

15TH BRICS AGRICULTURE MINISTERS' MEETING – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

NEWS:

At the **15th BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting held in Brazil**, India reaffirmed its dedication to **inclusive, equitable, and sustainable agriculture**.

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Key Highlights of BRICS Declaration

1. Commitment to Sustainability

- The **BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)** reaffirmed their collective vision to develop an **agriculture and food system** that is **equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-driven**.
- This reflects their intent to ensure that agri-food systems not only provide sufficient food but do so in ways that protect the environment, promote social inclusion, and incorporate modern technologies.

2. Launch of BRICS Land Restoration Partnership

- This **new partnership initiative** aims to address challenges like **land degradation, desertification, and soil fertility loss**, which threaten food production and ecological stability.
- It promotes the **integration of scientific research with traditional and indigenous knowledge systems**, ensuring context-specific and culturally relevant solutions to restore degraded lands.

3. Focus Areas of the Declaration

- The declaration prioritized the following:
 - **Food Security:** Ensuring consistent access to safe and nutritious food for all.
 - **Climate Resilience:** Enhancing the ability of agriculture to adapt to climate change and related shocks.
 - **Empowerment of Women and Youth:** Recognizing their roles in agriculture and fostering leadership and participation.

- **Sustainable Livestock and Fisheries:** Promoting practices that balance productivity with environmental sustainability.
- **Land Restoration:** Rehabilitating degraded lands for long-term productivity and ecological balance.
- **Digital Agriculture Certification:** Using digital tools to ensure traceability, safety, and quality of agricultural products.
- **Financial and Trade Frameworks:** Building robust financial support and trade systems that benefit the **Global South**, particularly developing and underrepresented nations.

4. Invitation to Global Events

- India extended invitations to BRICS partners to:
 - **World Food India 2025** – A global food fair to showcase innovations in the food processing and agri-business sectors.
 - **World Audio-Visual Entertainment Summit 2025** – Aimed at fostering **creative and digital collaboration**, indirectly promoting agri-tech storytelling and digital agricultural innovations.



Indian Government Initiatives for Sustainable and Inclusive Agriculture

1. National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)

- This mission promotes **climate-smart agriculture** by improving productivity, resource-use efficiency, and resilience to climate impacts.

- It integrates practices such as water-use efficiency, soil health management, and agroforestry.

2. National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA)

- An initiative by ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research), it conducts **strategic research, demonstration, and capacity building**.
- NICRA develops **location-specific technologies** to manage droughts, floods, heat, and other climatic stressors.

3. Waste to Wealth and Circular Economy

- Encourages the **reuse, recycling, and value-addition of agricultural waste**, such as using crop residues for bio-energy or compost.
- Promotes **resource efficiency and environmental conservation**, reducing the carbon footprint of agriculture.

4. Promotion of Bio-fertilizers and Traditional Farming

- Supports the use of **organic inputs**, such as **bio-fertilizers, vermicompost, and panchagavya**, to reduce dependency on chemical fertilizers.
- Revives **indigenous knowledge systems**, such as **natural farming and Vedic agricultural practices**, which are both eco-friendly and cost-effective.

5. Technological Advancement in Agriculture

- **Digital Agriculture Mission** and **AgriStack** aim to create digital profiles of farmers to deliver customized services and benefits.
- Promotes use of **drone technology** for crop monitoring, pesticide spraying, and data gathering.
- Establishment of **Climate-Resilient Villages** demonstrates scalable models for sustainable rural development.

6. Public Support Systems

- India supports farmers through:
 - **Minimum Support Prices (MSP)** for key crops.
 - **Public food stockholding** under schemes like PDS (Public Distribution System).

- Advocates for **fair trade and global price stability**, especially important for small and marginal farmers.

7. Targeting Small Farmers

- Programs like **cluster-based farming**, **Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)**, and **cooperative models** enhance collective bargaining and reduce input costs.
- Promotion of **natural farming** methods lowers input costs and enhances sustainability, making them ideal for **resource-poor farmers**.

8. Women Empowerment in Rural India

- Initiatives like:
 - **Lakhpati Didi** – Aims to make at least one woman in each rural household earn ₹1 lakh annually through livelihood promotion.
 - **Drone Didi** – Trains women to operate drones for agricultural services, ensuring **technological inclusion and employment**.
- These programs seek to empower women socially, economically, and politically in the agricultural ecosystem.

Understanding a Sustainable Agri-Food System

1. Definition

- A **sustainable agri-food system** ensures long-term **food and nutrition security** while **protecting natural resources**, **ensuring social equity**, and **promoting economic viability**.
- It balances the needs of present and future generations.

2. Eco-Friendly Practices

- Involves methods such as:
 - **Crop rotation** to improve soil fertility.
 - **Agroforestry** (integrating trees with crops/livestock) to enhance biodiversity and climate resilience.
 - **Organic farming** to reduce chemical use and soil/water pollution.

3. Economic and Social Equity

- Ensures that farmers earn **fair incomes**, have access to markets and technology, and work under **dignified labor conditions**.
- Strengthens **rural communities** by providing them with **nutritious food**, education, and infrastructure.

4. Climate and Biodiversity Resilience

- Encourages the **use of diverse crops and breeds** that are suited to local environments.
- Builds **adaptive capacity** to withstand climatic shocks (e.g., droughts, floods) and maintains **ecological balance**.

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