

# Agriculture Ministry should overhaul crop planning, spending discipline: *Pezeshkian*



President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks at a meeting with the Agriculture Ministry officials in Tehran on September 6, 2025.  
● [president.ir](#)

**Economy Desk**  
Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday set priorities for the Agriculture Ministry, calling for an overhaul of crop planning and

tighter oversight of foreign currency spending to curb inflation and boost benefits for consumers and farmers. Listening to the reports and views of the ministry officials in a meeting in Tehran, Pezeshkian outlined his

most important expectations from the executive body, ILNA reported. He said the ministry's top priority should be defining what crops to plant, where to plant them and how, based on available resources, calling

for a serious review of conventional planting methods, with comprehensive planning that considers social consequences and involves maximum cross-sectoral cooperation. "Greenhouses should be relocated to southern coastal areas, where water resources and export conditions are more favorable," he said. He noted that agriculture is among the largest users of government foreign currency allocations and urged stricter scrutiny to ensure commodities are not bought at inflated prices, and that subsidies reach the main target groups. Pezeshkian pressed for eliminating overlapping responsibilities, cutting current expenses, improving efficiency and making the ministry's structure leaner. "Because administrative costs have a significant impact on inflation," he said, "managing them carries a double necessity."

**Investment in technology**  
The president emphasized in-

creased investment in technology and the use of modern equipment and solutions in agriculture, the simultaneous management of consumption and demand alongside supply, the optimization and strict supervision of the process of purchasing and supplying essential goods from abroad in order to prevent higher costs at every stage from foreign procurement to domestic delivery, and the fullest use of regional trade capacities as among his other expectations from the ministry. Making use of idle capacity in food production and processing to create more added value with an export-oriented approach, drawing on successful global experiences in combating desertification, reviewing the policies, missions and performance of agricultural research centers to boost productivity and maximize their potential in line with allocated resources, and closing the gap from farm to fork to cut out middlemen, prevent unjustified price increases, ensure real producers gain the profits and protect consumers from exploitation were also among the president's expectations raised in this meeting.

## RAJA ready to allocate land at Aprin to neighbors, eyes 40m-ton rail transit

**Economy Desk**  
Iran's railway authority said on Saturday it is ready to allocate land in the second phase of the Aprin dry port to neighboring countries and aims to raise rail transit to 40 million tons. Jabbarali Zakeri, CEO of Iran's national railway company (RAJA), mentioned that the first phase of the Aprin dry port was completed last year with customs operations established and private sector investment in place. Work on the second phase, covering 700 hectares, has begun, IRNA reported. "We have informed neighboring countries that we are prepared to allocate part of the port's land," he said. The deputy roads and urban development minister also said rail crossings at border points should be streamlined to minimize obstacles and ensure customs, standards and border security procedures are resolved. Iran currently has joint rail links with Turkmenistan, Afghanistan,

Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Iraq, which he said needed to be strengthened. "Our railway diplomacy has been active over the past year," Zakeri said, noting that Turkmen and Uzbek officials were in Iran this week, with Kyrgyz and Turkish counterparts due to visit next week. Iran shares border rail connections at Sarakhs, Incheh Borun, Amirabad, Caspian port, Lotfabad, Astara and Jolfa. "If we can move one to five million tons of cargo annually through each of these points, we can say we have set a record," Zakeri said.

**Targeting 40m tons**  
He said reaching 40 million tons of rail transit was achievable "with process reforms, stronger inter-agency coordination, avoiding fragmented approaches, and using each other's capacities to increase efficiency." Rail-based transit development is a key national policy, he said. "If we have defined the North-South and



East-West corridors, we must base them on rail, and these corridors are the long-standing aspiration of the country's transport sector." Iran moved five million tons of transit, export and import cargo by rail last year, well below potential. Zakeri said under the Seventh Development Plan, with Parliament

and government support, Iran hoped to close the gap and achieve brighter prospects in rail transit. In the short term, he added, co-operation among institutions, avoiding parallel investments and easing conditions for public and private sector participation would be essential to reach the target.

## CBI gives go-ahead to Russia's VTB for opening Tehran branch



**Economy Desk**  
The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has granted preliminary approval for Russia's VTB bank to launch a branch in the capital Tehran, board member Olga Basha said, as reported by IRNA. "The Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran has issued preliminary approval for the opening of our branch in Tehran," Basha said on Friday, stressing that the Tehran branch would initially provide services to Russian and Iranian companies engaged in bilateral trade. Russia's second-largest lender has operated a representative office in Tehran since May 2023. The office would also handle trade finance, export operations and settlement mechanisms, including cross-border payments in national currencies, she added. Basha said the bank had completed the initial steps in establishing the branch and was continuing the next stages. "We are establishing the necessary contacts, shaping the right chain of interaction, and studying all the legal subtleties in the process of VTB's operations in Iran," she said. Basha declined to give forecasts about the future of the branch but added, "We see good prospects." Earlier, in response to a question from IRNA, Basha said the representative office was viewed "as a gateway to enter the Iranian market" and that the model had so far fully met the needs of the bank's customers and partners. Basha also said VTB was studying the Iranian market and exploring options for conducting foreign transactions between Russian and Iranian companies in national currencies, using the bank's central infrastructure.

## IMIDRO: Mining exports surpass \$4b in first four months, post 14% surge



**Economy Desk**  
Iran exported \$4.1 billion worth of mining and mineral industry products in the first four months of the calendar year (began on March 20, 2025), up about 14% in volume but down 4% in value compared with the same period last year, the state-run Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) said. From the start of the year

to the end of the fourth month, Iran exported 23.77 million tons of products from the sector worth \$4.132 billion. That compared with 20.89 million tons worth \$4.319 billion in the same period a year earlier, IRNA reported. Exports of steel, aluminum and copper accounted for the bulk of shipments, totaling 14.27 million tons valued at \$3.243 billion. A year earlier, exports of those three product chains

stood at 11.02 million tons worth \$3.385 billion. The figures showed a 30% increase in volume and a 4% drop in value. Imports of mining and mineral industry products reached 999,580 tons worth \$2.076 billion in the four-month period. In the same period last year, imports stood at 1.22 million tons valued at \$1.977 billion, marking an 18% decrease in volume but a 5% rise in value.