Indian Economy · GS - III

“India's food security requires a shift from production-centric policies towards a diversified, resource-efficient and import-resilient agricultural system.” Critically examine the need for crop diversification in India.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 13/11/2026	GS - III	Indian Economy

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Food import dependence, pulses and edible oils, wheat-paddy dominance, MSP and procurement, groundwater depletion, nutritional security, climate resilience, agricultural markets, import substitution.

Model Answer

Introduction

India has achieved substantial foodgrain production, but dependence on imported pulses and edible oils exposes its food system to global supply disruptions and price volatility.

Need for Crop Diversification

- **Import resilience:** Expanding domestic pulses and oilseed production can reduce exposure to international markets.
- **Resource conservation:** Diversification away from water-intensive crops can reduce groundwater depletion and ecological stress.

- **Nutritional security:** Pulses improve protein availability, while oilseeds support domestic edible-oil requirements.
- **Climate resilience:** Diverse cropping systems can reduce risks associated with crop-specific weather shocks.
- **Farm incomes:** Alternative crops can create new market opportunities and reduce dependence on a limited crop portfolio.

Challenges and Reforms

Assured procurement and MSP incentives remain concentrated in selected crops. India needs region-specific diversification strategies, improved seeds, irrigation efficiency, processing infrastructure, storage and reliable market access. Farmer-producer organisations and agricultural research can facilitate adoption.

Conclusion

Crop diversification should complement foodgrain security rather than undermine it. A balanced agricultural strategy can strengthen farmer incomes, conserve natural resources and reduce India's vulnerability to global food shocks.

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