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VIEWS | OPINION

Union Budget 2026–27 lays groundwork for value-led, data-driven growth in agri-food

Dhruv Saxena, Senior Consultant, Agri-Food & Nutrition Growth Advisory, Frost & Sullivan provides budget insight for the food and allied sector

By **Sanjiv Das** | February 5, 2026



Dhruv Saxena

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Budget 2026 - 27 nudges India’s agri-food system from volume-centric staples toward value and resilience. The high-value agriculture thrust - especially the Coconut Promotion Scheme - targets productivity renewal in perennial crops, critical because coconuts support ~30 million livelihoods including nearly 10 million farmers. Dedicated programmes for cashew/cocoa and sandalwood signal stronger emphasis on post-harvest, processing, branding and exports, creating whitespace for input companies (planting material, orchard management), processors, and traceability/quality players.

Bharat-VISTAAR is a clear signal that Budget 2026–27 wants to 'industrialise' farm advisory - moving from generic extension to personalised, always-on decision support. By integrating AgriStack portals with ICAR packages of practices, the platform can translate research into local-language, crop- and location-specific recommendations - sowing windows, nutrient schedules, pest/disease alerts, and input selection - while also improving risk management through timely weather/market-linked nudges.

For industry, this creates a demand pull for farm data infrastructure, sensors/IoT, remote sensing, and advisory networks, plus partnerships for “last-mile” delivery via FPOs, agri-retail, and fintech. Expect faster adoption of precision agronomy, stronger compliance/traceability, and new monetisation models (advisory subscriptions, embedded credit/insurance, outcome-linked input sales).

The integrated development of 500 reservoirs and Amrit Sarovars expands inland fish availability and stabilises farm-gate supply, while mobilising start-ups, women-led groups and Fish FPOs strengthens aggregation and last-mile market linkages.

On the competitiveness side, customs changes - duty-free treatment for catch by Indian vessels beyond territorial waters/EEZ and higher duty-free input limits for seafood processing - should improve processing utilisation, margins and compliance-led upgrading.

Read online: https://nuffoodsspectrum.in/views/25/23120/union-budget-2026-27-lays-groundwork-for-value-led-data-driven-growth-in-agri-food.html
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