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## Cashew Production Trends in India- A State Wise Comparison

**Sowmya H K**

Research Scholar, Department of Studies and Research in Economics, Tumkur University, Tumakuru, and,  
Associate Professor, Department of Economics, MPM GFGC Karkala, Udupi District

**Dr. Pallavi S. Kusugal**

Associate Professor and Research Guide, Department of Economics, University College of Arts, Tumkur  
University, Tumakuru

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### ABSTRACT

India is one of the top producers, processors, and consumers of cashew nuts in the world. The cashew industry is crucial for the country's economy, supporting millions of farmers and workers. This paper looks at how different states contribute to India's cashew production. It highlights the leading states, their unique traits, and the factors that affect their output. Recent data offers a clear view of the current situation in cashew farming in India, including production amounts, area cultivated, and productivity. Cashew nuts in India are among the most important contributors to the world market. Growing cashew nuts is a key part of farming and also supports many farmers' livelihoods. In India, Cashew cultivation in India covers a large area. India is one of the biggest producers of cashew nuts globally. Several states play a major role in its production. Maharashtra is the top state for cashew production, followed by Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala also play significant roles in the country's total cashew output. These states, especially their coastal regions, provide excellent climates for growing cashews. The use of high-yield varieties and modern farming methods has also improved production



## 1. Introduction

India is among the world's leading producers, processors, and consumers of cashew nuts. The country's economy is driven by the cashew business, sustaining millions of farmers and laborers. This paper examines the contribution of various states in the production of cashews in India. It identifies the top states, their distinct characteristics, and the determinant of their output. Recent figures present a clear picture of the existing scenario in cashew cultivation in India, such as production levels, area cultivated, and productivity. Cashew nuts in India are one of the main sources for the world market. Cultivating cashew nuts is one of the major aspects of farming and is also a source of livelihood for many farmers. In India, Cashew cultivation in India spans a vast area. India is among the largest cashew nut producers in the world. Its production is dominated by a number of states. The leading state in cashew production is Maharashtra, followed closely by Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala also make important contributions to the country's overall cashew production. The states, particularly the coastal areas, have ideal conditions for cashew cultivation. Production has also increased due to the application of new farming techniques and high-yielding varieties.

## 2. Literature Review

1. E.V.V. Bhaskara Rao (1997) E.V.V. Bhaskara Rao identify states like Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and West Bengal as the traditional cashew-growing regions.
2. Nayak and Paled (2018) observes that India's total production is more volatile compared to its cultivated area, owing mainly to changes in yield. This, in many cases, is attributed to the tendency of having older seedling-origin plantations and vulnerability to pests and diseases, mainly the tea mosquito bug.
3. Haritha Paul (2022) found that Kerala was historically a dominant producer and remains a major processing hub. But in recent years, there is a shift in leadership from Kerala to maharashtra. The study also showed a concerning trend of negative growth rates in area and production in recent years. This is caused mainly by the displacement of cashew by higher-value crops such as rubber and other commercial plantations. Notwithstanding this, Kerala is still a world center for cashew processing with great dependence on imports to supply its factories with raw nut requirements.



4. APEDA and Indian Trade Portal annual reports (2022) highlight a significant problem in terms of the enormous difference between indigenous raw nut production and installed capacity in the processing sector. This compels an overdependence on raw cashew imports from most African countries in order to keep factories operating.

5. Directorate of Cashewnut and Cocoa Development (DCCD) reports (2022-23) highlighted that cultivation has expanded to non-traditional areas, including Chhattisgarh and parts of the Northeast, like Meghalaya and Assam.

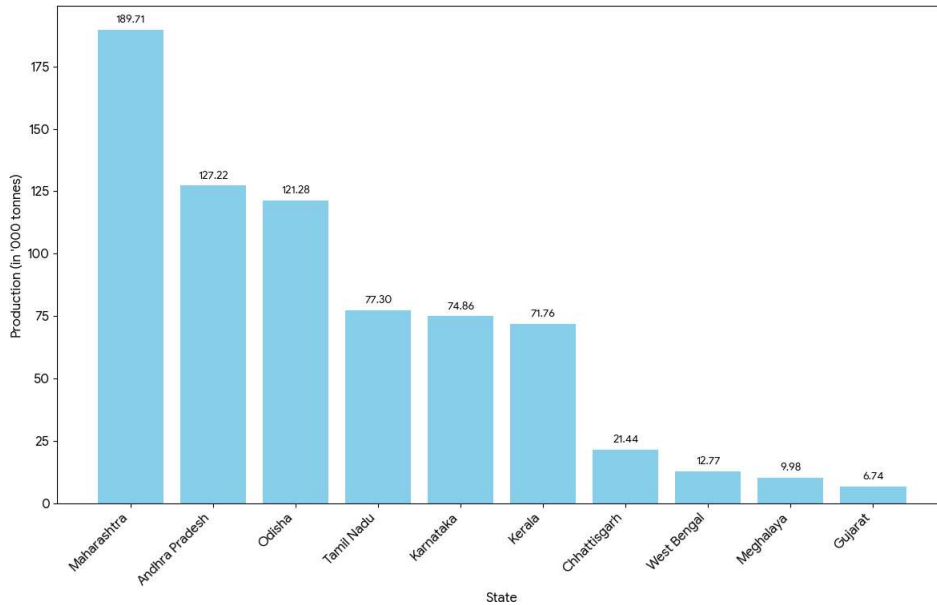
### 3. Statewise Contribution to Cashew Production in India

The table 1 shows the state-wise production of cashew nuts in India.

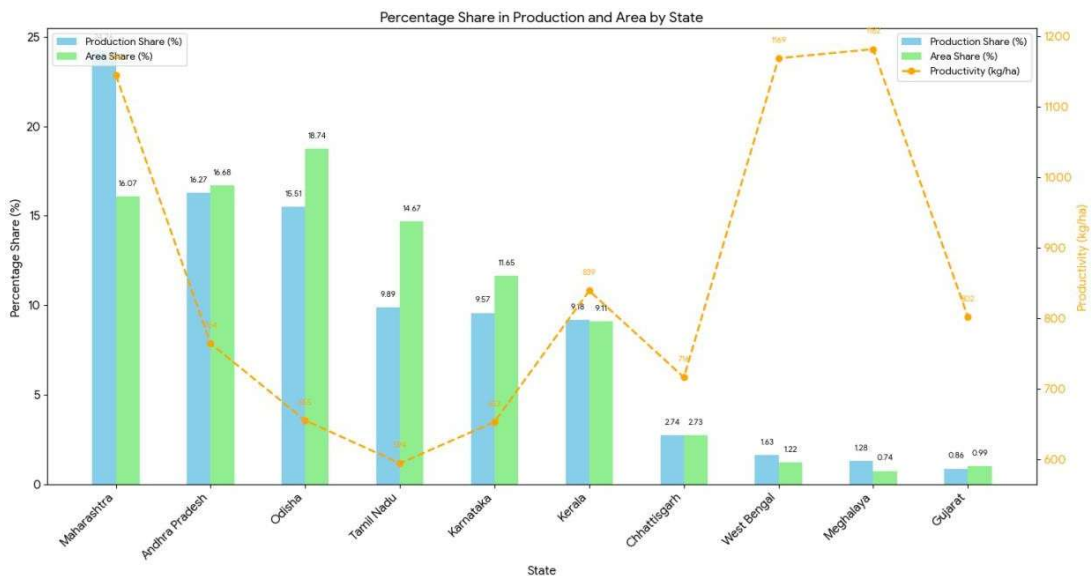
**Table 1: State-wise Percentage Share in Cashew Production, Area and Productivity**

Rank	State	Production ( <sup>'000</sup> MT)	Production Share (%)	Area ( <sup>'000</sup> ha)	Area Share (%)	Productivity (kg/ha)
1	Maharashtra	189.71	24.26%	191.55	16.07%	1145
2	Andhra Pradesh	127.22	16.27%	198.85	16.68%	764
3	Odisha	121.28	15.51%	223.45	18.74%	655
4	Tamil Nadu	77.30	9.89%	174.96	14.67%	594
5	Karnataka	74.86	9.57%	138.87	11.65%	653
6	Kerala	71.76	9.18%	108.59	9.11%	839
7	Chhattisgarh	21.44	2.74%	32.59	2.73%	716
8	West Bengal	12.77	1.63%	14.55	1.22%	1169
9	Meghalaya	9.98	1.28%	8.78	0.74%	1182
10	Gujarat	6.74	0.86%	11.85	0.99%	802

**Source: Directorate of Cashewnut and Cocoa Development (2022-23) Graph 1. State-wise Share in Cashew Production, Area and Productivity**



Graph 2. State-wise Percentage Share in Cashew Production, Area and Productivity



#### 4. Analysis of contribution of Cashew-Producing States Maharashtra:

As can be seen from the above table, Maharashtra is the undisputed champion in cashew production and contributes the highest volume to national production. The state's dominance can be attributed to its good agro-climatic conditions, particularly in the Konkan belt, and high productivity, which is almost double the national average. Government schemes and the use of new farming methods have further supported its leadership. Maharashtra is the undisputed leader in cashew production, generating close to a quarter of



the national production. Its productivity (1145 kg/ha) is very high and is one of the main reasons for its leadership.

### **Andhra Pradesh and Odisha:**

Andhra Pradesh and Odisha trail Maharashtra closely. Both of these states possess enormous regions under cashew cultivation and are key providers of cashews to the country. Andhra Pradesh has experienced a phenomenal increase in its output, whereas Odisha has had a long tradition of cashew cultivation, especially in its tribal and coastal districts. Andhra Pradesh and Odisha are the other leading producers, together generating more than 30% of the country's production. Although Odisha possesses the highest cultivated area, its productivity is below the national average.

### **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala:**

These states in the south also contribute significantly. Karnataka is renowned for its high-quality cashew kernels and has adopted contemporary processing methods. Tamil Nadu integrates traditional cultivation with advances in research and development. Kerala, long an innovator in the cashew sector, has a highly developed processing industry, but its raw nut production has experienced some difficulties, so it has had to depend on imports to supply its processing facilities.

West Bengal and Meghalaya are the states with relatively smaller areas but have very high productivity and even surpass Maharashtra.

The table indicates the disparity between the volume of production and efficiency, as there are states with large farming areas but lower productivity. As is clear from the table, Maharashtra stands head and shoulders above others in cashew production and contributes the most volume to the national output. The state's dominance is primarily because of its beneficial agro-climatic conditions, particularly in the Konkan belt, and high productivity, which is almost twice the national average. Government schemes and the use of contemporary cultivation methods have additionally strengthened its dominance.

## **5. Factors Affecting Production and productivity**

Although India's cashew production is appreciable, the sector has a number of challenges:

### **Dependence on Imports:**



Even though India is a large producer, the processing sector needs a high quantity of raw cashews, a big portion of which is covered by imports from the likes of Tanzania and Vietnam. This indicates a mismatch between domestic production and the ability to process.

### **Low Productivity:**

The national average productivity is comparatively low in comparison with nations such as Vietnam. This is usually brought about by the presence of aging, low-yielding varieties and conventional farming techniques in most areas.

### **Climate Change and Pests:**

The cashew crop is vulnerable to numerous pests and diseases, including the tea mosquito bug, and is also exposed to unpredictable weather conditions.

### **Need for Modernization:**

There is a requirement for increased investment in research, development of high-yielding varieties, and use of modern farming and processing methods so as to raise both production and productivity.

## **6. Challenges and Future Opportunities**

In spite of the increase in production, the literature indicates a number of issues to be resolved at the state level:

### **Yield Instability and Low Productivity:**

According to a study by Nayak and Paled (2018), India's aggregate production is more volatile than its cultivated area, largely because of yield instability. This is mostly attributed to the dominance of aged, seedling-origin plantations and susceptibility to pests and diseases, especially the tea mosquito bug.

### **The Imbalance of Import-Export:**

Various reports (e.g., by APEDA and Indian Trade Portal) highlight one of the biggest challenges: a huge disparity between raw nut production domestically and installed capacity in the processing sector. This compels a high dependence on raw cashew imports, mostly from African countries, to maintain factory operations.

**Economic Sustainability:**

Studies on the economics of cashew cultivation in states such as Odisha indicate a wide income disparity between the conventional and grafted varieties, necessitating farmers to offer their farms to more lucrative clones.

**7. Conclusion:**

The study indicates that India's cashew output is highly localized in a few major states, with Maharashtra producing the highest output as well as productivity. Though Andhra Pradesh and Odisha are among the highest contributors to the overall output, their productivity is still a priority area for development. Kerala, despite being historically prominent in processing, is struggling with raw nut production. The literature evidences that the future development of the Indian cashew industry is contingent upon a multi-pronged strategy: the popularization of high-yielding varieties, the upgradation of farming practices, improvement in government support mechanism, and filling the gap between imports and production to make the industry sustainable as well as profitable.

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