

## UPSC Preparation

### Major Cropping Seasons in India

There are three main cropping seasons in India - Kharif, Rabi, and Zaid. To know the important facts about these Indian cropping seasons is important from the [IAS Exam](#) perspective. Questions from this topic can be asked in both Prelims and Mains GS-I. Read on about the cropping seasons, types of crops, and the importance of agriculture for UPSC.

#### Facts about three cropping seasons in India

The important facts about the major cropping seasons of India are given in the tables below:

#### #Kharif Season

Major Cropping Season in India - Kharif	
What are the examples of Kharif Crops?	Some important Kharif Crops are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bajra</li> <li>• Jowar</li> <li>• Maize (corn)</li> <li>• Millet</li> <li>• Rice (paddy and deepwater rice)</li> <li>• Soyabean</li> </ul>
What is meant by Kharif Season?	The cropping season in India that starts in June and ends in October where monsoon crops are cultivated and harvested.

#### #Rabi Season

Major Cropping Season in India - Rabi	
What are Rabi crops? Examples.	Some important Rabi Crops are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barley</li> <li>• Gram</li> <li>• Rapeseed</li> <li>• Mustard</li> <li>• Oat</li> <li>• Wheat</li> <li>• Bajra</li> </ul>
Is Coffee a Rabi crop?	No, Tea and Coffee are Kharif crops.
What is a Rabi season?	The season where crops are sown in mid-November and harvested in April/May is called Rabi Season.

## #Zaid Season

Major Cropping Season in India - Zaid	
What are Zaid crops? Examples.	Some important Zaid Crops are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pumpkin</li> <li>• Cucumber</li> <li>• Bitter Gourd.</li> </ul>
When Zaid crops are sown and harvested?	Since the Zaid crops are also called summer crops, they are sown and harvested between March and June.

## Types of crops in India - Details

### 1. Kharif Crops

- July - October
- Harvest - September to October
- A.k.a Monsoon Crops
- Such crops require a lot of water
- Example: rice, sorghum, maize, Tea, rubber, coffee, guar, Sesame, cereals such as Arhar Dhal, pearl millet, soybeans, cotton, oilseeds, etc.

### 2. Rabi Crops

- Sowing between October and November
- Harvest - February to April
- A.k.a Winter Season Crops
- Need cold weather for growth
- Need less water
- Example: wheat, oats, barley, pulses, cereals, oilseeds, linseed, etc.

### 3. Zaid Crops

- Sowing between March and June (between Kharif and Rabi)
- Requires warm & dry weather for growth and a longer day-length for flowering
- Example: Seasonal fruits and vegetables

## Importance of Agriculture for UPSC prelims

Agriculture in India is an important topic in Indian geography. 49% of the population in India is dependent on agriculture. In the total geographical area in India, 141 million hectares is the net sown area while 195 million hectares is the gross cropped area.

Agriculture in India contributes to 14% of the GDP and the distribution of income and wealth. It provides essential amenities like food for the people and fodder for the animals. It also provides a major source of raw materials to the agro-based industries in India.

The vast relief of the country, varied climate, and soil conditions cause the provision of a variety of crops. All tropical, subtropical and temperate crops are grown in India but predominantly food crops are cultivated in 2/3rd of the total cropped area.

