



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

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## India

### Agricultural Situation

### Weekly Highlights & Hot Bites, #52

**2003**

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**Report Highlights:**

\*Starbucks revs up India plans\*, \*Laws for safer use of pesticides likely\*, \*Stern action against spurious seed sale\*, \*Government calls for research in transgenic crops\*.

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
New Delhi [IN1]  
[IN]

Welcome to Hot Bites from India, a weekly summary of issues of interest to the U.S. agricultural community. The report includes information that has been garnered during travel within India, reported in the local media, or offered by host country officials and agricultural analysts. Press articles are included in this report. Significant issues will be expanded upon in subsequent reports from this office.

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### **STARBUCKS REVS UP INDIA PLANS**

The Starbucks Corporation is reviving its plans for entering India. The company is expected to actively scout for prime real estate in metro markets in the next few months, and plans to open its first store in the next 12-14 months. Starbucks has identified Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai as the potential entry points for the chain in India. Starbucks is presently working on the franchisee model, although acquiring an Indian coffee pub remains a possibility. (Source: Business Line 12/20/03)

### **LAWS FOR SAFER USE OF PESTICIDES LIKELY**

To further make the use of pesticides safe, the government wants the tolerance limits to be standardized before the pesticide is marketed. As the maximum residue limits (MRLs) were not established for all the pesticides currently used in India, the government has established MRLs for fifty more pesticides. For new pesticides, the Health Ministry will set the residue limit at the time of their registration. Stating this in the *Rajya Sabha* (Upper House of the Parliament), Health and Family Welfare Minister, Ms. Sushma Swaraj, said the government is considering an integrated food law for curtailing and specifying residue limits of pesticides in food products. (Source: Business Line & Pioneer, 12/23/03)

*Post Comment:* See GAIN IN3115 on recently reported MRLs for pesticides.

### **STERN ACTION AGAINST SPURIOUS SEED SALE**

Agriculture Minister Rajnath Singh has issued strict instructions to the concerned authorities to take penal action against those who sell spurious seeds. This follows reports that some agricultural universities, research bodies, and private traders in the state of Gujarat are selling spurious seeds to farmers. (Source: Financial Express, 12/20/03)

### **GOVERNMENT CALLS FOR RESEARCH IN TRANSGENIC CROPS**

The Indian government is proposing a research project covering twelve transgenic crops by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The project would focus on specially targeted trait improvements such as resistance to insects and pests, tolerance to abiotic stresses, and extending the shelf life. The crops covered include corn, pigeon pea, chickpea, soybeans, cotton, rapeseed, tomato, banana, and potato. Calling for increased human resource development in the biotechnology sector to cater to the R&D needs in the country, Agriculture Minister, Rajnath Singh, said that transgenics in particular offered new opportunities for agriculture to increase productivity and reduce adversities. (Source: Economic Times, 12/20/03)

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IN3123	Grain and Feed Update - January	12/23/03

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