

Wheat acreage up 25%, but weather a concern

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The area under wheat jumped 25 per cent during the week ended December 9 compared to the same period last year. This comes as farmers brought more area under the crop in anticipation of better returns.

Record high prices and hope that markets will remain favourable for wheat in the next few months due to dwindling stocks in government granaries and with private traders boosted sentiment, traders said.

According to the latest data from the agriculture ministry, till Friday, wheat has been sown in around 25.57 million hectares. During the same period last year, it was 20.39 million hectares. In total, wheat is usually sown in around 30-31 million hectares of land.

However, below par winters so far in North India and rising temperatures during the daytime remains a concern. This is more so with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicting a warmer-than-normal winter in the north this year.

According to some reports, wheat needs around 14-15 degree Celsius temperature in the daytime during its growing stages. In case the temperatures are higher, there are chances of yields going down

“Wheat markets will remain bullish for the coming few months.

Farmers feel that there will be very good demand for their produce once it starts hitting the market due to near absence of pipeline stocks with traders. However, the only concern here is the weather,” Rahul Chauhan, commodity analyst at iGrain India told *Business Standard*.

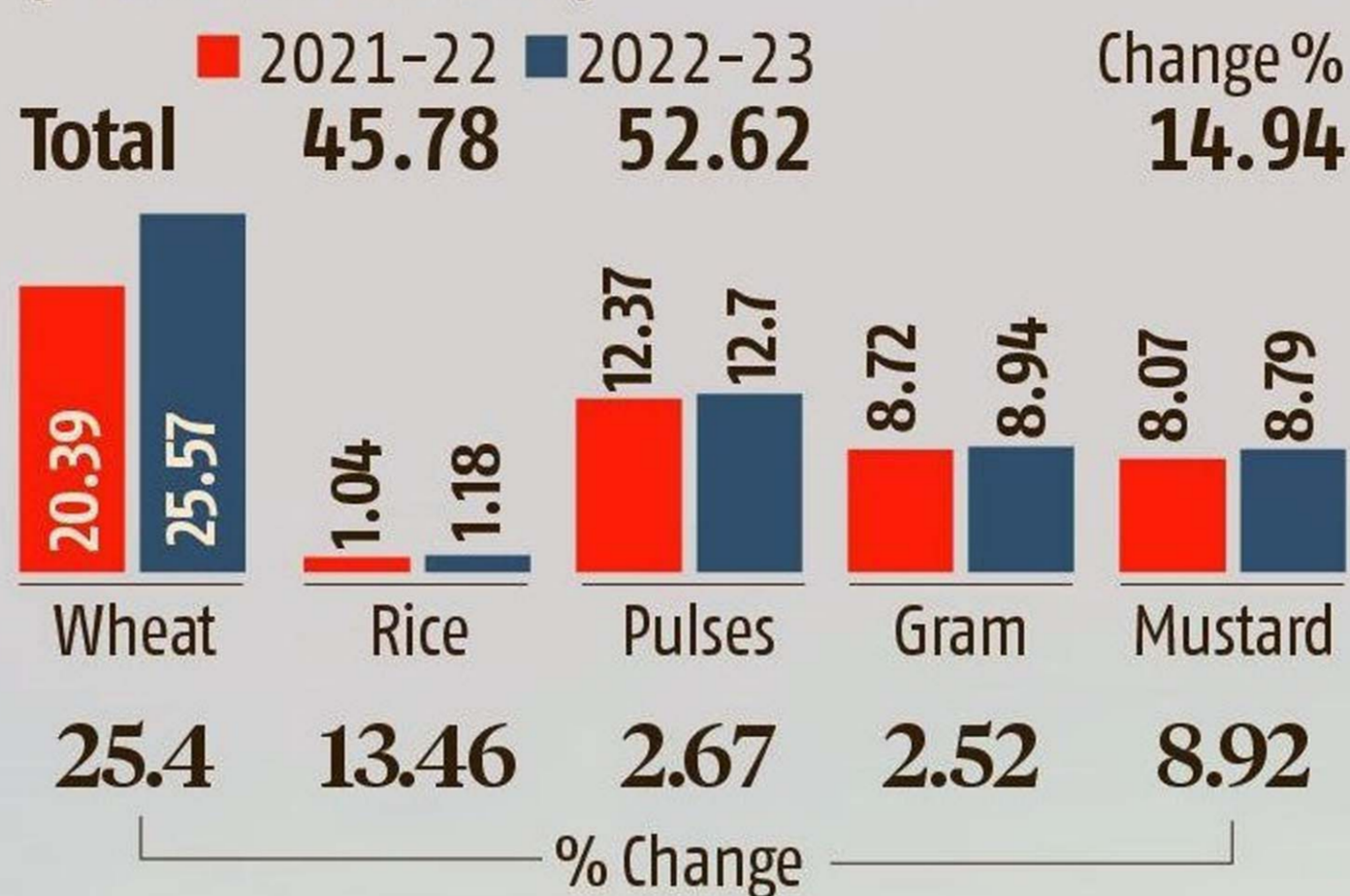
He also said that during this time of the year (December), the wheat crop needs fog, mist and cold weather, but this year, it is still warm during the day.

Overall, traders are confident that total acreage will be 10-15 per cent more than the previous years. However, whether it translates into a bumper harvest depends on the climatological conditions in the coming months.

Last year, India’s annual wheat produc-

STRONG ‘SOWING’

Rabi sowing as on December 9, 2022
(in million hectares)



Note: Total might not match as all crops haven't been included
Source: Ministry of Agriculture

WHEAT ACREAGE ON THE RISE

Area covered (in mn hectares)
Till December 9 of each year



Note: Wheat marketing year runs from April to March and the crop sown in one year is marketed the year after
Source: Government of India



Avg wholesale prices of wheat up 22% so far this year: Govt

Average wholesale price of wheat rose 22 per cent across India to ₹2,721 per quintal in November from ₹2,228 per quintal in January this year, the government data showed. In a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said, "The prices of agricultural produce including wheat are determined by the demand and supply conditions in the market, international prices, etc."

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tion dropped significantly due to sudden rise in temperatures just ahead of harvesting.

Meanwhile, data showed that acreage of all other crops, be it gram or mustard, has been higher than last year.

The area covered under mustard till

December 9 is around 8.92 per cent more than the same period last year. Under gram, it is around 2.52 per cent more than the same period last year.

Meanwhile, agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar — in a written reply in Parliament — said that the average wholesale price of wheat rose 22 per cent across India to ₹2,721 per quintal in November. It was ₹2,228 per quintal in January 2022.

“The prices of agricultural produce, including wheat, are determined by the demand and supply conditions in the market and international prices, among others,” Tomar said. The Centre had imposed a ban on wheat exports in May to control prices.

The minister said that wheat production last year had declined marginally from 109.59 million tonnes in 2020-21 to 106.84 million tonnes in 2021-22.

The all-India yields of wheat declined in 2021-22 to 3,507 kg/hectare from 3,521 kg/hectare in 2020-21.