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Pakistan Seeks Chinese Investment to Modernize Agriculture Sector

July 18, 2025

– Categories: *Economics*



In a strategic move to modernize Pakistan’s agricultural backbone, Federal Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain extended an official invitation to Chinese enterprises to invest in the country’s farming sector. The call, issued during bilateral discussions on Thursday, aims to deepen cooperation with Beijing in areas such as advanced irrigation technologies and precision farming key components Pakistan urgently needs to lift its agricultural productivity and align with global standards.

Agriculture remains a foundational pillar of Pakistan's economy, contributing roughly 19% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employing close to 38% of the total labour force. Despite its critical role, the sector has long been bogged down by antiquated practices, fragmented supply chains, and insufficient technological innovation. Pakistan's move to court Chinese investment is aligned with its recent policy overhaul, including the formation of a new regulatory authority to enhance oversight and improve domestic food safety mechanisms, especially in line with international Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures.

The urgency for reform is not without cause. Global competitiveness in agriculture is increasingly dictated by compliance with export standards, water efficiency, and value-added production, all areas where Pakistan continues to lag. Minister Hussain's invitation reflects a pragmatic recognition that local solutions alone will not suffice. Drawing on  China's proven expertise in agri-tech and smart irrigation systems could serve as a catalyst for change, especially in transforming yields and promoting export-oriented farming. "We welcome partnerships that bring innovation and boost farmer incomes," the minister stated, underscoring Pakistan's need for collaborative, rather than donor-dependent, growth models.

As Pakistan seeks to reposition itself within the global agricultural economy, success will depend on execution and transparency. The focus must now turn to building the infrastructure, governance, and investor confidence necessary to attract long-term partners like China. With fertile land and a sizable rural workforce, Pakistan possesses the raw ingredients for an agricultural resurgence. What remains is to harness international expertise without compromising national interest. If managed wisely, Chinese investment could offer Pakistan not just a lifeline but a launchpad for enduring economic transformation, one rooted in productivity, not patronage.