

Basmati growers plan to expand area as they get high prices

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Indian basmati farmers plan to increase the area under the fragrant rice crop in coming kharif season as they hope to receive really good prices after realising record prices last year for their produce. Experts, however, said prices will depend on export demand and geopolitical developments.

“I have already bought sufficient seeds from recent Pusa Kisan Mela as I plan to increase the area under basmati to 15 acres from 10 acres done last year,” said Ashok Dahiya of Sonipat district in Haryana, the



GOING STRONG. Basmati rice production has been estimated at 9 mt from an area of 6.2 million hectares in 2022-23

largest basmati-producing State. He expects a similar price for basmati next year too after

selling his crops (different varieties) at ₹3,800-4,000 per quintal last year.

“Though (expansion of acreage) not entirely on my own field, but definitely it is profitable even to take land on lease and go for basmati than any other crop,” he said, adding the costs of annual lease is more than ₹35,000/acre depending on the location and conditions of land.

ECHOING SIMILAR VIEWS

Whether its is Jind, Sirsa or Karnal, farmers in Haryana have echoed similar sentiments though the scale of expansion will vary depending on the land availability. India’s basmati rice

production was estimated at 9 million tonnes (mt) from an area of 6.2 million hectares in 2022-23. Of this, Haryana produced 3.81 mt, Punjab 3.12 mt and Uttar Pradesh 1.79 mt. Due to Covid pandemic, no survey was undertaken in 2020 and 2021.

The current export price trend indicates an interesting insight into the demand-supply matrix. Kharif 2023 for basmati rice will be a crucial year in view of comprehensive and accelerated rice and agricultural demand outlook, said trade policy analyst S Chandrasekaran. “The supplier-driven sentiments will redefine the realisation of prices,” he said.

Basmati rice shipments increased 41 per cent to \$3.82 billion (₹30,514 crore) in the 10 months up to January in the current fiscal and the volume surged 18 per cent to 3.66 mt. The unit value realisation increased to \$1,044 a tonne from \$877/tonne a year ago.

Exporters term the increased demand in importing countries to high prices for basmati amid global uncertainties after the Ukraine-Russia conflict. Besides the partial restrictions on export of non-basmati rice — ban on broken variety and 20 per cent duty on non-parboiled rice — had some influence on basmati prices, exporters said.