

# Punjab eyes 20% rise in area under basmati

**THE PUNJAB AGRICULTURE** department is planning to increase the area under basmati crop by over 20% in the current sowing season, with the state government pushing for alternative crops to wean away growers from water-guzzling paddy.

The agriculture department has targeted to bring 6,00,000 hectares under the

aromatic crop, up from 4,94,000 hectares last year, an agriculture department senior official said. The state government also has plans to fix a support price of ₹2,600 to ₹2,800 a quintal for basmati crop. To promote the basmati rice crop, the department has roped in 'Kisan Mitra', who will provide technical guidance to growers for sowing it.

"We have targeted to bring 6,00,000 hectares of area under basmati this season," said the official.

The area under the basmati crop was 4,85,000 hectares in 2021-22 and 4.06 lakh hectares in 2020-21. Punjab grows paddy over an area of about 30,00,000 hectares, including basmati, every year.

— PTI