

Kharif sowing ends with a bang

GAINERS & LOSERS. Overall acreage up as paddy area gains 2% but pulses, cotton and oilseeds coverage dips

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The Centre on Friday declared the end of the kharif sowing season after farmers increased the area under many crops including paddy, sugarcane, maize, ragi, bajra (millets) and soya-bean.

However, as the Centre is yet to release the production estimates of the kharif crops – as it is usually announced before the end of the season – speculation is rife that there is a drop in output of many crops, including pulses and cotton.

“Last year when there was concern about rice due to deficit rainfall in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand, the production estimate was still released. But this year, it seems the concern is higher as the official output forecast influences prices,” said SK Singh, a former agriculture scientist with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

HARVEST DELAYED

to 1,107.15 lakh hectares (lh) as of Friday against 1,104.79 lh in the year-ago period, the Agriculture Ministry said in its weekly update. Arrivals of early-sown crops in *mandis* have started from mid-September. But due to heavy rainfall in many parts, the harvesting may get delayed a bit and farmers will have to wait till the crops dry. Harvesting may be in full swing from after *Dussehra*.

The final acreage data show that the area under paddy has increased by 1.9 per cent to 411.96 lh from 404.27 lh in the corresponding period the last year. The area is higher in Bihar (by 4.89 lh), Jharkhand (3.04 lh), West Bengal (1.80 lh), Haryana (1.29 lh), Uttar Pradesh (1.23 lh), Chhattisgarh (1.23 lh), Punjab (0.32 lh) and Telangana (0.22 lh).

However, lower acreage in paddy has been reported from Madhya Pradesh (by 1.77 lh), Karnataka (1.49 lh), Andhra Pradesh (0.91 lh), Tamil Nadu (0.74 lh), Odisha (0.65 lh), Assam (0.44 lh) and Maharashtra

at 111 million tonnes (mt) this year.

CASTOR, SOYA GAIN

The Agriculture Ministry sowing data also showed pulses acreage lower by 4 per cent at 123.57 lh, compared with 128.98 lh in the year-ago period. Arhar, urad, moong, kulthi and other pulses all ended with a lower coverage.

Oilseeds acreage was down by 1.6 per cent at 193.23 lh against 196.39 lh in the year-ago period, mainly due to 3.6 per cent lower planting of groundnut at 43.91 lh.

On the other hand, area under coarse and nutri cereals (Shree Anna), including maize and bajra, ended higher by 1.8 per cent at 188.02 lh against 184.77 lh last year. But, jowar area was down by 8.5 per cent at 14.53 lh from 15.88 lh.

Cotton acreage was down 3 per cent at 123.87 lh against 127.73 lh, while that of jute/mesta was down 5.6 per cent at 6.59 lh from 6.98 lh. Sugarcane ended higher by 7.6 per cent at

Good show

Final kharif acreage (in lakh hectares)

	Normal Area	2023	2022	% Change
Paddy	399.45	411.96	404.27	1.9
Pulses	139.7	123.57	128.98	-4.2
Arhar	46.29	43.87	46.13	-4.9
Uradbean	39.23	33.08	33.52	-1.3
Moongbean	36.55	31.94	33.99	-6.05
Kulthi	2	0.48	0.53	-10.61
Other pulses	15.63	14.21	14.81	-4.08
Coarse cereals	181.91	188.02	184.77	1.76
Jowar	17.36	14.53	15.88	-8.48
Bajra	73.24	70.95	70.59	0.5
Ragi	10.94	11	10.64	3.41
Small millets	4.66	5.76	5.05	13.96
Maize	75.71	85.79	82.62	3.84
Oilseeds	189.81	193.23	196.39	-1.61
Groundnut	45.04	43.91	45.53	-3.55
Soyabean	117.44	125.62	124.79	0.66
Sunflower	1.23	0.73	2.04	-64.23
Sesamum	15.94	12.43	13.44	-7.48
Niger	1.48	0.91	1.13	-20.23
Castor	8.68	9.52	9.31	2.25
Other Oilseeds	0	0.11	0.14	-23.16
Sugarcane	48.85	59.91	55.66	7.64
Jute & Mesta	6.88	6.59	6.98	-5.57
Cotton	127.73	123.87	127.73	3.03