

Major Crops for UPSC CSE GS3 by Pmfias.com

“Indian Agriculture – Major Crops” will be a cake walk if you have understood Climatology, Climatic Regions and Indian Climatology well.

It can still be managed without the knowledge of Indian Climatology. But it will take a bit longer to understand.

Green revolution, Bringing Green Revolution in Eastern India (BGREI), Sustainable Agriculture, Organic Farming and Biofertilizers are already included in my Environment Notes.

This part is a ‘low-cost – High-Benefit’ section for prelims.

Reference: [Indian Geography by Kullar](#)

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Cropping Pattern

- Different crops grown in an area at a particular point of time is called cropping pattern.
- Cropping pattern depends on climate (temperature, rainfall, wind etc.), soil,

support price, value, demand - market, labor availability, historical setting, etc.

- Climate: Rice is cultivated extensively when the monsoons are good. But when monsoons are weak, millets are grown instead of rice.
- **Cotton in Maharashtra, tea in Assam and jute in West Bengal** remain the dominant crops due to highly favorable conditions for cultivation.
- Soil: **Regur** soils are ideal for cotton cultivation. Cotton is the obvious choice in such soils when the climate is favorable.
- Minimum Support Price (MSP): Rice and wheat which are offered MSP are preferred by farmers.
- Value: Millets in the hilly areas of HP and Uttarakhand are replaced by high value horticulture crops like apple.
- Demand: Rice is the preferred crop in the densely populated regions as there is a ready market.
- Historical setting: Sugarcane is grown **more extensively in North India even though the conditions are most favorable in South India.**
- This is because the sugarcane cultivation was encouraged by British as an alternative to indigo which lost its significance and market in states like Uttar Pradesh due to introduction of artificial dyes.
- **Diversification** of crops due to surplus food grain production post Green Revolution has led to significant changes in cropping pattern.
- Other than rice and wheat, oilseeds and pulses also became more prominent.
- Crop diversification in certain regions has been negligible. E.g.
 1. **Rice dominates in well irrigated parts of south India.**
 2. **Wheat dominates north-western part of the country.**

Imported Oil

- Virtually the whole of the country's palm oil consumption is imported.
- Sunflower (92 per cent) and soyabean (71 per cent) are also imported.
- Solvent extraction is replaced by refineries importing crude palm, soyabean oil etc.
- Most of the refineries are located at Mundra, Kandla, Mangalore, Chennai, Krishnapatnam, Paradip and Haldia.

All port cities. Why?

- 1) Easy to import oil – the main reason,
 - 2) Refining and discarding the waste reduces transportation cost
- The future for indigenous production lies only in
 - 1) mustard (because of its high oil content),
 - 2) cotton-seed (thanks to the Bt revolution) and
 - 3) rice bran (extensive rice cultivation).

Edible oil consumption

- India is the world's **second** largest consumer of edible oil next to China.

REGIONAL OIL PREFERENCES
(CONSUMPTION BY % OF HOUSEHOLDS)

Mustard	78
Soyabean	75

Sunflower	36
Soyabean	29
Cottonseed	16
Groundnut	15



Mustard	93
Soyabean	43
Sunflower	34

Sunflower	82
Sesame	21
Palmolein	18
Groundnut	10
Coconut	10

Source:
Nielsen (2014)

Palm oil

- Most of it is used predominantly by the food industry. Why? Because it's cheap and suits all types of frying.
- Vanaspati manufacturing, too, is now entirely based on palm oil.
- Being cheap also makes palm oil ideally suited for adulterating other oils (palm oil is a neutral oil, with no aroma of its own and can easily mingle with other oils).

Plantation Crops in India

- Plantation crops are those crops which are grown on plantations covering large estates.
- They take 3-5 years to bear returns after they are sown.
- They continue to bear returns for the next 35-40 years after the first harvest.
- They cover small area in India but are of high economic value.
- Tea, coffee (beverage crops) & rubber are the principal plantation crops.
- Spices, palm plantations and coconut plantations are the other important ones.

Tea

- Tea is the dried leaf of a bush. It contains **theine (stimulant)**.
- Tea bush is indigenous to China. It was introduced in India in 1840.
- The first commercial tea plantations were set up in the **Upper Assam (upper Brahmaputra valley)**.
- Lower Assam and Darjeeling were also opened up to tea plantations few years later.
- Later on, tea plantations were set up in **Nilgiri Hills of South India, Terai along the foothills of the Himalayas** and in some places in Himachal Pradesh.

Conditions of Growth

- Tea bush is a tropical and sub-tropical plant.