

Wheat Exports Strategy on War Footing

UKRAINE CRISIS DISRUPTION Commerce ministry exploring markets in Egypt, Turkey & Italy; new panel set up

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New Delhi: India is drawing up a strategy to step up the country's wheat exports following a disruption in global trade because of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The two account for more than a fourth of the global wheat trade.

Multiple ministries are in discussions to devise a plan to export wheat amid high prices and tight supplies because of the conflict. India had over 21 million tonnes of wheat in the central pool as of March 16 even as procurement of the new crop is about to start.

The commerce and industry ministry is exploring markets in Egypt, Turkey and Italy, and has created a task group. The consumer affairs, food and public distribution ministry is working to provide adequate storage facilities at five or more ports identified by the

Grain Plan

India exports wheat to B'desh, UAE, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Oman, Malaysia

Keen to export to China, Turkey, Japan, Spain

Russia, US, Canada, France, Ukraine, Oz are top wheat exporters

India's wheat exports above 6 million MT in first 3 quarters of FY22

Russia-Ukraine crisis offers opportunity to up exports



Key Roles

○ **APEDA sets up 15-member task group**

○ **Key states like UP, MP, Guj, Maha part of group**

○ **MEA may help in G2G orders**

○ **Farm min to address pest,**

disease-related issues

○ **Consumer affairs min to help create storage facilities**

○ **Shipping min may give preference to wheat consignments**

Central Warehousing Corp.

Officials said the external affairs ministry is being roped in to help with government-to-government orders, whereas the shipping ministry is being asked for warehousing facilities at ports and preference for wheat consignments.

India has already seen a rise in its wheat exports, but officials feel the opportunity is greater. The coun-

try's wheat exports in the period between April 2021 and January 2022 rose to to \$1.7 billion from \$358 million in the year-ago period.

"We are witnessing an increase in demand for wheat and a strategy is being built up so that exporters maintain the quality of wheat being shipped out," said an official aware of the development.

The Agricultural and Processed

Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), a body under the commerce department, has set up a 15-member task group including representatives of various states to draw up a roadmap for promoting wheat exports.

Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra accounted for around 97% of India's

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wheat production in 2019-20.

As per APEDA's analysis, out of the 10 major wheat importing countries, India is able to export to Bangladesh, Indonesia, Philippines, Nigeria and Japan.

"There is significant scope for India to increase its export base in major importing countries of wheat in the world," the official said, adding that India has sufficient stocks and another bumper crop will be harvested starting April.

Egypt, Turkey, China, Italy, Algeria, Morocco, Brazil, South Korea, the Netherlands and Spain are the other major wheat importers.

Last year, India also exported a Geographical Indication certified variety of wheat named Bhalia from Gujarat to Kenya and Sri Lanka.