
  - Ensures availability of cotton to the textile industry.
  - Monitors cotton scenario and advises the government on production and consumption matters.

## What are the Key Facts about Cotton?

- Kharif Crop which requires 6 to 8 months to mature.
- Drought-resistant crop ideal for arid climates.
- **Occupies 2.1% of the world's arable land**, meets 27% of the world's textiles needs.
- **Temperature:** Between 21-30°C.
- **Rainfall:** Around 50-100cm.
- **Soil Type:** Well-drained black cotton soil (Regur Soil) (E.g. Soil of Deccan Plateau)
- **Products:** fibre, oil and animal feed.
- **Top Cotton Producing Countries:** India > China > USA
- **Top Cotton Producing States in India:** Gujarat > Maharashtra > Telangana > Rajasthan > Andhra Pradesh
- **Four Cultivated Species of Cotton:** *Gossypium arboreum*, *G. herbaceum*, *G. hirsutum* and *G. barbadense*.
  - *Gossypium arboreum* and *G. herbaceum* are known as old-world cotton or Asiatic cotton.
  - *G. hirsutum* is also known as American cotton or upland cotton and *G. barbadense* as Egyptian cotton. These are both new world cotton species.
- **Hybrid Cotton:** Cotton made by crossing two parent strains that have different genetic characters. Hybrids are often spontaneously and randomly created in nature when open-pollinated plants naturally cross-pollinate with other related varieties.
- **Bt Cotton:** It is a genetically modified pest-resistant variety of cotton.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Prelims

**Q1. The black cotton soil of India has been formed due to the weathering of**

- (a) brown forest soil
- (b) fissure volcanic rock
- (c) granite and schist
- (d) shale and limestone

**Ans: (b)**

**Expl:**

- Black soil, also known as regur soil or black cotton soil, is ideal for growing cotton. The climatic conditions along with the parent rock material are the important factors for the formation of black soil. Black soil is typical of the Deccan trap (Basalt) region spread over northwest Deccan plateau and is made up of lava flows (fissure volcanic rock).
- The Deccan Plateau includes parts of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Tamil Nadu. Black soil also covers upper reaches of the Godavari and the Krishna, and the north Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Tamil Nadu.
- Chemically, the black soils are rich in lime, iron, magnesia and alumina. They also contain potash. But they lack phosphorus, nitrogen and organic matter. The colour of the soil ranges from deep black to grey.
- Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.

**Q2. A state in India has the following characteristics: (2011)**

1. Its northern part is arid and semi-arid.
2. Its central part produces cotton.
3. Cultivation of cash crops is predominant over food crops.

**Which one of the following states has all of the above characteristics?**

- (a) Andhra Pradesh
- (b) Gujarat
- (c) Karnataka
- (d) Tamil Nadu

**Ans: (b)**

- Gujarat has varying topographic features, though a major part of the State is dominated by parched and dry region. Out of 8 agro-climatic zones, five are arid to semi-arid in nature, while remaining three are dry sub-humid in nature.
- Deep black to medium black soils dominate the soil types in the State. The average rainfall in the State varies widely from 25 to 150 cm across various zones.
- More than 50% of the total available land is being used for agriculture. The main food crops are bajra, jowar, rice and wheat.
- Major commercial crops or cash crops of the State are groundnut, tobacco and cotton, linseed, sugarcane, etc. Other important cash crops are isabgul (Psyllium husk), cumin, mangoes and bananas.
- The State has notable achievement in production and productivity scenario in cotton, castor and groundnut. Cotton is an important crop of the State which covers 27.97 lakh ha.
- Therefore, option (b) is the correct answer.