

## **Major Crops Produced In Pakistan**

Pakistan is blessed with plenty of sunshine, water and fertile soil; the three main factors needed for good crops. Irrigation system in this region was developed back in old world civilizations. Since these ages, agriculture has been the main occupation of the population in plains, plateaus and even the hilly areas. The crops cultivated in this region have been followed by generations and developed over time. Domestic and commercial livestock and herding of cattle has also been a family trait and business for many people.

Water storage systems, like small dams and barrages were also developed in the old Indus Valley civilization. The innovative artificial reservoirs also contributed to crops that could be cultivated in all seasons. These advanced irrigation systems along with sophisticated drainage and sewer systems led to the planned settlements in the region. Archeological evidences show these agricultural activities dating back to 2500 BC.

After Pakistan came into being, the country developed Indus Basin Irrigation System (IBIS) which is the largest irrigation system in the world. This enormous structure sustains the farm lands all through the country.

Pakistan serves as a major producer and supplier for many crops and related products. The main crops are cotton, rice, wheat and sugarcane. These constitute almost 3/4<sup>th</sup> of the entire crop production. Among these, wheat is the major crop. Pakistan is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest producer of wheat in the world, producing wheat more than whole of the Africa and South America. Although more than 20 million metric tons of wheat is produced every year, yet it is still not sufficient for the country's needs and Pakistan has to import wheat along with cooking oil, pulses and other consumer food products.

Rice and cotton are a major export to balance the import of other food crops. Pakistan is the fourth largest producer and supplier of rice and cotton in the world. It ranks as the third largest producer of cotton in Asian markets.

Mangoes and oranges top the list of fruits Pakistan exports every year. Pakistan is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest producer and exporter of mangoes in the world. As for oranges, the different types as kinnow, mandarin and Clementine, Pakistan is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest producer on the globe. Apricot is another major fruit produced on a large scale, earning Pakistan the 6<sup>th</sup> among the world producers. It is exported both fresh and in dried forms. Date palm is also grown extensively, for which Pakistan is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest producer.

Although most of the pulses are imported, yet chickpea is an exception, as Pakistan holds the third position in world ranking for its production. In Asia, the country is the largest market of camels, second largest for Ghee and apricots and ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> for the production of milk, cotton and onion.

Major part of agricultural production is consumed within the country by the processed food industry, which has grown immensely since the last decade of the last century. This development owes to the agricultural productivity of the country.