

High temperature unlikely to damage wheat crops: Food secy

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UNION FOOD SECRETARY Sanjeev Chopra asserted that wheat crops are unlikely to get damaged although temperatures are a little on a higher side and exuded confidence of achieving a record output of 11.2 million tonne in this crop year ending June.

The secretary said the ban on wheat exports would continue, boosting the availability of grains for the government procurement. He said the government would procure around 35 million tonne of wheat in 2023-24 marketing year (April-March). The bulk of procurement of wheat, a major rabi crop, takes place between April and June.

Chopra said wheat prices

have come down and would ease further after the arrival of new crop. "(On Wednesday), we had a meeting with state food secretaries, which was followed by a meeting with state food ministers. And what we have discovered in the meeting is that the food scenario in the country is very, very comfortable," Chopra said on the sidelines of an event on Thursday evening.

The weather department made a presentation with regard to the weather conditions, he added. "So, no heatwave to the extent that would damage the wheat crop is expected over the next two weeks, which is a crucial period for the formation of the grain," the secretary said.

"So there are no reports as of today of any shrivelled wheat or any other adverse conditions for the wheat crop," Chopra said. He



was hopeful of achieving the projected 112.18 million tonne output in this crop year, as per the second advance estimates by the agriculture ministry.

India's wheat production

'Not considering any proposal to increase sugar export quota'

THE GOVERNMENT is not considering any proposal as of now to increase the sugar export quota from the present 60 lakh tonne for this marketing year ending September, Union food secretary Sanjeev Chopra said. The food ministry has allowed 60 lakh tonne of sugar exports for the current 2022-23 marketing year.

The country had exported around 110 lakh tonne, an all-time high, of sugar in the 2021-22 marketing year. "The sugar production is going down by about 9 lakh tonne, that is our estimate from the previous year. So keeping that in view, as of now there is no proposal to increase the export quota," Chopra said. — PTI

fell 107.74 million tonne in 2021-22 crop year (July-June) from 109.59 million tonne in the previous year due to heat wave in some key producing states. "There are no adverse

weather condition as of now. The temperature is above normal by 3-4 degree Celsius but the fact remains it is not going to impact the wheat adversely," Chopra said.

"...although temperatures are little on higher side, there is no damage expected to wheat crops," he asserted. Asked about impact on retail prices of wheat after the government's decision to sell 5 million tonne of wheat in open market, Chopra said the rates have come down by almost 10%. "The mandi prices, which was a matter of concern for us, are also coming down gradually," he noted.

The modal prices of wheat at mandi level have come down to ₹2,300 per quintal from ₹2,800 per quintal on January 25 when Open Market Sale Scheme was launched, he said. "So as and when we start getting the wheat of this season into the market, so obviously we will find that the prices go down further," Chopra said.