



Indian Sericulture: A Statistical Overview of Silk Production Trends (2020–21 to 2025–26): An Analysis Based on Central Silk Board Statistics

*Mr. Bibhuti Kumar Malik, FA

Post Graduate Diploma in Sericulture, Central Tasar Research and Training Institute (CTR&TI), Ranchi, India

*Corresponding Author's email: malikbibhutikumar@gmail.com

Sericulture has long served as a bridge between agriculture and the textile industry, creating livelihood opportunities for millions of rural households across India. Besides supplying a premium natural fibre, the sector contributes to employment generation, women's participation, tribal development and ecological sustainability. Using statistics published by the Central Silk Board (CSB), this article examines the performance of India's sericulture sector from 2020–21 to 2025–26. The data reveal encouraging progress in mulberry plantation, raw silk production, export earnings and employment generation. Although vanya silk production exhibited moderate fluctuations, the overall sector demonstrated resilience and continued expansion. The article interprets these trends and highlights the importance of scientific interventions, government support and market development in strengthening India's position as a leading silk-producing nation.

Keywords: Sericulture, Central Silk Board, Raw Silk, Mulberry Silk, Vanya Silk, Tasar, Eri, Muga, Silk Exports, Rural Livelihoods, India.

Introduction

Natural silk occupies a unique position among textile fibres because it combines economic value with environmental sustainability. In India, sericulture is much more than an agricultural enterprise; it is a livelihood system supporting farmers, rearers, reelers, weavers and artisans. The activity requires comparatively small investments, offers multiple employment opportunities throughout the year and provides regular income to rural households. India is distinguished globally by producing all four commercially important natural silks—Mulberry, Tasar, Eri and Muga. This diversity has enabled the country to develop region-specific production systems suited to varying climatic and ecological conditions. During the past several years, technological advancements, expansion of quality planting material, improved silkworm breeds and government-supported developmental programmes have contributed significantly to strengthening the sector. The statistical information presented by the Central Silk Board provides an opportunity to evaluate recent developments and identify emerging trends. Rather than merely presenting numerical values, analysing these statistics helps understand the direction in which India's silk industry is progressing.

Recent Trends in Indian Sericulture

The performance of the sericulture sector during the six-year period reflects a combination of technological advancement, policy support and increasing farmer participation. Growth has been particularly evident in mulberry-based sericulture, while vanya silk production has shown varying trends depending on ecological conditions.

The following table summarises the major indicators of India's sericulture sector during 2020–21 to 2025–26.

Table 1. Major Sericulture Statistics in India (2020–21 to 2025–26)

Particulars	Unit	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Mulberry Plantation	ha	237,578	242,277	253,182	263,352	261,633	269,670
Bivoltine Silk Production	MT	6,783	7,941	8,904	9,675	10,160	11,229
Multivoltine Silk Production	MT	17,113	17,877	18,750	20,217	20,959	21,021
Total Mulberry Silk	MT	23,896	25,818	27,654	29,892	31,119	32,250
Tasar Silk	MT	2,689	1,466	1,318	1,586	1,884	1,768
Eri Silk	MT	6,946	7,364	7,349	7,183	7,886	7,766
Muga Silk	MT	239	255	261	252	232	249
Total Vanya Silk	MT	9,874	9,085	8,928	9,021	10,002	9,783
Total Raw Silk Production	MT	33,770	34,903	36,582	38,913	41,121	42,033
Export Value	₹ Crore	1,467	1,849	1,773	2,028	2,362	3,579
Employment	Lakh Persons	87.3	87.8	92.2	94.8	97.3	98.4

Source: Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

Analysis of Major Indicators

Expansion of Mulberry Plantation

The area under mulberry cultivation increased from 237,578 hectares in 2020–21 to 269,670 hectares in 2025–26. This steady expansion indicates continued investment in plantation development and improved confidence among farmers in mulberry cultivation. The increase also suggests better implementation of plantation development programmes and wider adoption of scientific cultivation practices.

Steady Rise in Mulberry Silk Production

Mulberry silk remained the backbone of India's silk industry throughout the study period. Total mulberry silk production increased consistently, reaching 32,250 metric tonnes in 2025–26. One notable feature is the substantial improvement in bivoltine silk production, which reflects the increasing adoption of superior silkworm races, improved rearing technologies and better extension services. Higher bivoltine production is particularly important because of its superior filament quality and growing demand in domestic and export markets.

Performance of Vanya Silk

Unlike mulberry silk, production trends in Tasar, Eri and Muga varied across the years. Tasar silk production experienced fluctuations, largely reflecting the influence of climatic conditions and forest-based production systems. In contrast, Eri silk maintained comparatively stable production, demonstrating its adaptability and growing commercial importance. Muga silk, despite its limited geographical distribution, continued to contribute to India's unique silk heritage.

Growth in Overall Raw Silk Production

India's total raw silk production increased from 33,770 metric tonnes in 2020–21 to 42,033 metric tonnes in 2025–26. This sustained growth demonstrates the effectiveness of research, technology dissemination, quality seed production and capacity-building initiatives undertaken by the Central Silk Board and State Governments.

Increasing Export Earnings

Silk exports registered a remarkable improvement during the reference period. Export earnings increased from ₹1,467 crore in 2020–21 to ₹3,579 crore in 2025–26. The substantial rise indicates improved international acceptance of Indian silk products, greater value addition and expanding market opportunities for silk-based textiles.

Employment Generation

Sericulture continues to be one of the most employment-intensive agro-based sectors in India. Employment generated through sericulture increased steadily from 87.3 lakh persons to 98.4 lakh persons during the study period. The labour-intensive nature of the activity makes it particularly suitable for women, tribal communities and smallholder farmers, thereby contributing significantly to rural economic development.

Future Prospects

The future growth of Indian sericulture depends on strengthening productivity while ensuring environmental sustainability. Greater emphasis on climate-resilient host plantations, improved disease management, mechanisation of post-cocoon operations and digital extension services will be essential for maintaining production growth. Simultaneously, increasing value addition, promoting quality certification and expanding international market access can further enhance the competitiveness of Indian silk. Forest-based Tasar sericulture also deserves focused attention through scientific host plant management, conservation of natural resources and greater participation of tribal communities. These interventions will not only improve cocoon productivity but also strengthen sustainable livelihood opportunities in forest-dependent regions.

Conclusion

The statistical trends observed during 2020–21 to 2025–26 clearly indicate that India's sericulture sector is progressing steadily despite several production and market-related challenges. Expansion of mulberry plantation, increasing raw silk production, higher export earnings and sustained employment growth collectively demonstrate the sector's growing contribution to the national economy. Although fluctuations continue in certain vanya silk segments, the overall performance highlights the positive impact of scientific research, technological innovations and coordinated developmental programmes. Continued investment in quality seed production, farmer capacity building, climate-resilient technologies and market development will further strengthen India's leadership in natural silk production. With its unique diversity of silk varieties and strong rural base, Indian sericulture is well positioned to contribute to sustainable agricultural growth, employment generation and the global silk economy in the coming years.

References

1. Central Silk Board. (2026). *Sericultural Statistics in India: An Abstract (2025–26)*. Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.
2. Central Silk Board. *Annual Report 2025–26*. Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.
3. Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. *Silk Samagra-2: Scheme Guidelines and Progress Reports*.
4. Central Silk Board. *Statistics and Forecasting Division*. Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.