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Cotton Statistics And News

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Cotton - A Decade of Progress

Cotton in India has been making steady progress during the last several decades. The progress was somewhat moderate in the earlier decades but it was quite rapid during the first decade of the new millennium. The relevant data pertaining to area, production and productivity are given below:

Year	Area (lakh ha)	Production (lakh bales)	Yield (kg/ha)
1990-91	76.01	119	266
2000-01	85.76	140	278
2001-02	87.30	158	308
2002-03	76.67	136	302
2003-04	76.30	179	399
2004-05	87.86	243	470
2005-06	86.77	241	472
2006-07	91.44	280	521
2007-08	94.14	307	554
2008-09	94.06	290	524
2009-10	103.29	295	486

While the growth in area during the 1990s, leaving aside the annual fluctuations, comes to 15 per cent, the growth was higher at 20 percent during the 2000s. The acceleration in growth was much higher in the case of production. While it was only 31 percent in the previous decade, during the 2000s it was as high as 111 percent. The growth in the average yield was also quite remarkable at 75 percent during the 2000s. While the area crossed the 100 lakh hectare barrier in 2009-10, the production crossed the 300 lakh bale mark during 2007-08, although there was a decline in the subsequent two years due to adverse seasonal conditions.

The main factor that sways farmers' minds in devoting area to competing crops is the net income from them. It is now more or less established that cotton scores over most others in this regard, and hence the surge in cotton area. The other factor is the timely availability of good quality seed. Although there were some problems in the past, with the advent of Bt cottons whose seeds are supplied by several reputed firms now, cotton does not face any problem of seed supply.

In the case of production, technology plays a significant role. In this respect also, cotton has been a beneficiary. Cotton has been the leading crop in making practical use of biotechnology as represented by Bt cottons which are not only high yielding but are also resistant to bollworm, the most pernicious pest in cotton. While a major share for the breakthrough in production goes to the rapid spread of Bt cottons, which now cover about 90 per cent of the total cotton area, the greater awareness of farmers to adopt modern technology due to the launching of major schemes like the Technology Mission on Cotton has also contributed significantly to the increase in production. These factors have also given a push to higher productivity.

It is also noteworthy that the rapid progress of cotton seen during the first decade of this century is being sustained during the second decade also. For instance, area has touched a new record of 109.6 lakh hectares and production has also reached a new high of 325 lakh bales in 2010-11. Productivity has also made a smart recovery to reach 504 kg per hectare although it falls of the 554 kg reached in 2007-08.

CAI wishes all its reader *A Happy Diwali & Prosperous New Year*

Lowering the Cost of Cotton Production

During its recent 69th Plenary Meeting, the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)'s Committee on Cotton Production Research organised a Technical Seminar on "How to lower the cost of cotton production". At this Seminar, papers were presented by experts from countries with large, capital intensive, leading-technology farming system (Brazil, Turkey and USA), small holder production systems (Zambia) and countries in which production is constrained by heavy pest pressure (Pakistan). In all the countries, while there is potential to achieve large increases in yields, the rising cost of cotton production is a major concern to all producers.

Cotton is grown in four region of Turkey and although there are large differences in the cost of production among the regions, the average cost of production is high in Turkey because of high costs of land, labour, fuel and other inputs. Cotton in USA utilises high technology farming system, thus requiring different approaches to lower costs. Among the technologies available is an autopilot which guides a machine through a field according to a predefined line. Autopilot can be used with a sprayer, harvesting equipment or only at the time of cultivation. The system enables an operator to work more productively. There are also other systems which save inputs by avoiding overlaps when spraying insecticides, herbicides and folian chemicals.

Brazil has about a million hectares under cotton, mostly in the central west part of the country. It is struggling to lower production costs through rational use of biotechnology and other inputs with the ultimate aim of minimising the environmental impact of cotton production. In Zambia, the main reasons for high costs of

production are poor rural infrastructure, the high cost of inputs, minimal mechanisation, low use of inputs and the lack of incentives to invest in cotton production. These factors are common in Africa. Zambia is striving to lower production cost by improving soil fertility, by encouraging the use of integrated pest management, through the promotion of low cost agricultural products, the promotion of labour saving farm machinery, the use of herbicides instead of manual labour and through better harvest management.

The strategy used by Pakistan to reduce cotton production cost focuses on optimising input use and farming operations. The cotton production technology used in Pakistan is fairly sound but the yields are limited due to cotton leaf curl virus and mealy bug. Farmers in Pakistan enhance nitrogen fertilizer use efficiency by 15 per cent by splitting nitrogen application of larger quantities through soil. Pakistan is also said to be quickly shifting from flat planting toward planting on furrow beds to save irrigation water.

The Technical Seminar stressed that lowering the cost of production is a complex challenge and there is no easy solution applicable to all cotton production systems. Labour costs are increasing even in developing countries. Mechanisation and herbicide use are solution that could be encouraged by Governments in collaboration with private sector and farmers.

Further, efficient input use and proper management to cropping systems must not be ignored in any cotton production system, the Seminar is stated to have emphasised.

(Source : ICAC Release)

2009-10 Cotton Season - A Brief Review

The two features that stand out in regard to the cotton season 2009-10 (October 2009 to September 2010) are the highest area recorded till then making the first time when the area crossed the 100 lakh hectare mark, and the second highest production level reached, after the then record production of 307 lakh bales in 2007-08. The season was not without problems, uncertainties and contradictions which are characteristic of all cotton seasons. A brief review of the season is presented here.

Seasonal Conditions

Although there were quite a few aberrations in some zones, seasonal conditions in 2009-10 proved to be generally conducive to cotton. The canal water supply was by and large, adequate and timely in the north zone States of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan that proved to be favourable for planting cotton. In the central zone States of Maharashtra and Gujarat, where rainfed cotton predominates, the onset of

monsoon was delayed and the currents were initially weak after the onset. This caused concern about the prospects of sowing cotton. However, towards the end of July, monsoon currents grew stronger and good rains were received which facilitated large scale cotton plantings. In the south zone, rains were mostly adequate in Andhra Pradesh but somewhat deficient in the States of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu which adversely affected cotton plantings.

Area

There was a surge in cotton area during 2009-10 when it touched 103.29 lakh hectares, as against 94.06 lakh hectares in 2008-09. In fact, it was the first year when the country's cotton area crossed the 100 lakh hectare mark. The maximum increase of about six lakh hectares was in the central zone which has the two largest cotton producing States of Gujarat and Maharashtra.

The most important factor that sways farmers' minds in devoting areas to different crops in a particular season is the comparative net returns per hectare. It is now established that among the major kharif crops, cotton scores over the rest in bringing more money to farmers' pockets. This was once again apparent in 2008-09 when a steep hike in the support price fuelled the market prices to reach unprecedented levels. The farmers' income from cotton in 2008-09 was therefore much higher than normally expected. This had a positive impact on farmers bringing record area under cotton in 2009-10. With the advent of the high yielding bollworm resistant Bt cottons, the cost of producing one kg of cotton has also markedly come down since these cottons need only two or three sprays to control pests other than bollworms which necessitate at least seven to eight sprays at heavy cost and effort.

One other major factor that concerns farmers in allotting areas to different crops is the timely availability of good quality seed. In this regard also, cotton has overcome the earlier constraints with quite a number of reputed firms supplying Bt cotton seeds well before the planting season at prices regulated by the State Governments.

The State-wise spread of the area under cotton

during the last two years has been as under:

State	Area (lakh ha)	
	2008-09	2009-10
Punjab	5.27	5.36
Haryana	4.56	5.07
Rajasthan	3.02	4.44
Total North Zone	12.85	14.87
Gujarat	23.54	26.25
Maharashtra	31.42	35.03
Madhya Pradesh	6.25	6.04
Total Central Zone	61.21	67.32
Andhra Pradesh	13.99	14.83
Karnataka	4.08	4.27
Tamil Nadu	1.09	1.14
Total South Zone	19.16	20.24
Other States	0.84	0.86
All-India	94.06	103.29

Apart from the increase in total cotton area, there was also further expansion in the area under Bt cottons during 2009-10. The estimates of area covered by Bt cottons during the last two years are given below:

State	2008-09			2009-10		
	Total	Under	% of	Total	Under	% of
	(lakh ha)			(lakh ha)		
		Bt	Bt		Bt	Bt
Punjab	5.27	4.76	90	5.36	5.10	94
Haryana	4.56	3.80	83	5.07	4.90	94
Rajasthan	3.02	1.21	40	4.44	2.80	64
Gujarat	23.54	14.50	62	26.25	15.40	59
Maharashtra	31.42	25.72	82	35.03	30.50	87
M.P.	6.25	5.14	82	6.04	6.10	94
A.P.	13.99	11.43	82	14.83	12.50	95
Karnataka	4.08	1.72	42	4.27	1.90	49
Tamil Nadu	1.09	0.72	66	1.14	0.30	33
Others	0.84	-	-	0.86	-	-
All-India	94.06	69.00	73	103.29	79.40	78

It will be seen that the coverage by Bt cottons at the national level has gone up from 73 per cent in 2008-09 to 78 per cent in 2009-10. Percentage-wise, the highest coverage was in Andhra Pradesh at 95 per cent.

(To be continued

World Cotton Prices						
Monthly Average Cotlook A Index (FE) from 2005-06 onwards						
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Cotlook Index in US Cents per lb.						
August	53.23	59.88	66.62	78.04	64.14	90.35
September	53.94	58.82	68.12	77.09	63.99	104.73
October	57.74	57.03	68.93	62.30	66.82	
November	55.87	57.39	69.68	54.96	71.78	
December	56.09	59.43	69.52	55.47	76.78	
January	58.36	59.06	73.21	57.71	77.39	
February	59.66	57.86	75.05	55.21	80.05	
March	57.59	58.42	80.18	51.50	85.80	
April	56.23	57.13	75.44	56.78	88.08	
May	54.35	55.57	74.12	61.95	90.07	
June	55.14	60.61	77.04	61.39	93.04	
July	55.42	67.84	77.29	64.80	N.A	

Source: Cotton Outlook

UPCOUNTRY SPOT RATES											(Rs./Candy)	
Official quotations for standard descriptions with basic grade and staple in Millimetres based on Upper Half mean Length under By-law 66 (A)(a)(4)						SPOT RATES (UPCOUNTRY) 2009-10 CROP						
						October 2010						
						23 rd	25 th	26 th	27 th	28 th	29 th	
03.	ICS-102	22mm	V-797	4.5-5.9	19	H	25700	26000	26500	26500	26500	
04.	ICS-103	23mm	Jayadhar	4.0-5	19		27500	28000	28500	29000	29000	
05.	ICS-104	24mm	Y-1	4.0-5.5	20	O	34000	34500	34500	34500	34500	
07.	ICS-105	25mm	NHH-44	3.5-4.9	22		N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	
2010-11 CROP												
01.	ICS-101	Below 22mm	Bengal Deshi (RG)	5.0-7.0	15	L	28000	28300	28300	28100	28100	
02.	ICS-201	Below 22mm	Bengal Deshi (SG)	5.0-7.0	15	I	28200	28500	28500	28300	28300	
06.	ICS-202	25mm	J-34	3.5-4.9	23		37500	38000	38500	38300	38300	
08.	ICS-105	27mm	LRA-5166	3.5-4.9	24		38500	39100	39600	39400	39400	
09.	ICS-105	28mm	H-4/ MECH-1	3.5-4.9	25	D	41900	42500	43000	42800	42500	
10.	ICS-105	29mm	S-6	3.5-4.9	26		42400	43000	44000	43300	43000	
11.	ICS-105	31mm	Bunny/ Brahma	3.5-4.9	27	A	42500	43300	43800	43800	43300	
12.	ICS-106	33mm	MCU-5/ Surabhi	3.3-4.5	28		45000	45000	45000	44500	44000	
13.	ICS-107	35mm	DCH-32	2.8-3.6	31	Y	49000	49500	50000	50000	50000	