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Q7

Discuss the factors for localisation of agro-based food processing industries of North-West India.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2019 · GS I · 10 marks · Natural Resources and Industries

Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian sub-continent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India).

Core demand of the question

- Discuss the factors for localisation of agro-based food processing industries of North-West India
- Name the locational factors that keep these industries in the north-west
- Keep the answer within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, and nearby tracts form the main north-west food-processing belt.

Wheat, rice, cane, milk, and fruit are the raw-material base.

Canals and groundwater support the surplus that mills need.

Delhi-NCR, NH corridors, mandis, and FCI procurement supply the market and the logistics.

Perishability of cane and milk forces plants to localise next to the farm.

Introduction

North-West India, especially Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, northern Rajasthan, and adjoining Himachal foothills, is a dense belt of wheat, rice, sugarcane, milk, and fruit. Food processing has localised here because the raw material, water, roads, and a huge urban market sit together.

Body**Raw material and water**

- The Green Revolution core of Punjab and Haryana supplies surplus wheat and paddy for flour mills, rice mills, and cattle feed in the same mandi towns.
- Sugarcane of western Uttar Pradesh and parts of Haryana supports sugar mills that must sit near the cane field because the crop loses sucrose if hauled far.
- Canal irrigation from the Sutlej, Beas, and Yamuna systems, and groundwater, made double cropping possible, which keeps plants running beyond one harvest week.
- Milk from the dairy belts feeds Verka, Vita, and other plants; kinnow of Abohar-Fazilka and apple and vegetable belts toward Himachal feed juice, pickle, and cold-store units.

Market, transport, and policy

- Delhi-NCR, Chandigarh, Jaipur, and the Grand Trunk / NH corridors give a packed consumer market for bread, milk, snacks, and sugar within a day's trucking.
- Dense rural roads, mandis, and railheads, built for grain procurement by FCI and state agencies, also move processed cargo.
- Power, industrial estates, and later mega food parks and APMC hinterlands lowered the cost of sitting in Ludhiana, Panipat, Muzaffarnagar, or Alwar.
- A large pool of farm labour, mill mechanics, and traders, plus cold stores for potato and dairy, completed the localisation.

Why not only raw material

- Processing follows perishable cane, milk, and fruit first, then grain. Policy procurement and the NCR market explain why the same crops elsewhere did not always build an equal mill density.

Flow diagram

Green Revolution surplus -> Mills near cane milk grain
Canals groundwater -> Green Revolution surplus
Delhi NCR roads mandis -> Mills near cane milk grain
Food parks estates -> Mills near cane milk grain

Conclusion

Agro-based food plants of the north-west sit where surplus crops, canals, roads, and the Delhi market overlap. Keeping that belt competitive now depends on less water-wasteful cropping, stronger cold chains, and cleaner mill clusters.

Facts & figures

Punjab-Haryana grain core

Green Revolution belt whose wheat and paddy surplus feeds mills and procurement.

Muzaffarnagar cane tract

Western Uttar Pradesh sugar belt where mills sit beside the field because cane is perishable.

Abohar-Fazilka kinnow

South-west Punjab citrus belt that supports packing and juice activity.

Verka / state dairy plants

Cooperative and state dairies that localised milk processing in Punjab and Haryana.

Delhi-NCR market

Large urban demand within one-day trucking of north-west mill towns.

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