



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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GRAIN STORAGE PLAN

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Grain Storage Plan". The topic "Grain Storage Plan" has relevance in the Agriculture section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic "Grain Storage Plan"

For Prelims:

What is Grain Storage Plan?

For Mains:

GS 3: Indian Economy – Agriculture

What is the significance of the Grain Storage Plan?

What are the issues with the Grain Storage ?

Way Forward

Why in the news?

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah has thanked Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for approving the constitution of an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) for the World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in the Cooperative Sector.

What is Grain Storage Plan?

The Union Cabinet has given the green light to an impressive scheme that involves allocating a substantial ₹1 trillion for expanding storage capacity in the cooperative sector.

India's current grain storage capacity is 145 million tonnes, but the government aims to enhance it by 70 million tonnes to reach 215 million tonnes within five years. This expansion is crucial for reducing food wastage and improving farmers' planning capabilities.

What is the role of Cooperatives?

1. Cooperatives will establish decentralised storage facilities across the country.
2. Reduces burden on the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and improves efficiency.
3. Regional requirements and local needs will be integrated into nationwide implementation.

What is the role of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies?

Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) will emerge as a crucial pillar of the rural economy. It will not only enhance food security but also benefit millions of farmers associated with cooperatives. PACS will have the opportunity to expand their role beyond storage facilities, engaging in activities such as operating Fair Price Shops and Custom Hiring Centers. This comprehensive approach will empower PACS to contribute significantly to the agricultural ecosystem and uplift the livelihoods of farmers.

What are the benefits of this plan?

1. PACS as MSP Agents: Farmers have the option to sell their crops to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and receive an advance payment at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The remaining balance is settled once the PACS sells the food grains in the market, providing farmers with financial flexibility.
2. Crop Storage and Financing: Farmers can store their crops in PACS-managed warehouses and avail finance for the next crop cycle. This enables them to sell their crops at a time of their choosing, taking advantage of market conditions and maximising their profits.
3. Whole Crop Sale at MSP: Another option available to farmers is selling their entire crop to PACS at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). This provides a guaranteed price for their produce, ensuring income stability and reducing the risks associated with market fluctuations.

What is the significance of the Grain Storage Plan?

1. Grain storage plans **ensure food security** by storing surplus grain for times of low agricultural production or emergencies.
2. They contribute to **price stability** by regulating the supply and demand dynamics in the agricultural market.
3. Grain storage plans help **manage risks** such as adverse weather conditions, pests, diseases, and market volatility.
4. They promote **agricultural development** and rural economies by providing farmers with reliable storage infrastructure.
5. Effective storage plans enable countries to engage in **international trade** and export their surplus grain.
6. Grain storage **reduces post-harvest losses and food waste**.
7. It **maximises the utilisation of agricultural resources** and minimises environmental impact.

What are the issues with Grain Storage ?

1. Spoilage and quality loss due to inadequate storage conditions
2. Pest infestation, including insects, rodents, and fungi.
3. Insufficient or outdated storage infrastructure.
4. Lack of monitoring and management practices.
5. Financial constraints in building and maintaining storage facilities.
6. Post-harvest losses resulting from physical damage, spoilage, and mishandling.
7. Climate change impacts, such as extreme weather events, affect storage infrastructure and grain quality.

Source:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1928782>

PRELIMS QUESTIONS

Q.1 The Grain Storage Plan approved by the Union cabinet aims to address various challenges and improve the agricultural landscape. Select all the correct objectives of this plan:

- Increasing storage capacity by 100 million tonnes in the cooperative sector.
- Reducing post-harvest losses and minimising food wastage.
- Encouraging private sector participation in the storage infrastructure.
- Implementing advanced technology for efficient grain storage.

Select the other correct answer from the code given below:

- 1 only
- 1 and 4 only
- 2, 3, and 4 only
- All of the above

Answer: (c)

Q.2 What is the main objective of the Grain Storage Plan approved by the Union cabinet?

1. To reduce post-harvest losses of grains.
2. To increase the storage capacity of the Food Corporation of India (FCI).
3. To enhance the profitability of agricultural cooperatives.
4. To promote international trade in grain exports.

Select the correct answer from the code given below:

1. Option 1
2. Option 2
3. Option 3
4. Option 4

Answer: (a)

Mains Question

1. What is the significance of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) in the successful implementation of Grain Storage Plan?

Mohit Pratap Singh

DAIRY SECTOR IN INDIA

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Dairy Sector in India". The topic "Dairy Sector in India" has relevance in the Food Security and Food Management section of the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance:

For Prelims:

Facts about the Dairy sector?

For mains:

GS 3: Food Security and Management

Importance of dairy sector for India?

Challenges Faced by the Dairy sector?

Solutions for the Challenges?

Why in the news?

The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, in collaboration with the Agriculture Production Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, is going to celebrate World Milk Day on 1st June, 2023 and organize a Summer Meet for the animal husbandry and dairying sector on 1st-2nd June, 2023 at Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.

Facts about the Dairy sector?

- India is the highest milk producer and ranks first position in the world contributing 24% of global milk production in the year 2021-22.
- The top 5 milk-producing states are: Rajasthan (15.05%), Uttar Pradesh (14.93%), Madhya Pradesh (8.6%), Gujarat (7.56%) and Andhra Pradesh (6.97%). They together contribute 53.11% of total Milk production in the country.
- India is the largest producer of buffalo milk globally. Buffalo milk accounts for a significant portion of India's total milk production.
- Export of dairy products recorded a growth of 19.45 % as its export rose to \$471 Mn in FY 2022-23 till now (April-December 2022) from \$395 Mn in April-December 2021 of the last fiscal year.
- India is home to various indigenous cattle breeds that are known for their milk productivity and adaptability to local conditions. Breeds like Gir, Sahiwal, Red Sindhi, and Tharparkar are valued for their milk production potential.

Importance of dairy sector for India?

- **Livelihood support:** The dairy sector provides a substantial source of livelihood support to millions of rural households, particularly small and marginal farmers. It offers income generation opportunities, employment, and economic stability, helping to alleviate poverty and improve rural livelihoods.
- **Food security:** The dairy sector plays a crucial role in ensuring food security in India. Milk is a rich source of essential nutrients, and dairy products form an integral part of the Indian diet. The availability of milk and dairy products helps meet the nutritional needs of the population, especially children, pregnant women, and the elderly.
- **Income diversification:** Dairy farming offers farmers an opportunity to diversify their income sources. By engaging in dairy production, farmers can supplement their earnings from traditional crop farming. This diversification helps reduce the dependence on a single income source and enhances overall income stability.
- **Nutritional benefits:** Milk and dairy products are rich in proteins, calcium, vitamins, and minerals, making them crucial for maintaining good health. The availability of affordable and nutritious dairy products contributes to improved nutrition and overall well-being of the population, particularly in rural areas.
- **Employment generation:** The dairy sector creates significant employment opportunities along its value chain. From animal husbandry, fodder cultivation, and dairy farm management to milk collection, processing, and marketing, the sector employs a large number of people, including farmers, dairy workers, technicians, and marketing professionals.
- **Women empowerment:** Dairy farming provides a platform for women's empowerment in rural communities. Women play a significant role in dairy-related activities, including animal care, milking, and processing. Engaging in dairy farming gives women a sense of independence, economic empowerment, and decision-making authority within their households.
- **Export potential:** The dairy sector in India has seen a rise in export opportunities. The country exports a variety of dairy products, such as milk powder, ghee, and casein, to international markets. This contributes to foreign exchange earnings and boosts the country's overall economy.

Challenges Faced by the Dairy sector?

- **Low milk productivity:** The average milk productivity per animal in India is relatively low compared to international standards. Factors such as poor breed quality, inadequate nutrition, lack of proper animal healthcare, and limited access to quality breeding services contribute to low milk productivity.
- **Inadequate infrastructure:** Insufficient infrastructure, including lack of proper milk collection and chilling centers, cold storage facilities, and processing units, hinders the efficient functioning of the dairy sector. This leads to milk spoilage, quality deterioration, and limited value addition opportunities.
- **Quality and safety concerns:** Ensuring consistent milk quality and safety is a significant challenge. Contamination at various stages of the milk supply chain, lack of adherence to hygiene standards, and limited testing facilities contribute to concerns regarding milk adulteration and the presence of contaminants.
- **Access to credit and finance:** Many small-scale dairy farmers face challenges in accessing credit and finance for dairy-related activities. Limited availability of affordable credit, complicated loan procedures, and lack of collateral are common obstacles faced by farmers in expanding their dairy operations or investing in modern infrastructure.
- **Inefficient marketing and value chain:** Inefficient marketing systems and limited value addition activities restrict the sector's growth potential. Lack of proper linkages between farmers, milk processors, and consumers, coupled with inadequate cold chain facilities, result in wastage, price fluctuations, and limited market access.
- **Lack of technical knowledge and training:** Many dairy farmers lack access to proper training, technical knowledge, and best practices in dairy management. This hinders the adoption of modern techniques, efficient herd management, and optimal utilization of resources, leading to lower productivity and profitability.
- **Climate change and environmental impact:** Climate change poses challenges for the dairy sector, including altered rainfall patterns, increased heat stress on animals, and changing availability of fodder and water resources. Adapting to these climate challenges and adopting sustainable practices are necessary to ensure the sector's long-term viability.
- **Fragmented and unorganized sector:** The dairy sector in India is largely unorganized and fragmented, with a large number of small-scale farmers and informal milk traders. This results in challenges related to quality control, market access, and lack of bargaining power for small farmers.
- **Policy and regulatory constraints:** Inconsistent policies, complex regulations, and bureaucratic hurdles pose challenges for the dairy sector. Streamlining policies, ensuring regulatory compliance, and providing an enabling environment for investment and growth are essential for the sector's development.

Solutions for the Challenges?

- **Enhancing breed quality and productivity:** Encouraging breed improvement programs, promoting the use of superior genetic material, and providing access to high-quality semen for artificial insemination can help improve milk productivity and the overall quality of dairy animals.
- **Infrastructure development:** Investing in the development of milk collection centers, chilling units, cold storage facilities, and modern processing plants is essential to create a robust dairy infrastructure. This will help reduce milk spoilage, improve value addition capabilities, and ensure the availability of quality dairy products.

- **Quality control and safety measures:** Implementing stringent quality control measures, including regular testing for adulteration and contamination, can help ensure the safety and integrity of dairy products. Strengthening food safety regulations and establishing more testing laboratories will contribute to improving milk quality and consumer confidence.
- **Access to credit and finance:** Facilitating easy access to credit and finance for dairy farmers through schemes like Kisan Credit Card, Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme (DEDS), and cooperative loans can support investment in modern infrastructure, technology, and herd management practices.
- **Strengthening value chains and marketing systems:** Developing efficient marketing channels, strengthening linkages between farmers and processors, and promoting value addition activities such as dairy product diversification and branding can enhance market access and improve returns for farmers.
- **Technical training and extension services:** Providing training programs, workshops, and extension services to farmers on modern dairy management practices, including feed and nutrition management, breeding, animal health, and farm hygiene, can enhance their knowledge and skills, leading to improved productivity.
- **Climate-smart dairy farming:** Promoting climate-smart practices such as efficient water management, use of renewable energy sources, conservation of natural resources, and adoption of climate-resilient fodder varieties can help dairy farmers mitigate the impacts of climate change and build resilience.
- **Encouraging dairy cooperatives and farmer collectives:** Promoting the formation and strengthening of dairy cooperatives and farmer producer organizations (FPOs) can empower farmers, enhance their bargaining power, and provide better market linkages, access to resources, and collective decision-making opportunities.
- **Policy and regulatory reforms:** Creating an enabling policy environment with consistent and supportive regulations, streamlining bureaucratic processes, and addressing the specific needs of the dairy sector can encourage investment, innovation, and growth.

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1928584>

Q.1 Which of the following statements regarding the dairy sector in India is/are correct?

1. India is the largest producer of milk in the world, surpassing countries like the United States and China.
2. The dairy sector in India primarily consists of small-scale and unorganized dairy farmers.
3. The per capita milk consumption in India is higher than the global average.

Select the correct option using the codes below:

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

Answer (d)

Q.2 Which of the following statements regarding the dairy sector in India is/are correct?

1. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) is responsible for the implementation of various dairy development programs in India.
2. The dairy sector in India is highly dependent on imported breeds of cattle for milk production.

- (a) Both 1 and 2
- (b) 1 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Q.3 To what extent has the dairy sector contributed to India's agricultural and economic development? Discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by the dairy sector in India.

Rishabh

