

Pakistan Seeks to Expand Agricultural and Pesticide Exports to Iran to Strengthen Trade Ties

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Pakistan has proposed a major expansion of its agricultural exports to Iran, aiming to strengthen market-driven trade and reduce reliance on external financial systems. The plan includes increasing the export of rice, corn, bananas, meat, livestock, and pesticides, while placing barter arrangements at the center to ensure transactions remain independent of

foreign currency dependence. Officials in Islamabad believe this strategy could help lift annual trade volumes between the two Neighbours from the current figure of around \$3 billion to as much as \$10 billion.

The proposal was put forward during a high-level meeting in Tehran, where Pakistan's Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, met Iran's First Vice President, Dr Mohammad Reza Aref. Hussain assured Iran of Pakistan's readiness to expand agricultural supplies and highlighted the capacity of Pakistani farmers and producers who compete regionally without subsidies to meet growing demand. He noted that closer collaboration in food and agriculture could serve as a backbone for broader economic integration between the two countries.

Iran responded positively to the offer, with officials welcoming Pakistan's willingness to increase exports and strengthen cooperation. Both sides agreed that the upcoming session of the Joint Economic Committee will play a crucial role in reviewing these proposals and turning them into concrete agreements. The committee is expected to explore additional areas of mutual benefit, focusing not only on agriculture but also on the wider challenges of regional trade and investment.

Barter trade, in particular, has emerged as a vital mechanism for Iran, which continues to face restrictions in international markets due to sanctions. By exchanging goods directly rather than relying on foreign currency transactions, Tehran can sustain its supply chains and avoid some of the financial hurdles created by external pressures. For Pakistan, this approach provides a steady market for agricultural products by rewarding productivity and reducing costly bureaucratic delays.

The renewed emphasis on barter trade reflects a pragmatic approach from both governments. It highlights how private producers can still expand their reach when trade channels remain open and minimally burdened by financial restrictions. In addition to food and livestock, Pakistan is keen to supply pesticides and other agro-industrial goods, viewing Iran as a growing market with potential to absorb larger volumes of such products.

Observers note that this development represents a broader shift in Pakistan's trade strategy. By seeking stronger ties with Iran, Islamabad is diversifying its export destinations and reducing reliance on traditional markets. The initiative also underlines Pakistan's efforts to enhance food security partnerships in its immediate neighborhood, which could prove crucial as global supply chains remain volatile.

For Iran, strengthening ties with Pakistan offers a chance to secure reliable access to essential goods and deepen regional cooperation. With both countries sharing long-standing cultural and economic connections, the renewed push to expand trade may set the stage for more comprehensive collaboration in the years ahead.

If the proposals are successfully implemented, the two nations could see a transformation in their trade relationship, with agriculture forming the foundation of a much larger economic partnership driven by competitive markets and self-reliant producers rather than prolonged state dependence.