

Current Affairs (2023): Agriculture At a Glance

- * **National Turmeric Board**- The Centre has notified the constitution of the National Turmeric Board (NTB). It will focus on the **Development and Growth** of turmeric and turmeric products in the country.
- * **Bharat Atta**- The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution recently flagged off **100 mobile vans for sale of wheat flour (Atta)** under the 'Bharat Brand'. This initiative aims to provide affordable atta to consumers, with a MRP of Rs 27.50 per kilogram.
- * **Krishi 24/7**- The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) in collaboration with Wadhvani Institute for Artificial Intelligence (Wadhvani AI) has developed Krishi 24/7. It is the first-ever AI-powered solution for **automated agricultural news monitoring and analysis, with support from Google.org.**
- * **Fisheries Status in India**- With 8% share in global fish production, India is the **3rd Largest Fish Producer, 2nd Largest Aquaculture Producer, Largest Shrimp Producer and 4th Largest Seafood Exporter in the World.**
- * The **International Sugar Organization (ISO)**, announced India to be the Chair of the organization for the year 2024. ISO is the apex International body on sugar and related products with about 90 countries as members. With about **15% share in global sugar consumption and about 20% production of sugar**, Indian sugar trends affects the global markets significantly.
- * India is now the **3rd largest country** in the world in **Ethanol production** after USA & Brazil.
- * According to recent Department of Commerce data, **Exports of farm commodities**, at USD **23.6 billion** in April-September 2023, were below the USD 26.7 billion for April-September 2022.
- * PM Modi, during his visit to Rajasthan, launched a new type of Urea called "**Urea Gold**," which is coated with Sulphur and can improve the soil quality and reduce the farmers' expenses.
- * **State of Food and Agriculture 2023**-
 - * About **29.6 %** of the global population — **2.4 billion people** — were moderately or severely food insecure in 2022, of which about 900 million (11.3 % of people in the world) were severely food insecure.
 - * It is estimated that between **691 and 783 million people in the World faced hunger in 2022.**
 - * Almost **600 million people** will be **chronically undernourished** in 2030.
 - * Among the Nine South Asian countries, **India had the 3rd highest prevalence of undernourishment** (233.9 million) in the total population, after Afghanistan and Pakistan.
 - * **Ban on PUSA-44 cultivation**- The Punjab Government recently announced that the state will ban the cultivation of the PUSA-44 paddy variety from next year onwards. PUSA-44 is a Long-duration variety, taking around 160 days to mature. This is around 35 to 40 days more than other varieties, requiring 5-6 extra cycles of irrigation.
- * **Impact of Disasters on Agriculture Report**
 - * **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** has released the report **The Impact of Disasters on Agriculture and Food Security.**
 - * Disaster events have increased from 100 per year in the 1970s to around 400 events per year worldwide in the past 20 years.
- * An estimated **\$3.8 Trillion** worth of crops and livestock production has been lost due to Natural Disasters over the last 30 years.
- * The loss corresponded to an average of **\$123 Billion Per Year**, or 5 % of annual global agricultural Gross Domestic product (GDP).
- * **Adopting The Digital Crop Survey System**- Highlighting that the present system of estimation of crop area and production is completely manual, the Centre has asked states and UTs to digitize the process by adopting the Digital Crop Survey System from July next year.
- * On February 23, 2023, the Government announced that it has set up a **panel to assess the impact of rising temperatures on the wheat crop**, as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) warned that above normal temperatures would prevail in key producing states.
- * The Government of India has launched the **National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF)** as a separate and independent scheme to promote chemical-free and climate-smart agriculture.
- * **India is the world's second-largest tea producer after China.** However, the tea industry in India has been **facing a major setback** due to the infestation of tea mosquito bugs.
- * **Bio Prime Agri Solutions**, an **AgriTech startup** that is revolutionizing the world of agriculture with cutting-edge biological solutions has appointed **deQollab**, a new age creative communications agency as its strategic communications partner.
- * On July 24, 2023, **FAO Launches Action Plan for Ambitious Climate Strategy** to tackle Global Agri Challenges.
- * The "**One Nation, One Fertilizer**" scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 26, 2023.
- * On October 10, 2023, the Indian Government designated **National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)** as the implementing agency for setting up **fodder-centric FPOs.**
- * **Chokuwa Rice**
 - * Recently, Chokuwa rice from Assam was given the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag.**
 - * Also known as Magic rice, Chokuwa rice is a part of **Assam** culinary heritage and has been a staple of the troops of the mighty Ahom dynasty.
 - * This unique and healthy rice is cultivated around the Brahmaputra area and is cultivated in several parts of Assam like Tinsukia, Dhemaji, Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Golaghat, Nagaon, Morigaon.
 - * It is basically a semi-glutinous winter rice, known as Sali rice. The sticky and glutinous variety is categorized as Bora and Chokuwa based on their amylose concentration. The low amylose Chokuwa rice variants are used to make soft rice, which is known as Komal Chaul or soft rice.
- * **Lentil Production India**- As per the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, India is set to become the **world's largest producer** of lentils (masoor) (1.6 million tons) during the 2023-24 crop year on account of higher acreage in rabi season on higher acreage.
- * **Decline of Saffron Production in Kashmir**- Despite ranking as the **second-largest saffron producer** globally, with an average annual production of 11-12 tons, after Iran, the region's saffron industry is weakening, presenting Economic challenges for local farmers.