

- ❖ According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, pesticides imports dropped by a staggering 35% between 2010 and 2012. Experts and importers claim that the trend will continue in 2013.
- ❖ Rice sowing in Sindh is in full swing with improved water discharges making it possible to cultivate around 52% of the targeted 645,000 hectares.
- ❖ Increased maize harvest in the last marketing year has helped local food companies raise production of corn flour, corn flakes and similar products, as well as increase in export earnings. In 2012-13, maize production totaled 4.63 million tonnes, 7% higher than a year earlier
- ❖ The Government of Sindh's scheme for subsidized loans with partial credit guarantees for rice millers has yet to take a start. Under this scheme, the Sindh government had to provide 30% credit guarantee (Rs 300 million) through Sindh Investment Board (SBI) to the State Bank of Pakistan.
- ❖ During the last five years, country's rice production has declined by about 20% to 5.54 million tonnes due to which rice exports went down to \$1.84 billion from \$2.08 billion in the previous fiscal year.
- ❖ The country missed its rice export target during the out-going fiscal year (2012-13) on exporting around 3.489 million metric tonnes, 6% less against 3.724 million metric tonnes exported in 2011-12. After a period of four years, rice exports were \$1.837bn, 12% short of previous year earning at \$2.08bn.
- ❖ Sindh witnessed a rise in output of both major and minor crops due to expansion in areas under cultivation, use of better seeds, increased investment in farm inputs and qualitative crop care by growers.
- ❖ Punjab government will be increasing agricultural income tax by 200% this year, which is under heavy debate in the province. Farmers are paying Rs35 billion in taxes on fertiliser, Rs1 billion on pesticides, and Rs1 billion in cotton cess. Each of the 70,000 tractors being sold in the country comes with a Rs 50,000 tax.
- ❖ Import of oil and eatables fell by over 5% in 2012-13 which amounted to \$19.104 billion from \$20.245bn for last year. Statistics showed that oil import bill reached \$14.917bn in July-June 2013 period this year as against \$15.252bn over the previous year, indicating a decline of 2.20 %.
- ❖ The production of molasses has increased to 2.224 million tonnes in 2012-compared to 2.034 million in 2011 and is expected to reach 2.5 million tonnes during 2013.
- ❖ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will assist the Punjab government with a project to overcome the major problems affecting the province's basmati rice. ADB will spend \$1 million on the technical assistance.
- ❖ The series of good crops and strong commodity prices in the past has changed the fortune of the farming community in the last few years. But now they face decrease in their profit margins due to increased prices of fertilizer and other farm inputs.
- ❖ Around five millers had initially imported around 33,000 tonnes of Russian wheat, out of around 300,000 tonnes, which is due in October this year to fill the demand and supply gap.
- ❖ Sugarcane cultivation has declined in lower Sindh areas. According to the agricultural department figures, final achievement of sugarcane sowing was recorded at 189,698 hectares against the targeted sowing of 269,000 hectares in 2011-12

