GENERAL STUDIES III

India Record Foodgrain Production 2025–26: UPSC Analysis

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India's foodgrain production reportedly reached a record 378.538 million tonnes during the agricultural year 2025–26, according to figures announced on 27 November 2026. The first advance estimate for the 2026–27 kharif season stands at 167.143 million tonnes. This development highlights India's agricultural potential while raising important questions regarding farmer income, crop diversification, climate resilience, groundwater depletion, nutritional security and sustainable agricultural development. Civil Service Gurukul presents a comprehensive analysis for UPSC Prelims and Mains 2027.

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Current Affairs – Executive Summary

India's foodgrain production reportedly reached a record 378.538 million tonnes during the agricultural year 2025–26. The development demonstrates the potential of India's agricultural sector while highlighting the importance of sustainable resource management, crop diversification, farmer profitability, climate resilience and nutritional security. The first advance estimate for kharif 2026–27 stands at 167.143 million tonnes.

378.538 MT

167.143 MT

2025–26

SDG 2

1. Why Is India's Foodgrain Production in the News?

According to the reported announcement of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare dated 26 November 2026, India's final foodgrain production for 2025–26 reached 3,785.38 lakh tonnes, equivalent to 378.538 million tonnes.

The Ministry also reportedly released the first advance estimate of kharif foodgrain production for 2026–27 at 1,671.43 lakh tonnes, equivalent to 167.143 million tonnes.

Record agricultural production can strengthen domestic food availability, improve market supplies and support food security. However, higher production must be accompanied by sustainable agricultural practices and remunerative prices for farmers.

2. Key Foodgrain Production Statistics

Particulars	Lakh Tonnes	Million Tonnes	Estimate Status
Foodgrain Production 2025–26	3,785.38	378.538	Reported Final Estimate
Kharif Foodgrain Production 2026–27	1,671.43	167.143	First Advance Estimate

Important UPSC Examination Trap:

The figure of 167.143 million tonnes relates only to the first advance estimate for kharif 2026–27. It is not the final foodgrain production figure for the entire agricultural year.

The two figures cover different periods and should not be directly compared to calculate annual production growth.

3. What Are Foodgrains?

Foodgrains are agricultural crops that form an important component of human food consumption and national food security. In Indian agricultural statistics, foodgrains broadly comprise cereals and pulses.

Category	Examples
Cereals	Rice and wheat.
Coarse and Nutri-Cereals	Maize, jowar, bajra, ragi and other millets.
Pulses	Gram, tur, moong, urad and lentils.

UPSC Prelims Concept:

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Foodgrains = Cereals + Pulses.

Oilseeds, sugarcane, cotton and horticultural crops are important agricultural products but are not included in the conventional foodgrain production category.

4. Major Cropping Seasons in India

Season	General Sowing Period	General Harvesting Period	Major Crops
Kharif	June–July	September–November	Rice, maize, bajra, soybean and cotton.
Rabi	October–December	March–April	Wheat, gram, mustard and barley.
Zaid	March–April	May–June	Watermelon, cucumber and summer vegetables.

Cropping calendars vary according to regional climatic conditions, irrigation availability, crop varieties and agricultural practices.

5. Advance Estimates vs Final Estimates

Agricultural production estimates are progressively refined as information becomes available regarding cultivated area, crop conditions, yields and actual harvests.

Estimate	Meaning
First Advance Estimate	Preliminary assessment based on available crop and seasonal information.
Subsequent Advance Estimates	Revised assessments incorporating additional agricultural information.
Final Estimate	More complete official assessment incorporating updated production information.

6. Agricultural Production and Agricultural Productivity

Agricultural production represents the total quantity of crops produced, whereas agricultural productivity measures output relative to an input, commonly cultivated land.

Important Formula:

Crop Production = Area Under Cultivation × Yield Per Unit Area

Crop Productivity = Total Crop Production ÷ Area Under Cultivation

Record production may result from increased cultivated area, higher crop yields or a combination of both. Aggregate production figures alone do not establish that agricultural productivity has increased.

7. Potential Factors Supporting Agricultural Growth

Several structural and technological factors can contribute to agricultural growth. Their actual contribution to the reported 2025–26 record requires crop-wise and region-wise evidence.

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- Improved seed varieties and agricultural research.
- Expansion and modernisation of irrigation infrastructure.
- Favourable rainfall and appropriate crop management.
- Agricultural mechanisation and precision farming.
- Improved access to agricultural credit and inputs.
- Better pest and disease management.
- Market connectivity and agricultural extension services.
- Adoption of climate-resilient agricultural technologies.

8. Significance of Record Foodgrain Production

National Food Security

Higher foodgrain production can improve domestic food availability and strengthen the capacity of public food distribution programmes.

Price Stability

Adequate market supplies may help moderate food inflation, although retail prices also depend on storage, transportation, demand and distribution conditions.

Rural Economic Development

Agricultural growth can support rural employment, agricultural trade, food processing and related economic activities.

Buffer Stock Management

Higher production can facilitate public procurement and maintenance of foodgrain reserves, depending on procurement policies and market conditions.

External Sector Stability

Adequate domestic production may reduce import requirements for certain commodities and create export opportunities, subject to domestic food security and trade policies.

9. Does Higher Production Guarantee Higher Farmer Income?

Record agricultural output does not necessarily translate into higher net income for every farmer. Profitability depends on production costs, market prices, crop losses, access to procurement and other economic factors.

> **Farmer Profitability Formula:**
> Net Farm Income = Agricultural Revenue ? Total Production and Related Costs

Factor	Impact on Farmer Income

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Higher Crop Yield	Can increase marketable output.
Falling Market Prices	May reduce revenue despite higher production.
Rising Input Costs	Can reduce net profitability.
Post-Harvest Losses	Reduce saleable agricultural output.
Market Access	Can improve price realisation and bargaining power.
Crop Diversification	May create alternative income opportunities and reduce concentration risks.

10. Food Security vs Nutritional Security

Food security and nutritional security are closely connected but are not identical concepts.

Parameter	Food Security	Nutritional Security
Primary Objective	Access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food.	Adequate nutritional intake and effective utilisation.
Major Focus	Availability, access, utilisation and stability.	Dietary quality, health and nutrient adequacy.
Policy Instruments	Procurement, food distribution and income support.	Dietary diversification, healthcare, nutrition education and sanitation.
Key Challenges	Hunger and inadequate food access.	Malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

Abundant rice and wheat production does not automatically address protein deficiencies, micronutrient gaps or inadequate access to fruits, vegetables and other nutritious foods.

11. Four Pillars of Food Security

Availability

Access

Utilisation

Stability

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12. Minimum Support Price and Agricultural Procurement

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is an important agricultural price-support mechanism intended to provide a degree of protection against adverse price movements for specified crops.

The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) recommends MSPs, while the Central Government takes the final decision.

Institution	Major Role
CACP	Recommends minimum support prices.
Central Government	Approves and announces MSP.
Food Corporation of India	Participates in foodgrain procurement, storage and distribution.
State Procurement Agencies	Implement procurement operations according to applicable arrangements.

UPSC Prelims Trap:
Announcement of MSP does not mean that the government automatically purchases the entire production of every MSP-covered crop.

13. Food Corporation of India and Buffer Stocks

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) was established in 1965 under the Food Corporations Act, 1964.

Major Functions of FCI

- Support foodgrain procurement operations.
- Maintain and manage foodgrain stocks.
- Facilitate foodgrain movement and storage.
- Support public food distribution requirements.
- Contribute to national food security and market stabilisation measures.

Buffer stocks can help address seasonal supply disruptions, emergencies and food distribution requirements. Their effective management requires adequate storage, quality control and efficient logistics.

14. National Food Security Act, 2013

The National Food Security Act, 2013 provides a rights-based framework for access to specified food and nutritional entitlements.

Particulars	Statutory Framework
Rural Population Coverage	Up to 75 percent.

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Particulars	Statutory Framework
Urban Population Coverage	Up to 50 percent.
Priority Households	5 kg of foodgrains per person per month.
Antyodaya Anna Yojana Households	35 kg of foodgrains per household per month.
Additional Provisions	Nutritional support for eligible children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

Actual coverage and distribution arrangements operate according to applicable government policies, beneficiary identification and statutory provisions.

15. Major Government Initiatives Supporting Agriculture

Government Initiative	Major Objective
PM-KISAN	Income support to eligible farmer families.
Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana	Crop insurance against specified agricultural risks.
Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana	Improved irrigation access and water-use efficiency.
Soil Health Card Scheme	Soil testing and nutrient management recommendations.
National Agriculture Market (eNAM)	Electronic integration of agricultural markets.
Agriculture Infrastructure Fund	Financing eligible agricultural infrastructure projects.
Farmer Producer Organisations	Collective marketing, aggregation and improved farmer bargaining power.
Kisan Credit Card	Access to agricultural credit for eligible borrowers.
National Mission on Natural Farming	Promotion of natural farming practices.

16. Climate Change and Indian Agriculture

Indian agriculture remains exposed to climate variability, including changes in rainfall patterns, extreme temperatures, droughts, floods and crop disease risks.

Climate Risk	Potential Agricultural Impact
Erratic Monsoon	Disruption of sowing and crop development.
Heatwaves	Heat stress and reduced yields in sensitive crops.
Drought	Water scarcity and crop losses.
Floods	Crop damage, waterlogging and soil erosion.
Unseasonal Rainfall	Harvest losses and deterioration in crop quality.
Changing Pest Patterns	Increased crop protection challenges.

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17. Groundwater Depletion and Sustainable Agriculture

Agricultural sustainability depends not only on the quantity of food produced but also on the long-term availability of natural resources.

Intensive cultivation of water-demanding crops in water-stressed regions can contribute to groundwater depletion. Excessive or imbalanced use of agricultural chemicals may also affect soil and water quality.

Important Sustainable Agricultural Practices

- Drip and sprinkler irrigation where appropriate.
- Region-specific crop diversification.
- Rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge.
- Integrated nutrient management.
- Integrated pest management.
- Conservation agriculture and crop rotation.
- Climate-resilient seed varieties.
- Scientific soil and water conservation.

18. Importance of Pulses, Millets and Oilseeds

Crop Category	Strategic Importance
Pulses	Plant-based protein, dietary diversity and biological nitrogen fixation through suitable symbiotic associations.
Millets	Nutritional diversity and suitability of many varieties for relatively dry conditions.
Oilseeds	Domestic edible oil availability and potential reduction of import dependence.

Agricultural diversification must be designed according to local agro-climatic conditions, market demand, farmer preferences and income opportunities.

19. Major Challenges Facing Indian Agriculture

- Unequal access to irrigation infrastructure.
- Climate variability and extreme weather events.
- Fragmented agricultural landholdings.
- Rising agricultural input costs.
- Inadequate storage and post-harvest infrastructure.
- Groundwater depletion and soil degradation.
- Price volatility and uneven procurement access.

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- Regional disparities in agricultural productivity.
- Limited access to technology and extension services.
- Insufficient diversification towards nutritious and remunerative crops.

20. Constitutional Provisions Related to Agriculture and Food Security

Constitutional Provision	Relevance
Article 21	Right to life and judicially recognised dimensions of the right to food and dignity.
Article 38	Social justice and reduction of inequalities.
Article 39(b)	Distribution of material resources to serve the common good.
Article 47	Improvement of nutrition, living standards and public health.
Article 48	Organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines.
Article 48A	Protection and improvement of the environment.
State List Entry 14	Agriculture, including agricultural education and research.
Concurrent List Entry 33	Trade, commerce, production, supply and distribution of specified commodities, including foodstuffs.

21. Agriculture and Sustainable Development Goals

SDG	Relevance
SDG 1 – No Poverty	Improvement of rural livelihoods.
SDG 2 – Zero Hunger	Food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture.
SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation	Sustainable water-resource management.
SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth	Rural employment and agricultural value chains.
SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production	Reduction of food waste and efficient resource utilisation.
SDG 13 – Climate Action	Climate-resilient agricultural practices.
SDG 15 – Life on Land	Soil conservation, biodiversity and ecosystem protection.

22. Way Forward: From Record Production to Sustainable Food Security

Region-Specific Crop Diversification

Promote suitable pulses, millets, oilseeds and horticultural crops while protecting farmer profitability and market access.

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Climate-Resilient Agricultural Research

Invest in crop varieties and agricultural practices capable of responding to heat stress, drought, floods and changing pest patterns.

Efficient Water Management

Encourage appropriate irrigation technologies, groundwater recharge and cultivation patterns aligned with regional water availability.

Strengthen Post-Harvest Infrastructure

Develop scientific warehouses, processing facilities, rural logistics and efficient agricultural value chains to reduce avoidable losses.

Improve Farmer Price Realisation

Strengthen market intelligence, farmer producer organisations, transparent procurement and access to competitive agricultural markets.

Improve Agricultural Data Quality

Publish timely crop-wise and district-wise information on cultivated area, productivity, rainfall, crop losses and the reliability of production estimates.

Prioritise Nutritional Security

Integrate agricultural policy with nutrition programmes, dietary diversification and equitable access to healthy food.

> **Integrated Agricultural Development Framework:**
> Higher Productivity + Remunerative Prices + Crop Diversification + Climate Resilience + Efficient Value Chains = Sustainable Agricultural Development

23. UPSC Prelims Quick Revision Capsule

Keyword	Remember
Foodgrain Production 2025–26	Reported final estimate: 378.538 million tonnes.
Kharif 2026–27	Reported first advance estimate: 167.143 million tonnes.
Foodgrains	Cereals and pulses.
Kharif	Generally associated with monsoon sowing.
Rabi	Generally associated with winter cultivation.
CACP	Recommends MSPs.
FCI	Established in 1965 under the Food Corporations Act, 1964.
NFSA	National Food Security Act, 2013.
Article 47	Nutrition and public health.

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Keyword	Remember
Article 48	Scientific agriculture and animal husbandry.
State List Entry 14	Agriculture.
SDG 2	Zero Hunger.

24. UPSC Prelims Practice MCQs

Question 1

With reference to India's reported foodgrain production estimates, consider the following statements:

1. The final foodgrain production estimate for 2025–26 is 378.538 million tonnes.
2. The 167.143 million tonnes figure represents the first advance estimate for kharif 2026–27.
3. Both figures represent final production estimates for complete agricultural years.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Reveal Answer and Explanation

Correct Answer: A – 1 and 2 only

The second figure is a seasonal advance estimate, not a final annual production figure.

Question 2

Which of the following are included in the conventional foodgrain production category in India?

1. Rice
2. Pulses
3. Wheat
4. Oilseeds

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 4 only

C. 1, 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

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Reveal Answer and Explanation

Correct Answer: C – 1, 2 and 3 only

Foodgrains comprise cereals and pulses. Oilseeds are a separate agricultural statistical category.

Question 3

Which institution recommends Minimum Support Prices for specified agricultural crops in India?

A. Food Corporation of India

B. Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices

C. Reserve Bank of India

D. Finance Commission

Reveal Answer and Explanation

Correct Answer: B – CACP

CACP recommends MSPs, while the Central Government takes the final decision.

Question 4

Consider the following statements:

1. Agriculture is included under Entry 14 of the State List.
2. Article 48 deals with the organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry.
3. Article 47 deals with nutrition and public health.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A. 1 only

B. 1 and 2 only

C. 2 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Reveal Answer and Explanation

Correct Answer: D – All three statements

All three constitutional provisions are correctly identified.

Question 5

Which of the following constitute the four conventional pillars of food security?

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A. Production, procurement, exports and imports.

B. Availability, access, utilisation and stability.

C. Irrigation, fertilisers, mechanisation and storage.

D. Income, employment, taxation and investment.

Reveal Answer and Explanation

Correct Answer: B

The four conventional pillars of food security are availability, access, utilisation and stability.

25. UPSC Mains Practice Question

GS Paper III – Indian Agriculture and Food Security

Question: Record foodgrain production is an important achievement but does not automatically ensure nutritional security, farmer prosperity and environmental sustainability. Critically examine the statement in the context of Indian agriculture.

Marks: 15 | **Word Limit:** 250 words

Reveal Model Answer

Introduction

India's record foodgrain production of 378.538 million tonnes in 2025–26 highlights its agricultural potential. However, sustainable agricultural development requires a broader approach encompassing economic, nutritional and environmental objectives.

Significance of Record Production

- Improves domestic food availability.
- Supports public distribution and buffer stocks.
- Can strengthen rural economic activity.
- May contribute to food price stability.

Major Limitations

- Higher production may coexist with falling farm prices and rising input costs.
- Cereal abundance does not automatically eliminate micronutrient deficiencies.
- Water-intensive cultivation may contribute to groundwater depletion.
- Climate variability threatens agricultural stability.
- Inadequate storage and logistics can result in post-harvest losses.

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Way Forward

- Promote region-specific crop diversification.
- Strengthen climate-resilient agricultural research.
- Improve irrigation efficiency and soil conservation.
- Develop storage, processing and agricultural value chains.
- Improve farmer price realisation and market access.
- Integrate agricultural policies with nutritional security programmes.

Conclusion

India must transition from a production-centric agricultural strategy towards a sustainable, nutrition-sensitive and farmer-centric agricultural ecosystem. Such an approach can strengthen food security, rural prosperity and environmental resilience while advancing Sustainable Development Goal 2.

26. UPSC Syllabus Mapping

UPSC Paper	Relevant Topic
Prelims GS Paper I	Agricultural cropping seasons, economic institutions and environment.
Mains GS Paper I	Distribution of natural resources and agricultural geography.
Mains GS Paper II	Hunger, poverty, welfare programmes and food security.
Mains GS Paper III	Major crops, cropping patterns, irrigation, MSP, food processing, agricultural marketing and climate change.
Mains GS Paper IV	Intergenerational equity, environmental ethics and distributive justice.
Essay	Sustainable agriculture, food security and rural development.
Interview	Farmer income, agricultural reforms and climate resilience.

27. Frequently Asked Questions

What is India's reported foodgrain production for 2025–26?

The reported final estimate is 3,785.38 lakh tonnes, equivalent to 378.538 million tonnes.

What is the first advance estimate for kharif 2026–27?

The reported first advance estimate is 1,671.43 lakh tonnes, equivalent to 167.143 million tonnes.

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Is the kharif estimate the final production for 2026–27?

No. It represents a preliminary estimate for the kharif season only.

What crops are included in foodgrains?

Foodgrains broadly comprise cereals, including coarse and nutri-cereals, and pulses.

Are oilseeds included in foodgrain production?

No. Oilseeds constitute a separate agricultural statistical category.

What is the difference between agricultural production and productivity?

Production refers to total agricultural output, while land productivity measures output per unit of cultivated area.

Does record foodgrain production guarantee higher farmer income?

No. Farmer income also depends on market prices, production costs, crop losses and access to markets.

Which institution recommends MSP in India?

The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices recommends MSPs.

What are the four pillars of food security?

Availability, access, utilisation and stability.

Which Sustainable Development Goal focuses on zero hunger?

SDG 2 focuses on ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture.

Why is crop diversification important?

Appropriate crop diversification can improve dietary diversity, reduce agricultural risks, support alternative income opportunities and promote sustainable resource management.

Why is record foodgrain production important for UPSC?

It connects agriculture, food security, farmer income, government policies, economic development, climate change and environmental sustainability.

28. Conclusion

India's reported record foodgrain production during 2025–26 represents an important agricultural milestone. Nevertheless, the long-term success of Indian agriculture must be measured through more than aggregate production figures.

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Sustainable agricultural growth requires improved farmer profitability, efficient water management, soil conservation, climate resilience, crop diversification and equitable access to nutritious food.

A comprehensive agricultural development strategy can transform higher foodgrain production into lasting food security, rural prosperity and sustainable economic development.

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Editorial Disclaimer: This article is prepared for educational and UPSC examination purposes. The reported foodgrain production figures and announcement date should be independently verified against the official agricultural production release before publication. Advance estimates are subject to revision. General agricultural concepts and policy discussions are provided for educational analysis.

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