



Cash Crops- Earning Cash Smartly

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Agricultural activity is one of the major demands and primary activity in the country of India. Farmers depend on agriculture for their basic livelihood. Nearly 40 percent of the farmers rely on mechanization which is a modern method of farming for bringing out cultivation and 60 percent use traditional methods of farming.

Farmers grow a wide variety of crops either for self-consumption or to sell them in the market and keep the rest with them as a surplus for future needs. To carry out the selling of crops in the market farmers must implant a growth of kind of crops which is mainly used and sowed for selling them in the market and earning an income out of it.

What are Cash Crops?

Contrary to subsistence crops, which are grown for the farmer's consumption, cash crops are agricultural products grown to be sold on the market or exported for a profit (like livestock feeding or food for the family).

Cereals, oilseeds, coffee, chocolate, sugar cane, vegetables, fruits (including avocado and oranges), peanuts, cotton, and tobacco are a few examples of common food and non-food income crops. Large-scale production of cash crops, particularly in developing nations, might conflict with local communities' needs for resources and land use. Farmers' incomes depend on the prices of main cash crops since they are affected by them.

Why are cash crops important?

Cash crops are important for farmers for them to make money and raise their standard of living. It helps in creating employment opportunities in agriculture and agro-based industries further strengthening and developing the economy. Raising the cash for agricultural investment and rural development encourages agricultural innovation.

1. As the human population increases, so will the demand for food. Finding solutions to meet that need becomes necessary at that point. The cultivation of such crops is a crucial step in achieving global food security because it focuses on increasing yields and producing quality.
2. Future of money the idea of sustainable agricultural intensification, which strives to combine increasing agricultural output with environmental conservation, is the foundation of crop farming. Using methods like micro-dosing fertilizers, intercropping, genetic crop advances, etc., entails maintaining soil fertility, biodiversity, and other ecosystem services. The only way to guarantee long-term food security is to reduce environmental impact.

What is the risk of growing cash crops?

1. Degradation of the soil impacts both the quality and quantity of the produce.
2. A lack of quality homogeneity.

3. Price sensitivity in many markets due to pests or drought, harvest failure loss of market access, as might occur during a pandemic.
4. Farmers should steer clear of such commodities because it wouldn't be possible to transfer them to their desired markets promptly when some countries are under lockdown and interstate travel is restricted. Below are some of the most profitable cash crops grown in India which provide high yields and productivity:

1. Cotton

Cotton is a cash crop that is grown in tropical and sub-tropical areas with high temperatures varying from 21 degrees to 30 degrees Celsius with an annual rainfall of 50 to 100 cm. A good crop benefits from a lot of rainfall at the start and sunny, dry weather as the crop ripens.

It is primarily a Kharif crop, but it is also planted as a Rabi crop in Tamilnadu. It thrives on the Deccan Plateau's deep black (regur) soils as well as the alluvial soils of the Satluj- Ganga plain.

India is the world's third-largest cotton producer, behind China and the United States. Gujarat is the state that produces the most cotton in India.

2. Jute

Jute is also one of the most profitable grown cash crops. It needs high temperatures between 240 and 350 degrees Celsius, significant rainfall of 120 to 150 cm, and relative humidity of 80 to 90 percent.

Not only is a large amount of water needed to produce the crop, but also to process the crop's fiber once it has been collected. For the jute, light sandy or clayey loams are said to be ideal. Jute must be grown and processed with a plentiful supply of inexpensive labour.

3. Sugarcane

This is the primary source of gur, Khandsari, and sugar; it is a member of the bamboo family. It is a crop that takes a long time to mature, taking about 10-15 months.

It needs a hot, humid climate with annual rainfall ranging from 75 to 150 cm and average temperatures of 21 to 270 C. The best time for harvesting is during a brief, chilly, dry winter season. Numerous types of soils, including loams, clayey loams, black cotton soils, brown or reddish loams, and even laterites, are suitable for their growth. Any soil that can hold moisture can support the growth of sugarcane, but the soil should be rich in nitrogen, calcium, and phosphorus.

4. Tobacco

Tobacco requires a temperature as high as 350 C. It needs 100 cm of yearly rainfall, but it can also be cultivated with irrigation. The optimum soil types for tobacco are well-drained friable sandy loams that are rich in mineral salts but not overly rich in organic materials. After China and Brazil, India is the third-largest tobacco producer in the world. About 65% of the nation's production is produced in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh, followed by Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra. Gujarat is India's top tobacco grower.

Both the Kharif and Rabi crops are planted there. Red, yellow, and black cotton soils, as well as light sandy loams that drain well, are excellent for cultivation. It needs temperatures between 20 and 300 C and 50 to 75 cm of rainfall to thrive, and tropical climates are ideal. Behind China, India is the world's second-largest producer of groundnuts.