



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Introduction of additional safeguards for export of Basmati rice

Published On: 28-08-2023

Why is in news? Introduction of additional safeguards for export of Basmati rice to prevent exports of Non-Basmati white rice through mis-classification as Basmati rice

To **check the domestic prices** and to **ensure domestic food security**, the Government has been taking measures to restrict export of rice from India. The export of non-basmati white rice was prohibited on 20th July 2023.

It has been noticed that despite restriction on certain varieties, rice exports have been high during the current year.

About:

Basmati rice is cultivated in the **Himalayan foothills** of the Indian subcontinent.

The **specific agro-climatic conditions**, processing techniques such as harvesting and ageing are said to make this rice unique.

In India, rice grown in specific **parts of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir** can be labelled as basmati.

In May 2010, **GI status was given to basmati grown only** in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and parts of western Uttar Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

Basmati rice is exported out of India and had an annual forex earning of Rs 25,053 crore during 2021-22.

India accounts for **two-thirds of the global supply** of basmati rice.

Basmati rice constitutes one of India's significant exports **both in terms of soft power and hard money**.

Major chunk of India's basmati rice is **exported to Gulf countries** viz. Saudi Arabia, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Kuwait.

Basmati rice is just one of the thousands of rice varieties available in India. However, this **fragrant rice** has invited the most controversy.

In 2020, **India's application for a geographical indication tag recognised** in the European Union market was put on **hold after Pakistan opposed the move**.

A patent contested in 2000 by **Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, (India's premier science and industry organisation) said the **term 'basmati' could be used only for rice grown in India and Pakistan**. In 2001, a final decision ensured that the **US company could no longer use basmati in their name**.

Basmati vs Non-Basmati Rice:

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Basmati is **long grain**. The non-basmati rice comes in all different shapes and sizes – long, slender, short and thick, bead and round.

Basmati has a characteristic **fragrance and flavour** while non-basmati varieties, do not have an aroma.

Basmati is **also available in white and brown versions** depending on the extent of the milling process. Like wine and cheese, the older basmati gets the better its flavour and aroma. Hence the aged Basmati costs higher than the recent productions.

Basmati rice becomes **almost double its size on cooking**. Such a significant increase in size cannot be seen in non-basmati varieties. This makes basmati variety one of the highly demanded rice in the world.

Yield of Basmati rice from the agricultural land is almost half the non-basmati varieties. This is also one of the reasons for Basmati's higher costs.