

# NSAI NEWSLETTER

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## NSAI SECRETARIAT

- Dr. R.K.Tripathi
- Mr. Yashpal Saini
- Dr. Deepanker Pandey
- Dr. Pramod Sharma
- Dr. Aashima Batheja
- Ms. Celeste Varghese

## NSAI Participates in the National Conference on Quality Agri Inputs organized by ICFA in New Delhi

Dr. R. K. Tripathi, Director (Technical), participated in the National Conference on Quality Agri Inputs organized by the Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture on September 5, 2025 at the Multipurpose Hall, India International Centre, Lodi Road, New Delhi. He served as the Moderator for Session III, titled “Technology and Traceability to Ensure Quality Inputs,” which featured esteemed panelists including Mr. Raghavan Sampath Kumar (Executive Director, FSII), Dr. Nutan Kaushik (Director General, Amity University), Mr. Durgesh Chandra Sharma (Secretary General, CropLife India), and Mr. Archit Karnawat (Director of Quality Control and Production, Gentex Agri Inputs Pvt. Ltd.). In his opening remarks, Dr. Tripathi emphasized the need to modernize input quality testing laboratories by adopting advanced technologies for accurate assessments. He also highlighted the importance of equipping farmers with simple tools to check input quality at their level and pointed out that delays in the approval of new products like HT cotton have led to the spread of spurious seeds in the market.

Concluding the session, he underlined the need for large-scale farmer awareness on the importance of quality agri inputs and urged the industry to adopt self-regulation through Ethics Committees and a star-rating system to recognize responsible players. He also stressed the usefulness of traceability systems like the SATHI Portal and called for harmonized policy reforms to allow for the continuous adoption of new technologies in enforcement and quality assurance systems.



## **Zonal Seeds Review Meet 2025-26: Strategizing for a Productive Rabi Season**

The Seed Division of the Ministry of Agriculture organized the Zonal Seeds Review Meeting for Rabi 2025-26 on September 23, 2025. The meeting was held at the Aakash Training Room, C. Subramaniam Auditorium, NAS Complex, New Delhi. From NSAI, Dr. Pramod Sharma, Assistant Director and Dr. Aashima Batheja, Research Associate attended the meeting. The review meet, which was chaired by Shri Ajeet Kumar Sahu, Joint Secretary (Seeds), brought together representatives from agriculture department of all states to review and discuss seed-related strategies and preparations for the upcoming Rabi season.

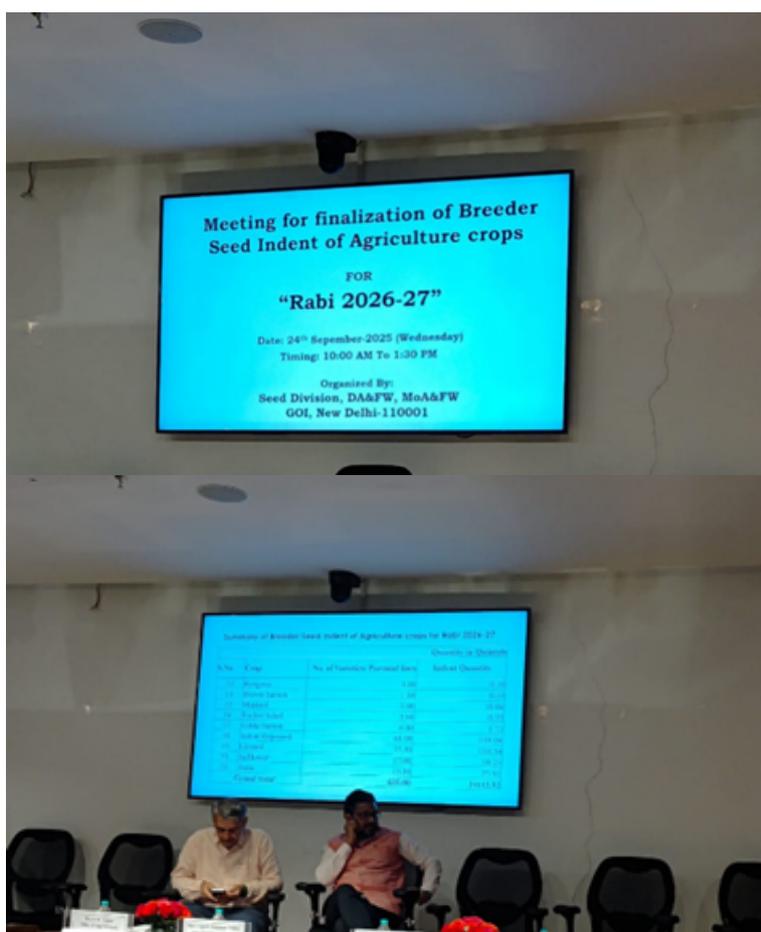
The meeting focused on key issues of different states including the requirement and availability of foundation and certified/quality seeds, distribution planning, and seed production targets. Discussions covered the conversion process from breeder seed to foundation and certified seed, achievement of Seed Replacement Rates (SRR), and challenges faced by states and agencies in lifting breeder seeds. Additionally, the deliberation included reviewing the status of data uploading on the Seed Law Enforcement portal, addressing concerns related to the SATHI portal, and ongoing seed sector reforms.



## **Agriculture Ministry Finalizes Breeder Seed Indent for Rabi 2026–27 Crops**

A meeting on Finalization of Breeder Seed Indent for Agricultural, Vegetable, Seed Spice, Bulb, and Tuber Crops for the Rabi 2026–27 season was held on September 24, 2025 at NAS Complex, New Delhi. The meeting was convened under the chairmanship of the Joint Secretary (Seeds), Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, and brought together representatives from various sectors to finalize breeder seed requirements for the upcoming Rabi season. The exercise aimed to ensure timely planning and coordinated seed production across crops critical to India’s agricultural output. Dr. Pramod Sharma, Assistant Director and Dr. Aashima Batheja, Research Associate represented NSAI

During the discussion, each crop indent was reviewed critically with the concern state and agencies and were advised to incorporate suggestions provided by the Seed division in the indent of Rabi 2026-27. The Seed Division directed all nodal agencies to revise their indents by incorporating newly released varieties and replacing older ones on a zone-wise basis. Additionally, it was emphasized that the quantity of breeder seed is insufficient for some crops, and there is a need to enhance its production to meet the demand.



## NSAI Participates in the Hyderabad Seed Conclave Celebrating 30 Years of Seedsmen Association

Dr. Deepanker Pandey, Deputy Director (Technical), National Seed Association of India (NSAI), participated in the Hyderabad Seed Conclave and the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Seedsmen Association, held on September 25, 2025 at Hotel Daspalla, Hyderabad. The event marked a significant milestone, commemorating three decades of the Seedsmen Association’s contribution to the Indian seed industry.

The inaugural session was attended by esteemed dignitaries, Sri Tummala Nageswara Rao, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, Marketing, Cooperation, Handlooms & Textiles, who presided as the Chief Guest, and Sri Nalamada Uttam Kumar Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Irrigation & CAD; Food & Civil Supplies, Telangana as Guest of Honor. Dr. Pandey represented NSAI at the event, which served as a vital platform for discussions on the evolution, achievements, and future trajectory of the seed sector. Bringing together industry leaders, policymakers, and stakeholders, the conclave emphasized collaborative strategies for strengthening the seed value chain and fostering innovation in Indian agriculture.



## **Seed Industry Leaders Call for Unified Licensing at SIAM's 12th Annual Meet**

The Seed Industries Association of Maharashtra (SIAM) held its 12th Annual General Meeting on September 30, 2025 at Hotel Hyatt Place, Aurangabad Airport, MIDC, Chilkalthana, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar. Ahead of the AGM, two technical sessions were organized on the themes, “Harmonization of Laws Relating to the Seed Sector in India” and “Implementation of the SATHI Portal.”

Dr. R.K. Tripathi, Director (Technical), NSAI, participated as a panelist in the technical session on seed law harmonization, which addressed key regulatory inconsistencies across states. The discussion focused on licensing discrepancies, certified vs. truthfully labelled (TL) seeds, the requirement of State Agricultural University (SAU) trials for varietal inclusion, and the lack of adherence to central guidelines by several states. The session was chaired by Mr. Rajvir Rathi, Vice President, Public & Government Affairs, Bayer Crop Science & Vice Chairman, FSII, and moderated by Mr. Ritesh Mishra, Vice President, SIAM. Other panelists included Mr. Vaibhav Kashikar, Vice President, SIAM, Executive Director, Ankur Seeds & Treasurer, NSAI, and Mr. Kuldeep Tyagi, Director, Government Affairs, FSII.

Mr. Kashikar outlined critical challenges confronting the seed industry and suggested practical remedies. Dr. Tripathi, in his presentation, emphasized the need to reform the seed licensing system and highlighted the misinterpretation of the Seeds (Control) Order, 1983, by several states. He proposed amendments aimed at creating a harmonized, “One Nation, One Licence” framework. The second technical session focused on the implementation of the SATHI portal, particularly the integration of certified and TL seeds, while addressing key industry concerns. The AGM also shed light on pressing issues faced by the sector, including the widespread distribution of illegal HTBt cotton seeds and the strategic responses needed to curb their proliferation.



## Seed Industry Updates

### **Dialogue NEXT India 2025: Advancing Borlaug's Legacy to Feed the Future**

Global agricultural leaders, scientists, policymakers, and farmers gathered in the capital from 8-9 September, 2025 for DialogueNEXT India, a two-day high-level summit focused on advancing innovative, farmer-centric solutions to address growing food security challenges. Held on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr. Norman Borlaug's introduction of semi-dwarf wheat to India, the event spotlighted the country's legacy of agricultural innovation and its emerging role as a hub for smallholder solutions in the Global South. Organized by the World Food Prize Foundation in collaboration with CIMMYT, the Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA), and ICAR, the event featured discussions on climate-resilient crops, policy reform, technology adoption, and market access. Leaders emphasized the urgent need to scale breakthrough innovations to meet the demands of a global population projected to reach 9.7 billion by 2050. With the theme "Take it to the Farmer," DialogueNEXT underscored that the next generation of agricultural transformation must be inclusive, collaborative, and regionally tailored to empower those who feed the world.



## **GST Cuts on Agri Inputs and Dairy Products Hailed as 'Diwali Gift' for Farmers**

Industry leaders from the agriculture and dairy sectors have lauded the government's recent reduction in GST rates on key farm inputs and dairy products, calling it a timely "Diwali gift" for farmers. The move, announced on September 04, 2025, is expected to ease financial pressure on farmers grappling with rising input costs and erratic weather. With input costs accounting for nearly 30–40% of cultivation expenses, experts say the lower GST will improve access to quality crop protection products, enhancing yields and farm incomes. The dairy sector also received a boost, with GST on products such as butter, ghee, paneer, cheese, and condensed milk reduced from 12% to 5%, while UHT milk has been made tax-free. Industry players noted that the changes will make essential nutrition more affordable, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, while supporting dairy farmers with better income stability and incentivizing investments in animal care and feed.

## **KisanKraft Marks 20 Years of Service to Small Farmers in India**

KisanKraft Limited, a Bengaluru-based agri-tech company, marked its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary on August 26, 2025. Founded in 2005 by Ravindra Agrawal, the company has focused on providing appropriate and affordable agricultural machinery, tools, and seeds tailored to the needs of small and marginal farmers across India.

Over the past two decades, KisanKraft has expanded its product portfolio to over 300 models spanning the entire crop cycle from land preparation and sowing to crop care, harvesting, and post-harvest management. The company reports that its solutions have reached over 50 lakh farmers nationwide. To support this growth, a manufacturing facility was established in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, alongside a vast dealer and service network of over 5,000 outlets and 14 regional offices. KisanKraft has also received BIS: ISI certifications for select products and holds multiple patents for its innovations.

It has contributed significantly to the development and promotion of sustainable mechanization practices, including Dry Direct Seeded Rice (DSR), stubble management tools, and electric-powered equipment aimed at reducing farmers' input costs and environmental footprint.



### **NCEL and APEDA Sign MoU to Strengthen Cooperative-Led Agri Exports**

In a significant move to boost India's cooperative-led agricultural exports, the National Co-operative Exports Limited (NCEL) and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on September 09, 2025. The agreement, signed in the presence of Dr. Ashish Kumar Bhutani, Secretary, Ministry of Cooperation, marks a strategic partnership between the Ministry of Cooperation and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Abhishek Dev, Chairman of APEDA, and Unupom Kausik, Managing Director of NCEL, formalized the pact on behalf of their respective organizations.

According to an official statement, the collaboration aims to enhance value realization for farmers, strengthen rural livelihoods, and improve India's global agri-trade positioning, aligning with the goals of the recently launched National Cooperation Policy. The partnership will focus on capacity building, quality compliance, infrastructure development, participation in global trade events, and market intelligence. It will also equip cooperative societies with knowledge on international standards, food safety, and export processes through targeted training programmes. Integrating APEDA's export facilitation with NCEL's grassroots outreach is expected to streamline exports of fruits, vegetables, spices, cereals, processed foods, and animal products. Pankaj Kumar Bansal, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation, stated that the MoU empowers NCEL with critical technical and policy support, enabling cooperative members to access global markets and achieve export excellence.

### **India Hikes Wheat MSP by 6.6% to ₹2,585 per Quintal to Boost Output, Retain Farmer Interest**

In a bid to boost wheat production and retain farmer interest, the Indian government on September 30, 2025 raised the minimum support price (MSP) for wheat by ₹160 per quintal a 6.6% increase bringing the new procurement rate to ₹2,585 per 100 kg for the 2026 marketing season. The decision, announced by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw following a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, aims to encourage farmers to expand wheat acreage amid rising competition from higher-return crops like rapeseed.

India, the world's second-largest wheat producer, sets annual MSPs for key crops to support domestic producers and ensure stable supplies for its massive food welfare programme, which provides free grains to around 800 million beneficiaries. Wheat sowing typically begins in October-November, with harvests from March.

Market experts noted that the hike was crucial, as better returns from oilseeds like rapeseed had prompted farmers in several states to consider crop shifts. The new price is expected to stabilize wheat cultivation trends and secure adequate procurement for the country's food security needs.

### **India's First Bait Formulation for Fall Armyworm Management Introduced by Corteva**

Corteva Agriscience has launched Bexavie® (Spinetoram 0.1% w/w RB), India's first bait formulation insecticide developed specifically for the management of Fall Armyworm (FAW) in corn. Formulated with Jemvelva™ active, Bexavie® is designed for targeted application in corn fields, offering effective control across multiple larval stages of the pest. The innovative bait technology ensures precision use and extended protection, aligning with integrated pest management strategies. Since its emergence in 2018, FAW has posed a significant threat to corn cultivation in India, causing substantial crop losses in several states. With the introduction of Bexavie®, Corteva expands its crop protection portfolio, providing corn growers with a novel and efficient tool to combat this persistent pest.

### **UPL Introduces Brucia®: A New Post-Emergent Herbicide for Weed Control in Maize**

UPL Sustainable Agri Solutions has announced the launch of Brucia®, a next-generation post-emergent herbicide developed specifically for maize cultivation in India. Designed to tackle persistent and resistant weed challenges, Brucia (Tolpyralate 40% SC) delivers fast-acting control against a broad spectrum of grassy and broadleaf weeds at a low application dose of 50 ml per acre during the 2 to 4 leaf weed stage. Launched in the presence of key channel partners in Karnataka, the product is set to be made available across major maize-growing districts through UPL's dealer and distributor network. With its ease of use, low manual labor requirement, and targeted action during the early growth stage, Brucia is positioned as a cost-effective and efficient weed management solution for maize farmers.

Company officials emphasized its potential as a game changer in improving farm productivity and profitability amid increasing weed resistance and climatic uncertainties. The initial rollout in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka will soon expand across southern India as part of UPL's broader commitment to supporting smallholder farmers through sustainable and innovative crop protection technologies.



## **Union Minister Giriraj Singh Launches 'Kapas Kisan' App to Streamline Cotton Procurement**

In a significant move aimed at empowering cotton farmers, Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh launched the 'Kapas Kisan' mobile app on September 02, 2025, designed to facilitate seamless procurement of cotton under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme. The app enables farmers to self-register, book slots, and track payments, bringing greater transparency, efficiency, and speed to the cotton procurement process. Describing the initiative as a "farmer-first" step, Singh said the app will significantly ease the selling process for cotton growers, reduce manual paperwork, and minimize time spent at procurement centres. He emphasized that the user-friendly app supports multiple Indian languages, ensuring accessibility for farmers across the country. Importantly, the app is expected to prevent distress sales by assuring procurement at MSP rates.



## **India Launches First-of-Its-Kind AI-Based Weather Forecasting Program for Farmers, Reaches 3.8 Crore Beneficiaries**

In a groundbreaking move to support agricultural planning and climate resilience, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (MoAFW) has launched the government's first-ever AI-driven weather forecasting program, reaching 3.8 crore farmers across 13 states this Kharif season. The program delivers tailored monsoon forecasts directly to farmers via SMS through the m-Kisan platform, empowering them with timely information to make informed decisions on crop selection and sowing. This initiative uses a powerful blend of cutting-edge, open-access AI models, Google's Neural GCM and ECMWF's Artificial Intelligence Forecasting System (AIFS) which have demonstrated superior accuracy in predicting local monsoon onset compared to traditional methods. The AI-powered system is able to issue forecasts up to four weeks in advance, marking a significant leap in agricultural planning capabilities.

## **APEDA Launches 'BHARATI' Initiative to Boost Agri-Food Exports and Empower 100 Startups by 2030**

In a major step towards strengthening India's position in the global agri-food trade, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has launched "BHARATI" as Bharat's Hub for Agritech, Resilience, Advancement and Incubation for Export Enablement. The initiative was unveiled during the Food & Beverages Sector Stakeholders Meeting, chaired by Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, in the presence of UAE's Minister of Foreign Trade Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi and Union Food Processing Industries Minister Chirag Paswan.

BHARATI aims to support 100 high-potential agri-food and agri-tech startups with a focus on innovation, sustainability, and export enablement. The programme is aligned with the Government's flagship missions, Atmanirbhar Bharat, Vocal for Local, Digital India, and Start-Up India and supports APEDA's ambitious goal of achieving Rs. 4.4 lakh crore (US\$ 50 billion) in agri-food exports of Scheduled Products by 2030. Set to launch its pilot cohort in September 2025, BHARATI will incubate startups working in areas such as GI-tagged products, organic and superfoods, AYUSH-based goods, livestock items, and technology-driven services. The initiative also targets advanced technologies including AI-based quality control, blockchain for traceability, IoT-enabled cold chains, and agri-fintech solutions.



Startups will undergo a three-month acceleration programme focused on export readiness, market access, regulatory compliance, and collaborative innovation. The programme will address key industry challenges in product development, packaging, sustainability, logistics, perishability, and value addition. APEDA plans to collaborate with state agricultural boards, agricultural universities, premier institutions like IITs and NITs, industry bodies, and established startup accelerators to build a strong support ecosystem. The initiative is scheduled to feature nationwide outreach, with the selection process for startups beginning in September 2025 via the APEDA website.



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