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INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE

- **The Punjab government has decided to waive off** Rural Development Fee (RDF) and market fee, of 2 per cent each, on Basmati variety of paddy in the state with an objective to make Basmati milling competitive so that the produce of farmers is lifted at remunerative prices. The decision is likely to boost Basmati cultivation by extending a benefit of nearly Rs 200 crore to its trade in the state. Notification in regard to the same is awaited.
- **Uttar Pradesh has attracted investments of Rs 1,700 crore** in some new food processing projects that are in the planning stages. Dairy major Amul is likely to invest Rs 1,000 crore in a milk processing plant with a daily capacity of 10 lakh litre, while Allansons Ltd, a leading exporter of processed food products and agro-commodities, may invest Rs 700 crore for setting up five agri-based plants.
- **Exploireit, an information management concept** has been launched by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). The aim is to break information barriers by making large volumes of agricultural scientific knowledge and information easily accessible by the public.

MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE

- **The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACCP)** has recommended a marginal increase in the fair and remunerative price (FRP) for sugarcane to Rs 220 per quintal for the 2014-15 sugar year (October-September). The recommendation was made after carefully examining the cost of production, surplus availability and international prices among other factors.

AGRICULTURE MARKETING

- **The Karnataka government has approved an agricultural marketing policy** aimed at fostering competition, capacity building, bringing in transparency and ushering in an era of single unified licence across the 30 districts in the state. The policy aims to simplify the licensing procedures, remove the barriers to participate in markets to foster competition and ensure the efficient determination of price, linking the primary market in the southern state to the national market for the benefit of all stakeholders in the marketing chain. Notification in regard to the same is awaited..
- **West Bengal government has approved a scheme, Brihat Krishak Bazar Yojana,** which would allow private developers to set up terminal markets under the Agriculture

Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act. An amendment to the APMC act is likely to be taken up soon to accommodate the new scheme.

Beside, while the state government is opposed to contract farming, it is planning to introduce its own version of the agricultural reform, namely “partnership farming”, which the government claim would ensure certain safeguards for farmers. While the contract farming model allows an agreement between private players and farmers, in the “partnership farming” model there would be tripartite agreement involving the state authority. Notification in regard to the same is awaited.

TRADE

EXPORTS

- **The United States will not impose countervailing duty** on imports of frozen warm water shrimp as the United States International Trade Commission (USITC) has said that the US industry is “neither materially injured nor threatened with material injury” by reason of imports of frozen warm water shrimp from India and six other countries including Indonesia, Thailand, China, Ecuador, Malaysia and Vietnam.

The decision brings a great relief to Indian shrimp industry and its exporters as India can now compete with other major producing countries on price. Due to CVD (5.85 per cent) and the present level of antidumping duty (3.49 per cent), India’s shrimp exports to the US would have been costlier. Moreover, if CVD was imposed, it would have helped Thailand and Indonesia to dominate the US shrimp market and market access for Indian shrimp would have been affected.

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CII-Jubilant Bhartia Food and Agriculture Centre of Excellence (FACE)
C/o Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)
India Habitat Centre, Core 4A, Ground Floor, New Delhi - 110003, (INDIA)
Tel: +91-11-43007490, Website: www.face-cii.in/www.cii.in

For more information or suggestions, please contact:

Meetu Kapur

Executive Director – FACE

Email: meetukapur@cii.in

