

Govt targets to cut edible oil import to 36% by FY26

Imports stood at ₹1.66 trn in oil year Nov-Oct 2021-22

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THE STEPS INCLUDE bringing in non-traditional areas under oilseeds production, reviving cultivation of sunflower oil, increasing seed replacement ratio and introduction of new high yielding varieties.

According to an official note reviewed by FE, the aim is to expand the area under oilseeds by 8.75% to 32.3 million hectare (MH) by FY26 from 29.7 MH in the last fiscal.

Correspondingly, the target is to increase oil seed production by 23% to 54.1 million tonne (MT) during the same period.

According to the ministry note, during the 2021-22 oil year (October-November), India had imported around 14.19 MT of edible oils valued at ₹1.66 trillion. In the total imports, the share of palm oil was 56%, followed by soyabean oil (29.01%) and sunflower (14.03%).

Under the national mission on edible oils – oilseeds, the government is aiming at increasing productivity of

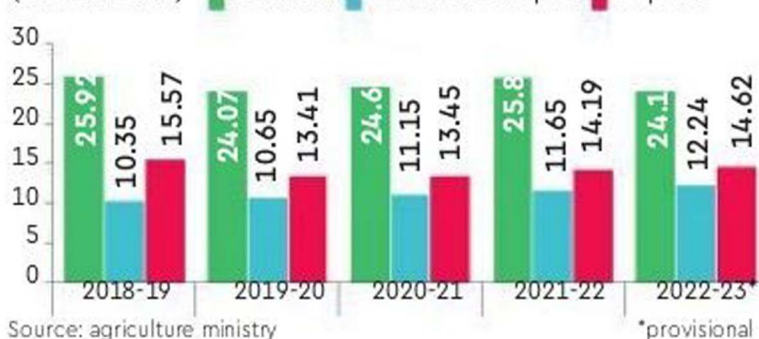
Oilseeds sown area & production

(million hectare) Area Output



Edible oil scenario

(million tonne) Demand Domestic output Imports



Source: agriculture ministry

*provisional

oilseeds from the existing area through increasing seed replacement ratio with focus on varietal replacement having high yield potentials.

The mission is ensuring that mustard seed production is promoted by bringing non-traditional regions such as Karnataka, Maharashtra and areas under rice fallows (which remain uncropped in rabi season) in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal,

Assam and Odisha.

“Under the special initiative, the government had distributed high yielding varieties of mustard seeds to farmers in 301 districts of 18 States during 2022-23 rabi season under the national food security mission-oilseeds,” the note stated.

Mustard was sown in a record 9.8 MH, which is 64% more than last five years’ average sown area of 6.4 MH. In

the 2021-22 season, mustard sown areas stood at 9.1 MH.

The government is also discussing measures to revive sunflower production, which is currently grown in small areas. According to an agriculture ministry official, the average area under sunflower ranged from 2.1 MH in 1990-95 to 1.94 MH in 2005-2010. The area declined to 0.28 MH during 2017-18 and currently stagnated around 0.26 MH.

Stating that more than 70% of the oilseed crops are largely grown under rain-fed condition and more prone to biotic and abiotic stresses, the official note has suggested increasing irrigation coverage under oilseeds under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana.

“Production of edible oil will also be undertaken through cultivation of tree borne oils (TBOs),” the note has stated. TBOs are minor forest produce and there are around 10 TBO varieties including sal, neem, mahua, karanj and kokum. In August 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the national mission on edible oils – oil palm for bringing in an additional 0.65 MH under palm plantation 2025-26 with an investment of ₹11,040 crore.

At present, 0.36 MH is under palm plantation.