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Agricultural Production and **Market Outlook**

The Rising Agriculture....

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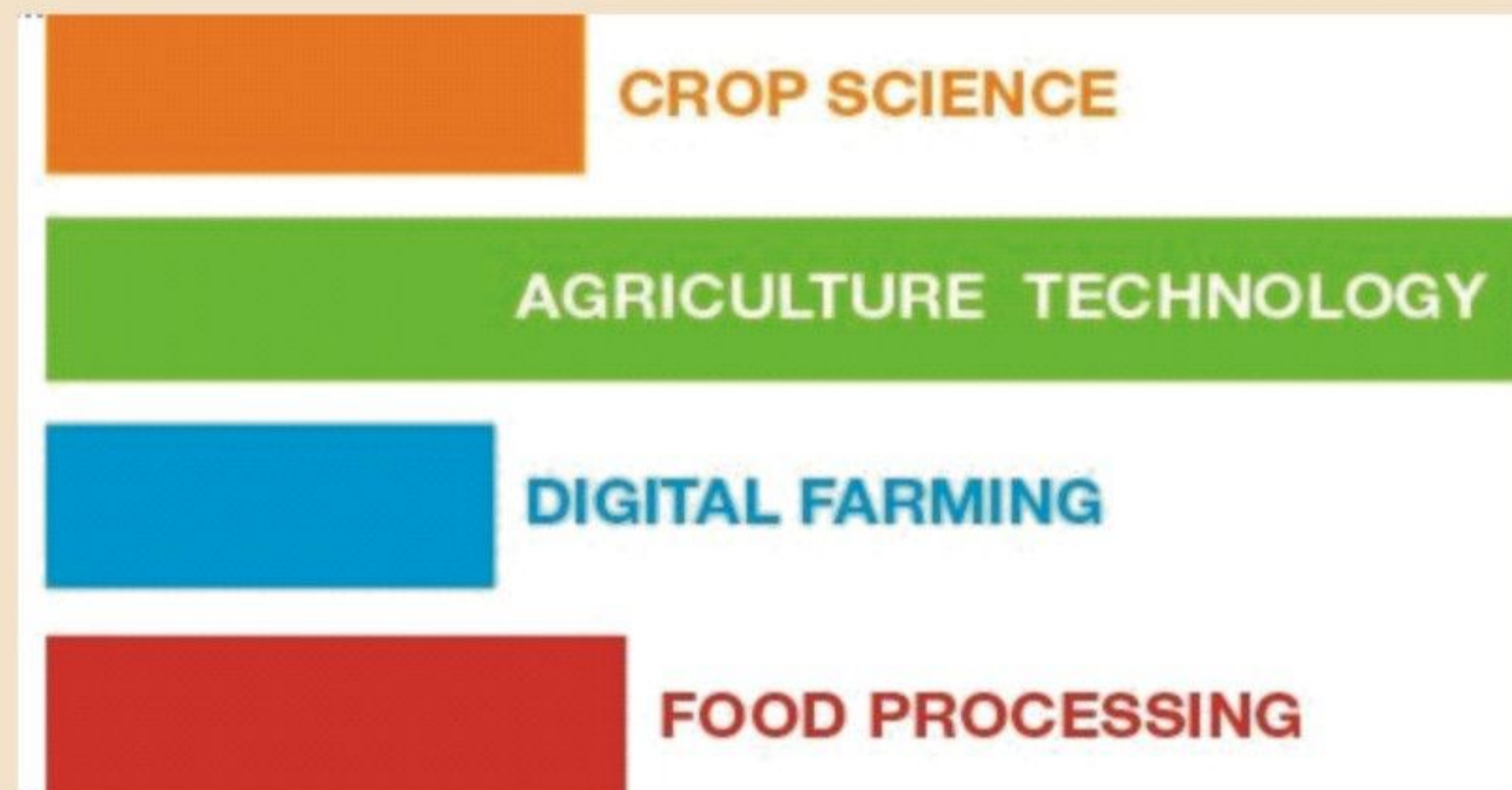
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Govt. create agri-knowledge data for Next Gen farmers



At present, Directorate of Knowledge Management in Agriculture (DKM) under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has mandate to disseminate ICAR technologies, policies and other activities to different stakeholders. With increase in use of mobile phones and internet, the data related to new agri-innovation, technologies and policies need to be packaged in a way that get easily available and available for next generation farmers can be put to use. There is a urgent need to engage next generation farmers else they will shift out of farming. Agriculture is knowledge intensive activity and farmers need help at every stage for better management and thus dissemination of the agri-knowledge will boost agriculture sector and improve farmers' livelihood. This will also help achieve the target of doubling farmers' income by 2022.

Government looks to dispose of 18 lakh tonnes pulses from buffer stock



Saddled with a buffer stock of 18 lakh tonnes of pulses, the government is trying to dispose of the dals and including cooperative NCCF, to do the needful. The government will procure pulses in the current year as well if the rates fall below the minimum support price (MSP) level. For the first time, the government had last year decided to create

a buffer stock of pulses to ensure better prices to farmers and at the same time use the stock to augment local supply in times of price rise. About 20 lakh tonnes of buffer were created through local procurement and imports.

Although some quantity has been sold to traders through auction, the sale has not picked up. The food ministry is trying other means to clear the stock. It is in talks with welfare organizations and cooperatives to sell the stock, according to official sources.

The buffer stock of pulses and the fall in MSP have discouraged farmers as they

have grown pulses in less area during the ongoing kharif season of the 2017-18 crop year. However, to ensure better prices for farmers, the government has recently lifted ban on export of tur, urad and moong dals. The country had procured a record 22.95 million tonnes of pulses in 2016-17 crop year due to good monsoon.

With ambitious food produce target, government sheds rain fears



Allaying fears of a poor kharif (summer sown) harvest due to deficit rainfall in many districts and floods in several others, the Centre set an ambitious target of overall foodgrain production for the 2017-18 crop year (July-June) based on its contingency measures including use of quality seeds and other appropriate inputs for rabi (winter-sown) crops. The target was fixed by the agriculture ministry which put the foodgrain production figure for 2017-18 at 274.55 million tonnes (MT) just marginally less than the estimated record production (275.68 MT) in 2016-17.

The figures signal that the Centre expects kharif

production in the current year will not be as bad as was expected two-three weeks ago due to deficit rainfall in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana and floods in Bihar, Assam and Odisha. "We are expecting better rabi production due to contingency measures as per our strategies for the upcoming season," said Union agriculture minister Radha Mohan Singh.

He said the availability of quality seeds and use of appropriate inputs as per Soil Health Cards would help in increasing productivity and overall foodgrains production. Keeping in mind variability of rainfall during June-September period, the ministry has planned a number of contingency measures for the rabi season. It includes region specific crop planning on the basis of water availability, pre-positioning of inputs like seeds, fertilizers and micro-nutrients, moisture conservation practices, judicious use of irrigation water and focus on rice fallow area for sowing of pulses and oilseeds. Less monsoon rainfall leads to lower moisture content in soil and water shortage in reservoirs--the two key factors which guide sowing in rabi season. Better strategy of crop selection and other measures can, however, minimize the impact of deficit rainfall on crops.

Reducing food waste top priority for India



India, one of the world's largest producers of food, is also the largest producer of milk and second largest producer of fruits and vegetables. However, India is currently only processing 10 per cent of its food, resulting in enormous food waste, this huge raw material base, paired with a growing 1.3 billion population, presents vast investment and partnership opportunities for the US, said Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal, minister of food processing industries, at an industry round table organised by US India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF).

As the fastest growing major economy in the world, India possesses a USD 6 billion food sector, of which 70 per cent is food retail. This market is set to triple by 2020. In addition, an average Indian

spends almost 40 per cent of income on food.

Over the next six years, this expenditure is set to double. This makes India an attractive destination for foreign investment. Badal's visit comes ahead of the mega World Food India Show to be held in New Delhi from November 3-5. This global event aims to facilitate partnerships between Indian and international businesses and investors. The conclave would be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Encompassing the entire food spectrum from production to consumption, World Food India aims to create a better sourcing environment which will enable higher returns for farmers, create employment, and foster entrepreneurship.

Government may hike import duty on wheat to 20-25 per cent



The government is likely to raise import duty on wheat to 20-25 per cent from 10 per cent to curb cheap shipments and give positive price signal to farmers who will start sowing winter crop after the Diwali festival.

In March, the government had imposed 10 per cent import duty on wheat to contain sharp fall in local prices in view of bumper crop of 98.38 million

tonnes in 2016-17 crop year (July-June).

As farmers start planting of rabi (winter) wheat crop from end of this month, the government wants to give positive price signal and encourage farmers to grow wheat in more area.

The government does not want wheat growers to follow the way of pulses farmers who shifted to other crops this kharif season as prices remained lower just before the sowing period owing to bumper crop last year.

The trade data showed that private traders imported about 8.5 lakh tonnes of wheat since April at 10 per cent import duty. Another 1.5 lakh tonnes of shipments are expected to arrive.

Global prices were depressed for last few months, but there has been spurt in rates in anticipation of lower crop in Australia. Even domestic rates have started inching up, the data showed.

Govt pegs 2.77% fall in kharif foodgrain output at 134.67 mt

Crop	in million tonnes	
	Kharif 2016-17 (4th Advance estimate)	Kharif 2017-18 (1st advance estimate)
Rice	96.39	94.48
Coarse cereals	32.71	31.49
Pulses	9.42	8.71
Oilseeds	22.40	20.68
Sugarcane	306.72	337.70
Cotton*	33.09	32.27

*million bales of 170 kg each Source: Ministry of Agriculture



India's foodgrain production is estimated to decline by 3.86 million tonnes to 134.67 MT this kharif season on account of poor rains as well as floods in some parts of the country.

According to the first advance estimate released by the agriculture ministry, production of all kharif foodgrains rice, pulses and coarse cereals is projected to decline from the record 138.52 MT last kharif.

In cash crops, production of cotton, oil seeds and jute is estimated to fall and that of sugarcane to go up.

As per the latest data, rice output is likely to fall by 1.9 million tonnes (mt) to 94.48 mt in kharif season this year, from the record 96.39 mt in the previous kharif.

Pulse output could drop to 8.71 mt, from the record 9.42 mt, due to depressed prices and poor rains.

The production of tur is estimated to be lower at 3.99 mt from 4.78 mt while urad output may rise to 2.53 mt from 2.17 mt in the last kharif season.

Coarse cereal output is also seen lower at 31.49 mt, against 32.71 mt in the gone-by kharif season. Maize output is pegged at 18.73 mt this kharif as against 19.24 mt a year ago.

Oilseed output is estimated to be down at 20.68 mt in the kharif season of this year compared to 22.40 mt in the year-ago period. Soyabean output has been pegged at 12.22 mt as against 13.79 mt last kharif.

Among cash crops, cotton output is estimated to be slightly lower at 32.27 million bales (of 170 kg each) in the 2017-18 crop year (July-June) from the earlier 33.09 million bales.

However, sugarcane output might rise to 337.69 mt, from 306.72 mt before.

Production of jute and mesta is estimated to decline to 10.33 million bales (of 180 kg each), from 10.60 million bales last year.

The fall in kharif output is attributed to dry spell as well as floods in some parts of the country.

The overall South-West Monsoon, crucial for rain-fed kharif crops, was projected normal, but till the first week of this month, it was less by 5 percent.

Assam, Bihar, Gujarat and Rajasthan witnessed floods while parts of Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu faced a dry spell.

The kharif output estimates might be revised later taking feedback from states. The ministry releases four estimates before the final one at different stages of harvesting.

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