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**Centre for  
Food Policy**  
Shaping an effective food system



# Who is making food policy in **India**



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# National government responsibilities for food policy-making in India

India is a quasi-federal government where individual States/Union Territories retain a degree of autonomy over food policy, and who makes food policy will differ between individual regions.

**Department of Commerce**  
Promotion of foreign export and trade  
Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority  
Marine Products Export Development Authority  
Commodity Boards

**Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade**  
E-commerce and Foreign Direct Investment of food products manufactured in India (Make in India)  
Approvals for food product retail trading

Nutrition for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers  
Integrated Child Development Services scheme, POSHAN-Abhiyaan  
Nutrition education  
Food supplements programmes  
Pradhan Mantri Matri Vandana  
Yojana maternity benefit programme  
Immunisations, health check-ups and referral services run under the National Health Mission

**Department of Revenue**  
Direct and indirect taxes of food products  
Central Goods and Services Tax

**Division of Climate Change**  
Environmental policies for climate change, agriculture, water, and habitats  
National Action Plan on Climate Change

**Division of Conservation and Survey**  
Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee approval of food imports with Genetically Modified Organisms  
Assessing and preserving plant genetic resources for food and agriculture via National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan

**Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying**  
Livestock production, preservation and protection from disease  
Dairy development  
Delhi Milk Scheme  
National Dairy Development Board

**Department of Fisheries**  
Development of Inland, Marine and Coastal Fisheries  
Fishery Institutes

**Department of Fertilizers**  
Ensuring adequate and timely availability of fertilizers to farmers at affordable prices  
Nutrient Based Subsidies

**Department of Health and Family Welfare**  
Food Safety and Standards Authority of India responsible for food labelling standards, food safety management systems, quality assurance food testing laboratories, and the regulation and compliance of food business operators.  
Eat Right India consumer awareness campaign  
Food Fortification Resource Centre (TATA Trust collaboration)

**Department of Health Research**  
Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Nutrition  
Recommended Dietary Allowances  
Dietary Guidelines for Indians

**Department of Consumer Affairs**  
Consumer protection and trading standards including ISI certification marks and standard weights and measures of agricultural products

**Department of Food & Public Distribution**  
National Food Security Act, 2013  
Public Distribution System to improve food security  
Procurement of food grains at Minimum Support Price by Food Corporation of India or State Government agencies  
Distribution of food grains at affordable prices via Fair Price Shops and highly subsidised for families below the poverty line  
Development and promotion of sugar industry  
Export and import of food grains, sugar and edible oils

**Division of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission**  
Food and shelter provision for the urban homeless  
Loans and skills training for urban food street vendors

**Department of School Education and Literacy**  
Provision of free midday meals for school children via the Mid-Day Meal Scheme

**Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation**  
Safe sanitation, water, and waste disposal related to food hygiene, food safety and reduction of parasite-related malnutrition

Utilisation and value addition of agricultural produce  
Support infrastructure and technology to minimise wastage in the food supply chain  
Promote the export of processed food products

**Department Rural Development**  
Agricultural employment and food security for rural communities  
Agricultural resource development  
Land reform for the rural landless  
Social assistance to improve food security of older people  
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005  
Aajeevika - National Rural Livelihoods Mission, Self-Help-Groups  
Annurpurna Scheme

**Division of Livelihood Support**  
Livelihood support regarding the Minimum Support Price for minor forest food products

**Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare**  
Crop insurance  
Agricultural productivity  
Sustainable agriculture, including drought management and soil health  
Agricultural marketing  
Inter-/intra-State trade  
Regulation of stockholding  
National Food Security Mission  
National Agricultural Market (e-NAM) online platform  
Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices  
recommendations on the Minimum Support Price for core crops

**Department of Agricultural Research and Education**  
Support for agricultural research  
Indian Council of Agricultural Research



## Who is making food policy in India

National food policy in India is developed and implemented across 19 Departments/Divisions and 15 Ministries<sup>1</sup> of the central government. The key areas of food policy include agricultural production, trade, farmer livelihoods, food security, and nutrition.

The **Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare** is responsible for agricultural production and contributes to a Government-wide commitment to double farmer's incomes by reducing production costs, and facilitating market access and trade. The *National Food Security Mission* encourages production of staple cereal grains and pulses. This is supported by the crop insurance scheme of *Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana*, as well as water conservation (*Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana*) and sustainable agriculture programmes (e.g., *Soil Health Cards*). Non-cereal crop production is also promoted e.g., via the *National Mission on Horticulture*. Farmer livelihoods are supported by the *Minimum Support Price* for core crops and access to online trade platforms (*National Agricultural Market: e-NAM*). Three agricultural reform bills were introduced in 2020 to liberalise the sector. The *Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill 2020* simplifies inter-/intra State trade; the *Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill 2020* supports contract farming; and the *Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020* deregulates the stockholding of essential foodstuffs.

Further areas of government linked to food production include the **Department of Agricultural Research & Education**, where the *Indian Council of Agricultural Research*, co-ordinates domains of agricultural education

and research, including those related to horticulture, fisheries and animal husbandry sciences. In addition, the **Department of Fertilizers** administers *Nutrient Based Subsidy Programmes* to support crop production, and the **Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying** and the **Department of Fisheries** support livestock, dairy and fish production. The **Division of Climate Change** includes environmental policies for climate change, agriculture, water and biodiversity under the *National Action Plan on Climate Change*. The **Division of Conservation and Survey** considers the preservation of food and agricultural resources and includes the *Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee* and the *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*.

The **Department of Rural Development** protects farmer livelihoods and the food security of vulnerable rural households. The *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Program* targets poverty and deprivation by guaranteeing employment; the *Aajeevika - National Rural Livelihoods Mission* promotes self-employment and income generating opportunities including the organisation of female Self-Help-Groups and access to financial services. The *National Social Assistance Program* protects the food security of older people via the *Annurpurna Scheme*. The **Division of Livelihood Support** provides support for Tribal communities producing and selling minor forest food products. The **Division of Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission** provides food security for the urban homeless and livelihood support for urban street food vendors.

The *National Food Security Act, 2013* is an umbrella legislation, bringing together new and existing programmes to protect the 'right to food'. First, the **Department of Food & Public Distribution** operates a food subsidy programme via the *Public Distribution System*, which procures staples and then distributes them at subsidised prices through *fair priced shops*. The poorest households (identified via *Antyodaya Anna Yojana*) can access foods at further subsidised rates.

Second, the **Ministry of Women & Child Development** provide women and child services to improve the nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Two key programmes are the *Integrated Child Development Scheme* and the *Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN Abhiyaan / National Nutrition Mission)*. Third, the **Department of School Education and Literacy** provides free meals to school goers via the *Mid-day meal scheme*. The **Department of Consumer Affairs** implements the *Consumer Protection Act, 1986*; the *Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016*; and the *Standards of Weights and Measures - the Legal Metrology act 2009*.

Domestic and foreign trade is facilitated by the **Department of Commerce** and the **Department for the Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade** which support foreign export, trade and direct foreign investment, as well as the '*Make in India*' initiative. Trade is further supported by the **Department of Revenue** which introduced the national *Goods and Services Tax* in 2017 to create a unified common national market. The *Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana*, in the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries**, promotes modern infrastructure facilities (e.g., cold food stores) to support efficient food processing and distribution.

The **Department of Health and Family Welfare** includes the *Food Safety and Standards Authority of India*, which is responsible for food standards, compliance and inspections. This includes the *Food Fortification Resource Centre*, the *Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2018*; as well as, the *Eat Right India* consumer awareness campaign. The **Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation** supports WASH initiatives related to food hygiene, food safety, and reduction of parasite-related malnutrition. The **Department of Health Research** sets *Recommended Dietary Allowances and Dietary Guidelines for Indians* via the *Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Nutrition*.

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