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NEW INITIATIVE

- **NABARD has sanctioned 46 farmer producer organisations (FPOs) for Punjab and Haryana** to make farming and allied activities more remunerative for small and marginal farmers in these states. Out of the total, 25 would be in Haryana and the remaining 21 in Punjab.
- **The Ministry of Commerce has delisted Pickles and Chutneys; Bread; Mustard Oil (except solvent extracted); Ground Nut Oil (except solvent extracted)** from the reserved list. These items so far were reserved for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) but delisting will allow large companies to produce these items. According to the Ministry, the policy initiatives have been taken to encourage greater investment, to bring in better technologies, and to enhance competition in Indian and global markets for these products. Big companies till now were producing these items using outsourcing contracts to MSMEs, but the current move would allow them a direct route to manufacture these items.

AGRICULTURE MARKETING

- **Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation Ltd (HPMC)**, an undertaking of Himachal Pradesh government, is all set to sell fruits, vegetables and 30 processed food products through a new user-friendly web portal which is expected to be operational by end of 2015. HPMC Ltd, which already has country-wide presence in selling fruits and related processed foods, has come up with a Rs 10 crore project to help both, farmers, who source the products, and consumers interested in horticulture of the northern state. The online initiative is expected to ensure deeper penetration into the market and collaboration with big companies. Central Government has already provided a funding of Rs 3.9 crore to process the work.

EXPORT

- **The EU has introduced labels showing the origins** of fresh, chilled and frozen meat from sheep, goats, pigs and poultry. The new rule applies for non EU countries as well. The new rule however, excludes beef for which rules already exist since 2002 which in addition to the above also require a listing of where the cows were born.

- **Mauritius is fast developing into a new export destination for Indian mangoes.** Trade is likely to begin based on the agreement signed on March 11, 2015, between India and the Republic of Mauritius effective from April 1 to August 31 of every year. Mangoes will be exported through APEDA under two treatment options - Vapour Heat Treatment (VHT) at 47 degree celsius in eight minutes and Hot Water Treatment (HWT) at 48 degree celsius in 60 minutes.

IMPORTS

- **India has bought up to 80,000 tonnes of Australian wheat** in recent deals to make up for the damage caused to the crop due to unseasonal rains. This is the biggest such imports by India in last five years. According to USDA data India imported around 200,000 tonnes of wheat in 2010 but since then purchases have been low owing to bumper domestic production. It is expected that large stockpiles in government silos may cap purchases but some more imports may happen for higher quality since high-protein wheat producing states of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have seen worst damage.

SUGAR

- **As per DGFT notification, Export of preferential quota sugar to the EU and the USA** has been moved from 'STE' (state trading enterprises) to 'Free' regime subject to (certain) conditions. As a result any trader or entity can now export sugar to the European Union and the US under the tariff rate quota (TRQ), which entitles shipments to enjoy low tariff. Earlier only Indian Sugar Exim Corporation, formed by two sugar associations ISMA and NFCSF, was designated to export the sweetener to the EU and the US under the TRQ.

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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

