

## National Agriculture Code

### Why in News?

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has begun the process of formulating a National Agriculture Code (NAC), on the lines of the existing National Building Code and National Electrical Code.

### What is National Agriculture Code (NAC)?

*The BIS is the national body which sets standards for different products across various economic sectors.*

- **NAC** - It is a standard for agriculture practices like preparation of fields, micro irrigation and water use.
- It will cover the entire agriculture cycle, and will also contain a guidance note for future standardisation.
- It will incorporate emerging agricultural technologies, novel farming practices, and varying regional conditions across India.
- **Nodal Authority** - Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)
- **Objectives** - The NAC will serve as a guide for farmers, agriculture universities, and officials involved in the field.
- To promote quality and best practices in the agriculture sector.
- To create an implementable national code covering recommendations for agriculture practices taking agroclimatic zones, crop type, till agrifood value chain into consideration.
- To act as an enabler of quality culture in Indian agriculture by providing the required reference to policy makers.
- To create a comprehensive guide for the farming community to ensure effective decision making in agricultural practices.
- To integrate relevant Indian Standards with recommended agricultural practices.
- To address the horizontal aspects of agriculture such as SMART farming, sustainability, traceability and documentation.
- To aid in the capacity building program organized by agriculture extension services and civil society organisations.
- **Features** - It will incorporate emerging agricultural technologies, novel farming practices, and varying regional conditions across India.
- **Two Parts of NAC**
  - The first will contain general principles for all crops.
  - The second will deal with crop-specific standards for the likes of paddy, wheat, oilseeds, and pulses.

- **Coverage of NAC** - It will cover all agriculture processes and post-harvest operations from Crop selection, Land preparation to Harvesting/threshing and Record maintenance
- **Input Management Standards** - Use of chemical fertilisers, pesticides, and weedicides, as well as standards for crop storage and traceability.
- **Emerging areas** - Natural farming, organic farming, as well as the use of Internet-of-Things in the field of agriculture.
- **Standardized Agriculture Demonstration Farms**- These are experimental sites for testing and implementing various agricultural practices and new technologies in accordance with Indian Standards.
- They will be created in selected agriculture institutes in the country.
- **Developed by** - Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

### What are the benefits of NAC?

- **Improve Agri Processes** -It will ensure best practices from crop selection to the storage of agricultural produce.
- **Enhance Efficiency** - Optimum utilization of resources & latest technologies.
- **Better Standardization** - Areas which are lacking standardization will be identified and standards will be developed for them.
- **Improve Quality** - It would act as an enabler of quality culture in Indian agriculture by providing the required reference to policy makers and guidance to the farming community.
- **Agricultural Transformation** - It holds immense potential to transform India's agricultural sector by creating a more conducive environment for farmers to thrive.
- **Improve Rural Livelihood** - By addressing the challenges faced by farmers and promoting efficient and sustainable agricultural practices, the NAC can significantly improve the livelihoods of millions of people in rural India.
- **Environmental Impact** - Development of new and innovative methods of crop production will reduce the environmental impact of agriculture.

### What are the challenges in implementing NAC?

- **State-Level Autonomy** - Since Agriculture is a state subject, implementing a national level code for agriculture might have resistance from states.
- **Diverse Regulations** - Harmonizing diverse state agricultural regulations with the NAC can be challenging.
- **Limited Warehousing and Cold Storage** -A lack of adequate warehousing and cold storage infrastructure can hinder the implementation of the NAC.
- **Poor Transportation Networks** - Inefficient transportation networks can increase the cost of transporting agricultural produce, affecting farmers' profitability.
- **Farmer's Illiteracy** - Many farmers may not be aware of the NAC's provisions or how they can benefit from it.
- **Digital Divide** - Many farmers, especially in rural areas, lack access to modern technology and this can hinder the adoption of digital tools and platforms that are essential for the NAC's success.

## What lies ahead?

- Promote collaborative effort among central government, state governments, farmers, and other stakeholders.
- Provide training to farmers on the NAC and its standards.
- Giving financial assistance to institutes for providing training to farmers.

## References

1. [The Indian Express | National Agricultural Code](#)
2. [PIB | National Agricultural Code](#)

