



Mains Practice Question

Q. From being a net food importer in the 1960's, India has emerged as a net food exporter to the world. Provide Reasons. (Answer in 250 words, UPSC Mains 2023)

01 Jan, 2024 GS Paper 1 Geography

Approach

- Briefly introduce the historical context of India being a net food importer in the 1960s.
- Discuss major factors responsible for transforming India into a net food exporter from a net importer.
- Conclude with discussing the challenges that still pertain and significance of addressing those challenges.

Introduction

Since the 1960s, when it was forced to rely on imports and food aid from other nations due to chronic food shortages, India has made great advancements in its ability to produce and export food.

According to WTO's Trade Statistical Review (2022), India was in the top 10 ranking of the global Agri exporters.

Body

Some of the major factors are mentioned as below:

1. **Green Revolution:** The green revolution initiated in the **mid 1960's** boosted agricultural productivity, food grain production and better **irrigation infrastructure**.
2. **Government Policies:** Supportive government policies such as **Minimum Support Price , e-NAM**, subsidized inputs, better procurement system incentivised farmers to increase food production.
3. **Research and Development:** Investment in agricultural research and development helped in adoption of better technologies and methods. E.g **Indian council for agriculture research**.
4. **Private Sector Participation:** Private sector involvement in agriculture and allied fields such as **food processing industries** etc. lead to better infrastructure, better **market access** and better market prices e.g e-Choupal ,**Tata Kisan Kendras**.
5. **Diversification of Crops:** The government's focus on diversifying India's food supply e.g.Launching technology mission, Crop diversification programme (CDP) etc.
6. **Trade liberalization:** Trade liberalization in the 1990's and thereafter too contributed to better exports.
7. **Global Demand:** More global demand in the ever expanding world markets has also boosted the prospects of Indian agriculture.

Conclusion

While India has made **significant strides** in becoming a net food exporter, certain challenges remain including **climate change, sustainable agriculture,water management** and to ensure that the

benefit of the exports reaches to **small and marginal farmers** as well.

Addressing these challenges will enhance and **sustain India's position** in the global food market while at the same time ensure **national food security**.

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