

AGRICULTURE FORUM FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION OF FARMING SOCIETY

Kota, Rajasthan



Exporting Success: Take Your Crops to the World Market

Authors

**Anant Sharma¹, Mukesh Kumar², Ajay Verma³,
Priyanshi¹ and Swapnil Srivastava⁴**

Ph.D. Research Scholar, ¹Department of Agronomy,

³Department of Extension Education, Acharya Narendra

Deva University of Agriculture and Technology,

Kumarganj, Ayodhya- 224229 (Uttar Pradesh), India

²Professor, Department of Agronomy, ⁴Ph.D. Research

Scholar, Department of Agricultural Biotechnology,

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University of Agriculture and

Technology, Meerut-250110 (Uttar Pradesh), India

INTRODUCTION

India boasts one of the world's largest farming sectors, with over **58% of rural households depending primarily on agriculture for their livelihood**. Agriculture contributes around **15–16% of India's GDP**, and crops like rice, wheat, spices, cotton, fruits, and vegetables dominate national output. Indian crops are not just staples domestically — they make serious waves internationally. Farmers and agribusinesses now eye global buyers to boost incomes, reduce price risk, and diversify markets. India's agriculture isn't just big — it's massive. With over **140 million farm households** and more than **58% of rural families depending on farming**, agriculture shapes livelihoods and daily life. Domestic demand is huge, but global demand? That's where real opportunity explodes.

Exporting agricultural products:

- **Diversifies income** — farmers aren't stuck selling only locally.
- **Stabilizes prices** — global demand smooths out price swings caused by monsoon or local market trends.
- **Drives quality upgrades** — international markets demand higher standards, so producers level up their game.
- **Boosts national foreign exchange** — farm exports contributed around **\$52.5+ billion USD in FY2025–26**, up from about **\$35 billion USD a decade ago**. (That's ~50% growth over 10 years, major glow-up energy.)

2. The Big Picture — How Indian Agri Exports Are Trending

India's agricultural export journey has moved from shipping raw bulk commodities to exporting **higher-value and branded products**.

2.1 Recent Export Figures

Fiscal Year	Total Agri & Processed Food Exports (USD)
2018–19	~35.0 billion
2019–20	~36.5 billion
2020–21	~40.1 billion
2021–22	~49.5 billion
2022–23	~50.4 billion
2023–24	~51.8 billion
2024–25	~52.55 billion

2.2 Top Export Categories (2024–25)

- **Rice (mostly Basmati): ~12.4 billion USD** (~23% of agri exports)
- **Spices: ~3.8 billion USD**
- **Fresh fruits & vegetables (incl. grapes, pomegranates, mangoes): ~1.8+ billion USD**
- **Coffee: ~1.8 billion USD**
- **Tea: ~800 million USD**
- **Processed foods & juices: ~1.8 billion USD**

This mix shows India still leads with staples like rice and spices, but value-added categories are rising fast.

3. Why Indian Crops Are Popular Globally

3.1 Unique Comparative Advantages

- **Climatic diversity** — from Himalayan valleys to tropical south, India grows a crazy diversity of crops.

- **Heritage products** — Basmati rice, Kashmiri red chillies, organic turmeric? Global brand vibes.
- **Large processing ecosystem** — mills, spice grading units, food parks, and testing labs help meet export plant standards.
- **APEDA support** — market intelligence, export audits, quality checks, buyer meets, and digital platforms.

3.2 Growing Demand in Key Markets

India doesn't just export — it serves top global buyers:

- **Middle East** — huge rice & spice demand
- **EU & UK** — specialty and organic products
- **USA & Canada** — processed foods, grains, nuts
- **Southeast Asia & Africa** — staple grains and horticulture

These markets are hungry for both staple calories and nutritious premium goods.

4. Export Crops That Are Slaying It

4.1 Basmati & Non-Basmati Rice

India is the **world's #1 exporter of Basmati rice**, thanks to:

- long grain, aroma
- global diaspora demand
- premium pricing

FY2024–25 data suggest **~12.4B USD from rice exports** alone.

4.2 Spices

India controls a massive share of the global spice trade:

- ~70–75% of global spice exports come from India

- Star performers: chilli, turmeric, cumin, coriander

Spices are not just culinary — they're wellness products now (think turmeric latte global trend).

4.3 Horticulture (Fruits & Veggies)

Top exportables:

- **Mangoes** (Alphonso, Kesar) — high demand in Middle East, Europe
- **Grapes** (especially from Maharashtra) — fresh + frozen
- **Pomegranates** — premium order

Fresh veg & fruit exports are **~1.8 billion USD** — growth mode engaged.

4.4 Coffee & Tea

Single estate and speciality coffee fans in the EU + USA love Indian coffee. Tea, especially orthodox teas from Assam and Darjeeling, remains an export favourite.

4.5 Processed & Value-Added Foods

This segment is the fastest growing. Think:

- packaged snacks exported to diaspora markets
- fruit juices and pulps
- organic packaged staples

Packaging + branding = much higher per-unit export revenues.

5. How Indian Farmers Can Win in World Markets

5.1 Better Quality = Better Price

International markets care about:

- **Residue-free produce**
- **Colour, shape & size**
- **Traceability**
- **HACCP / ISO / Codex compliance**

Meeting these standards unlocks premium pricing.

5.2 Value Addition

Selling processed goods is like levelling up. For example:

- raw mangoes vs. **mango pulp in aseptic packs** → huge price gap
- raw spices vs. **blended organic spice packs** → premium retail pricing

Exporting processed goods can **double or triple** farmer returns vs. bulk raw exports.

5.3 Aggregation & FPOs

Since 80% of Indian farms are small (<2 hectares), **collective aggregation** through FPOs lets farmers pool volumes to meet export order size demands.

5.4 Supply Chain + Cold Chain

Perishables need cold chain access — otherwise 10–20% losses happen before export. Government support for cold storage and reefer trucks is a game changer here.

6. Challenges (No Cap) and Solutions

6.1 Quality & Compliance Costs

Getting certification = \$\$
Solution: Government subsidies + shared certification via FPOs.

6.2 Price Volatility

Global prices swing based on weather, geopolitics, and demand cycles.
Solution: Futures market access + crop insurance + diversification.

6.3 Infrastructure Gaps

Cold storage, labs, and transport networks are still patchy.

Solution: Invest in food parks, logistics corridors, and port linkage.

6.4 Trade Barriers & Standards

EU / US / Gulf standards are strict.

Solution: Build accredited labs and train farmers in compliance basics.

7. Real-World Success Stories

7.1 Basmati in Saudi Arabia & EU

India supplies over 60% of the global Basmati market, with countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the UAE being major importers. Premium packaging and consistent quality standards have established India as a preferred source.

7.2 Spice Exports

India dominates the global spice market, contributing approximately 70–75% of the spice trade worldwide. Innovations in hygienic packaging and organic cultivation have opened new markets in North America and Europe. Organic turmeric and spice mixes from Rajasthan and Gujarat are now hot sellers on Amazon and ethnic grocery chains in the USA and Canada.

7.3 Assam Pineapple & UP Honey

Small district exports — like Assam pineapple or Kashi honey — secured international buyers via APEDA's buyer-seller meets.

8. Government Push — Policies That Help

8.1 APEDA Export Development

Offers:

- exporter registrations
- quality help
- logistics support
- digital exports portal (e-APEDA)

8.2 Agri Export Zones / Food Parks

These zones cluster farmers + processors + labs + storage — lowering transaction costs and improving export readiness.

8.3 Market Access Initiative

Funding for compliance, trade fairs, and buyer outreach helps Indian producers win shelf space abroad. The Government also launched **digital interventions** and foreign trade agreements (FTAs) to reduce tariff barriers for Indian agri goods.

9. Future Trends & What Comes Next

9.1 Organic & Sustainable Produce

Global markets are thirsty for organic grains, spices, and fruits. India has huge potential because of traditional low-input farming areas.

9.2 E-Commerce Export Platforms

Digital platforms let even micro-producers sell globally by hooking into export fulfilment models.

9.3 Geographical Indications (GIs)

Products with GI tags (like Darjeeling tea) command a higher premium abroad — creating Brand India equity.

9.4 Smart Farming & Traceability

Tech GPS tagging, blockchain for traceability, and digital quality records are becoming standard expectations for global buyers.

CONCLUSION

Level Up the Agri Export Game

India's agriculture is not just feeding domestic stomachs — it's powering export momentum, fuelling rural economies, and building global brand equity for Indian crops. With smart quality compliance, infrastructure upgrades, and

strategic market targeting, Indian farmers can not only enter **global markets** but dominate them.

Exporting crops is a pathway from marginal returns
→ global value chains → consistent income growth
→ rural prosperity.