

Rabi sowing down by 5%

Rice sees biggest fall with 21.5% decline over year-ago period

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, January 18

A significant fall in sowing in Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Rajasthan has affected wheat and other crops, bringing the overall area under rabi crops down by nearly 5 per cent to 588 lakh hectares (lh), according to data released by the Agriculture Ministry on Friday. The total area cultivated in the corresponding week in 2017-18 was around 618 lh, it showed.

Rice reported the maximum shortfall in cultivation. The area under rice is about 21.5 per cent lower than the same period last year, due to a drop in rice cultivation in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Wheat cultivation, on the other hand, reported a 2.5-per cent deficit as compared to last year. As against an area of around 304 lh sown in 2017-18, the area under wheat cultivation is around 296 lh, mainly because of drop in sowing in drought-hit Maharashtra and Gujarat, as well as West Bengal.

There is nearly a 10-per cent drop in the sowing of gram, a major

As you sow...

Crop	2017-18	2018-19
Wheat	303.87	296.05
Rice	22.84	17.93
Pulses	157.8	149.01
Gram	105.95	95.40
Lentil	17.18	16.85
Coarse cereals	54.18	46.66



pulse crop of the rabi season. This deficit has pulled down the overall pulses area by over 5.5 per cent till this week. As compared to the 157.8-lh covered in the corresponding week in 2017-18, the pulse has been grown only in 95 lh so far.

Coarse cereals, too, are faring badly, with an overall drop in area of nearly 14 per cent. If the area under jowar cultivation, at 24.6 lh, is around 19 per cent lower than the 30.27 lh last year, maize is down by 9.5 per cent to 14 lh.

Mustard/rapeseed outlook

The only crop showing a positive trend is mustard/rapeseed, which has reported around 3 per cent increase in sowing, as compared to

Rabi sowing till Jan 18, 2018 (in lakh hectares)

Crop	2017-18	2018-19
Jowar	30.27	24.6
Maize	15.62	14.13
Barley	7.43	7.23
Oilseeds	79.20	78.45
Rapeseed & mustard	66.77	68.66
Total crops	617.89	588.09

the corresponding period last year. Even though the total oilseeds area this year is down by almost 1 per cent compared to last year, the area under mustard/rapeseed has increased to 68.66 lh from 66.77 lh in the same period.

Among the States that have reported a smaller area under oilseeds crops are Karnataka, Rajasthan and Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, the cumulative water storage in 91 reservoirs monitored by the Central Water Commission till Thursday remained at 77.17 billion cubic metres, which is the same as the live storage in these water bodies, reported during the same week in the previous year, according to a report.