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# *Blossom*

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### **India – Jammu & Kashmir - Govt's failure to implement crop insurance cost fruit growers dearly**

The early snowfall has spelt doom for apple orchards in all four southern districts of Kashmir—Shopian, Pulwama, Kulgam and Anantnag. 30-40 per cent apple crop has suffered damage in Shopian, Pulwama, Kulgam & Anantnag District of Kashmir Region. Anantnag district has lost 15 lakh apple trees to the early wet snow blanket that froze Kashmir for three days. The District has more than 71 lakh fruit-bearing trees. The youngest and the oldest trees were hardly hit. It is not crop loss, it is a loss to the trees which is devastating to the growers.

At a time when untimely snowfall has wreaked havoc with apple crop, the failure of authorities to implement Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) despite state Cabinet's nod has cost dearly to horticulture sector in Kashmir. The Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir State in March had accorded in principle sanction to the adoption of the WBCIS in respect of horticulture crops namely apple, saffron, mango and litchi for the Jammu and Kashmir in addition to Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). The agriculture production department was made nodal agency for implementation of the scheme.

The state government has implemented crop insurance scheme in the Jammu division a year ago, the fruit growers and farmers in Kashmir are still waiting for the same. According to the official records, 150,000 farmers in Jammu were insured under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), while none of the farmers in Kashmir have been brought under the scheme to give them cushion in times of natural calamities, like hailstorms, droughts, floods etc.

Though the State Government had issued tenders seven times for hiring insurance company for Kashmir Region, but due to lack of response the scheme could not be implemented. Besides there were some technical difficulties in implementing Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), a key insurance scheme initiated by the Government of India (GoI). Failure to implement WBCIS on time means fruit growers have incurred more than INR 5 Bn (USD 69.6 Mn) in losses.

WBCIS uses weather parameters as 'proxy' for crop yields in compensating the cultivators for deemed crop losses. Pay-out structures are developed to the extent of losses deemed to have been suffered using the weather triggers. The objective of WBCIS is to provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crop as a result of adverse weather incidences including deficit rainfall, excess rainfall, unseasonal rains, dry-spell, wind, etc.



### **JBA partners with Chaucer on new India Crop catastrophe model**

JBA Risk Management, the global flood risk modeller, has partnered with international specialty insurer Chaucer on the development of a new catastrophe model to help re/insurers price and assess their exposure within India's Crop Insurance scheme, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY).

JBA collaborated with Chaucer through its office in Singapore to develop a new probabilistic crop model that makes use of the latest developments in agricultural technology software and utilizes computer simulations to measure the growth of insured crops throughout the summer and winter seasons. By utilizing simulations, the parties seek to avoid the uncertainties of relying on historic crop yield data, which has changed substantially in recent years due to India's green revolution. The model also accounts for the potential susceptibility of particular crop types to positive El Nino phases, with JBA research suggesting that some crops in India may be subject to a 28% fall from their annual average during El Nino years.

The launch of the India Crop model is intended to coincide with the start of the India Rabi (winter) crop growing season amid concerns that a period of El Nino weather patterns will affect the Northern Hemisphere from late 2018 into 2019. As per JBA Risk Management Singapore there's currently a 70% chance that the global climate will experience an El Nino warming phase from October this year into early 2019. El Nino is known to have substantial effects on the rainfall patterns of the Indian summer monsoon. Physical crop simulations that JBA have analysed using historic climate data suggest that some major Indian rainfed crops, including Soybean and Groundnut, are particularly vulnerable to these changes during El Nino years and can be adversely affected.

According to Chaucer office Singapore, the Indian agricultural insurance market has grown rapidly since 2015 due to the state sponsorship of a revised insurance scheme. The Indian Government has publicly stated that it is looking to ensure cover for 50% of India's 130 million farmers by 2020 through the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) Scheme.

To facilitate and support this vital and ambitious goal, it is hugely important to have robust models in place to help assess the nature of the risk and exposure to the market. Collaboration with JBA has ensured combination of Chaucer's underwriting expertise with JBA's leading modelling capability.

Source: <https://www.reinsurancene.ws>



### **India - Nine Odisha district declared drought-affected; crop loss 33%**

As many as nine districts of Odisha have been declared drought-affected by the state government with an overall crop loss of 33 per cent. The districts are Bargarh, Balangir, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Sambalpur and Sundargarh. The crop loss has been sustained due to moisture stress. 233,174 hectares of crop land in 5,633 villages under 1,186 Gram Panchayats of 66 Blocks of the nine districts have suffered crop loss.

As per analysis, there is rainfall deviation of 39% to 59% (severe deficit) in 5 Blocks namely, Muribahal, Loisinga & Belapada of Balangir District and 2 Blocks namely, Sundargarh Sadar & Tangarapalli of Sundargarh District. Another 30 Blocks in 12 Districts experienced deficit rainfall (shortfall between 19% and 39%). 100 Blocks in 19 districts have experienced dry spell period of continuous three weeks and more. The state government has declared drought of moderate/severe natures in these areas and authorized the collectors to undertake relief measures.

Source: <http://www.newindianexpress.com>



### Drone technology to reduce water consumption by 90 percent

Subsistence farming using bullocks was replaced with tractors and mechanized harvesters and using GMOs to improve crop immunity. And now the next stage in the evolution of farming is a large-scale single crop unit that would give unparalleled output because of the 'drones' that would be deployed for various functions. A Chinese company Eagle Brother Co Ltd from Hubei Province is currently testing a platform for spraying crops with the help of drones. The platform will be launched in very soon. It is said that modern technology will minimize water consumption by 90% and increase productivity to 50 percent. It is specified that farmers themselves will be able to indicate information on varieties and types of crops, the size of the farm and the necessary pesticides, and the spraying process with the help of drones will be performed by the operators already in place.

The increased use of large machinery and high-tech equipment has also helped Chinese farmers reduce grain losses in harvesting. A cooperative in Minyue Village, Songyuan City, started using an advanced corn harvester this year, which can cut the plant and separate the seeds from the cob while processing and spreading the corn stover over the field. The traditional harvester collected corn and transported them to a storage house for further separation work. Around 1 percent of seeds was lost during the process. The new machine has higher efficiency and can greatly reduce the losses of harvest. The agriculture mechanization rate of main crops in Jilin is more than 80 percent. The province owns around 600,000 large and medium-sized tractors. Jilin is just one example of China's push to develop modern agriculture. The country had 1.14 million combine harvesters and 14.31 million items of irrigation and drainage equipment by the end of 2016, up 105.3 percent and 6.1 percent respectively compared with a decade ago.

The big market has attracted foreign brands. Around 2 million specialized farmer's cooperatives were registered in China by the end of November, 76 times the number a decade ago. Currently, the cooperatives have over 100 million rural households participating, which account for 46.8 percent of the country's total. Through specialized cooperatives, farmers engaged in the same kind of agricultural production are able to pool resources and increase productivity. The development of farmers' cooperatives in China will accelerate its land circulation, heralding greater demands for agricultural machinery and fierce competition among equipment manufacturers home and abroad.

Source: <https://krishijagran.com>

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