

SASYAM FOUNDATION

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# VICHAR

# NEWSLETTER

**CULTIVATING IDEAS, GROWING FUTURES**

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# GENERAL AGRICULTURE

## The thick red line: Why India shouldn't agree with US on agri

Donald Trump's tariff deadline is approaching, and India is seeking a favorable interim deal before Trump's high tariffs on Indian exports, up to 26%, kick in. However, there is an impasse in the talks, as India has a "big red line" on which it will find difficult to negotiate. Trump is reportedly seeking concessions from India in the agriculture and dairy sectors, and New Delhi is determined to safeguard India's domestic agricultural sector and the dairy domain. India's domestic agricultural sector employs millions of people, about 40% of the population, and is not as heavily subsidised as farming in the US. A mere quid pro quo tariff regime will not address the mismatch created by the US by providing massive subsidies to its farmers vis-a-vis farmers in India. SOURCE- INDIATODAY



## Interim trade deal with US likely in 48 hours, India firm on agriculture red line

An interim trade deal between India and the US is expected to be signed within 48 hours, days before the expiry of Donald Trump's reciprocal tariffs deadline. India has been hesitant to open the agriculture and dairy sectors to the US, while India has sought greater access to labor-intensive industries like textiles, gems, leather goods, plastics, and chemicals. The deal has been tense due to the Trump administration's demand for wider access to India's agricultural sector, which India has refused to lower tariffs on genetically modified corn, soybeans, rice, and wheat grown in the US. India's hard stance on agriculture is due to the politically sensitive nature of the sector, fearing that wider foreign access would trigger further protests by farmers. Trump has previously threatened a 26% duty on Indian imports, but suspended the tariffs for 90 days, allowing countries to strike a deal with the US. The bilateral trade agreement aims to double trade between the two nations to USD 500 billion by 2030. SOURCE- INDIA TODAY



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## Centre needs to protect farmers from US agri imports: Kerala's agri minister P Prasad

Kerala's Minister for Agriculture, P-Prasad, warns that the livelihood of lakhs of Kerala's rubber, coconut, dairy, and poultry farmers could be at risk if the Centre fails to protect their interests during negotiations for a trade agreement with the US. The US demands to allow genetically modified products like soya and remove regulations preventing US dairy products from entering India, which could partially open its agricultural sectors. The US agreement could also significantly harm Kerala's agriculture, as higher imports of soyabean oil will impact its coconut farmers. SOURCE- THE INDIA EXPRESS



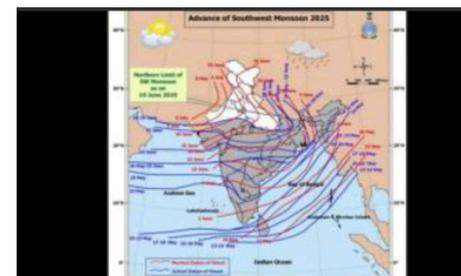
## Strawberry & pomegranate up, cereals down: Agriculture output report

New data from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) indicates that the Gross Value of Output (GVO) of fruits and vegetables has seen the largest increase over the past decade. Meat's share in the GVO of agriculture and allied sectors rose from 5% in 2011-12 to 7.5% in 2023-24, while cereals' share fell from 17.6% to 14.5%. GVO is a measure of production, referring to the total value of items produced before subtracting inputs used in production. SOURCE- INDIAEXPRESS.COM



## India's Monsoon Is Changing And It's Reshaping Agriculture And Climate Resilience

The southwest monsoon in India is showing signs of variability in onset, distribution, and withdrawal, affecting agriculture, water security, and climate planning. The monsoon's erratic nature, as noted by Vishwas Chitale, Senior Programme Lead of the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, is not only affecting its onset and duration but also its distribution across regions and months. SOURCE- NEWS18



# GENERAL AGRICULTURE

## India plans AI-driven pest detection roll-out to help farmers.

The National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS), launched in August 2024, aims to help farmers mitigate pest attacks and reduce crop losses. The system currently covers 61 crops and will be expanded to cover more farmers and extension workers, initially reaching 50,000 users. The agriculture ministry plans to take the technology to farmers to communicate with experts directly by uploading images of affected crops or pests. Agriculture contributes around 18% to the GDP and 46% of the population is engaged in it. AI's computer vision model can identify and differentiate between farmer-friendly insects and pests, which can adversely affect crop growth and farmers' income. Once pests are detected, these models can be combined with pest management advisories, reducing indiscriminate use of pesticides and enhancing farmers' incomes. Wadhvani AI, a non-profit organization focusing on AI applications, is a non-profit organization that focuses on AI applications. SOURCE- LIVEMINT.COM



## Union Agriculture Minister to visit J&K on July 3-4

Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Minister for Agriculture, Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, will visit Jammu and Kashmir on July 3 and 4, 2025. He will chair high-level meetings and participate in key programs related to agriculture, rural development, and academia. Chouhan will hold a review meeting at the Civil Secretariat, attend a meeting of the Consultative Committee on Natural Farming and the National Oilseeds Mission, and attend a courtesy meeting hosted by the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Manoj Sinha. He will also be the chief guest at the sixth convocation ceremony of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST-K), Srinagar. SOURCE- GREAT KASHMIR.COM



# GENERAL AGRICULTURE

## Kashmir's paddy fields dry up as rain deficit and heatwave cripple agriculture

A prolonged dry spell and an unceasing heatwave have pushed Kashmir's fragile agrarian economy to the brink. As June largely passed without rainfall, streams dried up and irrigation canals shrank to a trickle, placing intense stress on paddy fields across the region. Large tracts of farmland in both southern and northern Kashmir now lie parched, leaving thousands of farmers struggling to save their crops.

"Baked by relentless heat, the paddy fields have dried into cracked, brittle sheets of earth," said Mohammad Ramzan, a farmer from Anantnag district in south Kashmir. He said the main irrigation canal servicing his area had nearly dried up. SOURCE- THE HINDUBUISBNESSLINE



## Kerala raises concerns over proposed trade treaty with U.S.

Kerala Agriculture Minister P. Prasad has written to Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, expressing concerns over the proposed Indo-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Prasad argued that the Centre should not sign agreements that hurt farmers, stating that the details should be disclosed and discussed in Parliament and with states. He also urged Agriculture Ministers to raise their voice against relaxing import duties on agricultural and milk products. Prasad acknowledged the Centre's efforts for tariff exemptions before the July 9 deadline. SOURCE- THE HINDU.COM



# GENERAL AGRICULTURE

## Reservoirs full, agricultural activity in full swing, says Cheluvaryaswamy

Mandya district in-charge Minister N. Cheluvaryaswamy announced that agricultural activities in the State have reached their peak due to the full reservoirs in the Cauvery basin. The Minister stated that the government is committed to protecting farmers' interests and has sanctioned an agricultural university for Mandya and permission to start a private agricultural college in Adichunchanagiri. The Mettur dam in Tamil Nadu has also reached its full level, resolving water sharing issues. The government has sanctioned ₹150 crore for the development of canals and repair works in Srirangapatna, with works in the distributary canals pending. The Minister also mentioned that the Chikkadevaraja Sagar and Ramaswamy canals have already been developed, but the works in the distributary canals are still pending.



## E-registration for unique ID cards to be undertaken by agriculture department on a war-footing over the next fortnight

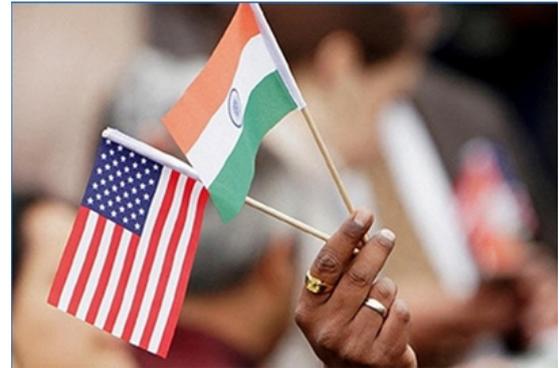
The Tamil Nadu Farmer Registration (TNFR) Agristack portal's June 30 deadline was not met due to server glitches. Unique ID cards will be mandatory for crop insurance, PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi, and State Government schemes. Approximately 80% of nearly 1.1 lakh farmers in Coimbatore district have been registered, granting them an annual assistance of ₹6000. The department has tasked officials at the block level to bring the rest of eligible farmers under e-registration. Factors contributing to the 20% let-up in registration include farmer deaths, land sale, and land transfer. The agriculture department relies on the Tamil Nilam App for data updates.



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## India-U.S. trade pact likely before July 9; certain issues still pending in agri, auto sectors

An Indian team has returned from Washington after holding talks with the US on an interim trade pact, which is expected to be finalised before July 9. The talks are in the last phase and the conclusion is expected to be announced before July 9, marking the end of the 90-day suspension period of Trump tariffs imposed on dozens of countries, including India. India has raised issues over 25% duty in auto sectors and has taken up the matter in the Safeguards committee of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The US has adopted a 25% ad valorem tariff increase on imports of passenger vehicles and light trucks, and certain automobile parts originating in or from India.



## Indian agriculture should be kept out free trade agreement with U.S. or other countries: SKM leaders

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) leaders have called for an all-India strike on July 9, urging for the immediate withdrawal of the National Policy Framework for Agricultural Marketing (NPFAM). The SKM and trade unions have launched a nationwide program to protest against the Modi government's anti-farmer, anti-labour, and anti-people policies. The leaders criticized the Modi government for not legalizing the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and alleged that the government's policies have been detrimental to farmers and workers. They appealed to the public to join them in protesting against the anti-farmer, anti-labour, and anti-people policies of the Central government. SKM leader Vissa Kiran Kumar demanded that agricultural products should not be included in the free trade agreement under any circumstances.



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## Food grain production target is 148.48 lakh tonnes for 2025-26, says Agriculture Minister

The State of Tamil Nadu has set a target of producing 148.48 lakh tonnes of food grain for 2025-26, following a surplus of 153 lakh tonnes in 2024-25. The state also aims to produce 12.20 lakh tonnes of oil seed for the current year. The Kharif season 2025-26 will see 82.50 lakh hectares under sowing, with 25.50 lakh hectares for rabi and 6.40 lakh hectares for the summer season. Land preparations have been initiated in various regions due to pre-monsoon rains and the early onset of the southwest monsoon.



## Kerala raises concerns over proposed trade treaty with U.S.

Kerala Agriculture Minister P. Prasad has written to Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, expressing concerns over the proposed Indo-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Prasad argued that the Centre should not sign agreements that hurt farmers, as agriculture is a State subject. He also urged Agriculture Ministers of all States to raise their voice against relaxing import duties on agricultural and milk products. Prasad noted that the treaty with the United Kingdom was finalized without discussions with States. He acknowledged the Centre's efforts for tariff exemptions ahead of the July 9 deadline, but urged Kerala to register firm opposition to any agreement that endangers the livelihoods of millions and threatens the foundation of Kerala's agricultural economy.



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## India and Trump are haggling over the same constituency

India-US trade talks are nearing a crucial phase, facing a July 9 deadline. Sticking points remain agriculture and dairy, with the US pushing for market access to benefit its farmers, a key political base for President Trump. India is hesitant to offer concessions to protect its own farmers from cheaper imports. SOURCE- THE ECONOMIC TIMES



## Stalin inaugurates integrated agriculture extension centre at Nanguneri, veterinary pharmacy at Vasudevanallur

Chief Minister M. K. Stalin inaugurated an integrated agriculture extension centre in Nanguneri, India, which houses agriculture, horticulture, seed certification, agro business, and agro engineering departments. Farmers can access services under one roof, buy seeds and fertilizers, and undergo training on new techniques. District Collector R. Sukumar distributed vegetable seeds under the Nutrition Farming Mission. Stalin also inaugurated a veterinary pharmacy, agriculture regulatory market, godowns, and an agriculture extension centre in Tenkasi. SOURCE- THE HINDU



## Anna University develops toolkit for gender-inclusive climate resilience in agriculture and water sectors

Anna University's Centre for Climate Change and Disaster Management (CCCDM) has developed a 'Gender-Responsive Adaptation Planning Toolkit' to assess climate risks in agriculture and water sectors. The project, which covers 36 gram panchayats, was piloted in the Rajapalayam block of Virudhunagar district. Nine gram panchayats, including Samsigapuram, Thenkarai, and S. Ramalingapuram, were found to be at high risk of climate change impacts. Three villages, Cholapuram, Melarajakularaman, and Gopalapuram, exhibited high gender vulnerability to climate change. The study aimed to address the impacts of climate change on women, farmers, and marginalized groups. The assessment covered agriculture, water resources, socio-economic dimensions, and indicators such as exposure to climate-related disasters, groundwater stress, and adaptive capacity. SOURCE- THE HINDU



# GENERAL AGRICULTURE

## Farmers not getting price for cotton: Gujarat agriculture minister flags dip in acreage

Gujarat's cotton farmers are shifting to groundnuts and soybeans due to low prices, causing a decline in cotton acreage. The state Agriculture Minister, Raghavjibhai Patel, emphasized that Gujarat is the hub of cotton production due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's investment in its value chain. However, Patel raised concerns that the inadequate price farmers receive is discouraging cotton production. Gujarat's cotton acreage has declined from 26.79 lakh hectares last year to 23.62 lakh hectares in the 2024-25 Kharif season. Maharashtra now leads in cotton, and Gujarat has ceded its position to Maharashtra. Gujarat's cotton pressing is 76 lakh bales, compared to Maharashtra's 85 lakh bales and Telangana's 48 lakh bales as of May 31, 2025. SOURCE- NEW INDIAN EXPRESS



## Agriculture Issues Most Sensitive": US Ex Envoy To India On Interim Trade Deal

Atul Keshap, president of the USIBC, has highlighted the importance of agriculture issues in trade negotiations, stating that the India-US interim trade deal will have to navigate this aspect. The USIBC is dedicated to the growth of ties between the world's two largest democracies. Keshap believes that agriculture is the most sensitive in negotiations, as farmers occupy an enormously important cultural space in all countries. He also highlights the importance of agriculture in the home and heart of both countries, as seen with Japanese rice farmers. Keshap hopes that the US and India will reach a outcome that is mutually good, as this is the first in a series of trade agreements. He believes that it is important for the US and India to have a trade agreement, as their shared adversaries are watching and hoping that they fail. The US wants duty concessions for its agricultural products, and the two sides are looking to finalize the talks before the suspension of US reciprocal tariffs ends on July 9. SOURCE- SOURCE- NDTV.COM

