

Higher crop area coverage during this Rabi season
to press forward Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan in
Agriculture

Government farm friendly policies bring 22.71 lakh
hectares additional area under cultivation during
current Rabi season over last year coverage

Mustard Mission along with other interventions leads
to 54% increase in area under mustard sowing over
normal Rabi sown area

Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and
Maharashtra major states reporting higher area
coverage

Substantial increase in Rabi crop acreage is a result
of the combined efforts of our toiling farmers,
agricultural scientists and the farmer-friendly policies
of the Modi Govt: Shri Tomar

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Union Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is implementing many national programmes to increase production of deficit commodities like oilseeds and pulses as part of making Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Sustaining food security, reducing import dependency and enhancing agricultural exports are the major pillars of this strategy. Timely supply of quality seeds of high yielding varieties (HYVs), inputs, latest production technologies, credit, crop insurance, micro-irrigation and post-harvest facilities are few of such interventions taken to increase agricultural production and productivity. All these interventions have led to large increase in area under Rabi crops this year.

Rabi sowing was being monitored since beginning of the season and the final figure arrived on 3rd February 2023 has shown that momentum gained in sowing of Rabi crops continued till end of the season. A comparison is made with the area sown last year (2021-22) and normal sown area (average area of last 5 years). Total area sown under Rabi crops has increased by 3.25% from 697.98 lakh hectares in 2021-22 to 720.68 lakh hectares in 2022-23. This is 22.71 lakh hectares more this year compared to corresponding period of 2021-22. Comparing with normal sown area, the increase is to the tune of 13.71% from 633.80 to 720.68 lakh hectares.

The increase in area is across all crops, - highest being in rice. Out of 22.71 lakh hectares increase in all Rabi crops, increase in rice area is 11.20 lakh hectares from 35.05 lakh hectares in 2021-22 to 46.25 lakh hectares in 2022-23. However, this is lower than normal sown area of 47.71 lakh hectares. Maximum increase in area under rice is in states of Telangana and West Bengal. Area from rice is being diverted to other low water consuming oilseeds, pulses and nutri-cereal crops.

Commending the substantial increase in the cultivation of Rabi crops, the Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar said this is a result of the combined efforts of our toiling farmer brothers and sisters, agricultural scientists and the farmer-friendly policies of the Modi Government. The government focus is on increasing oilseeds production to reduce import dependency in edible oils. In 2021-22, country had to import 142 lakh tonnes of edible oils at a cost of Rs 1.41 lakh crore. Due to renewed focus on oilseeds, area under oilseeds increased by 7.31% from 102.36 lakh hectares during 2021-22 to 109.84 lakh hectares this year. This is a quantum jump of 31.03 lakh hectares over normal sown area of 78.81 lakh hectares. The increase in area under oilseeds at the rate of 7.31% is more than double the rate of increase of 3.25% in all crops together. Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh accounted for major expansion in area of oilseeds.

Rapeseed & Mustard contributed maximum in increasing oilseeds area during this Rabi season. Mustard area increased by 6.77 lakh hectares from 91.25 lakh hectares in 2021-22 to 98.02 lakh hectares in 2022-23. Thus, out of 7.49 lakh hectares increase in area under oilseeds, rapeseed & mustard alone accounted for 6.44 lakh hectares. Area brought under cultivation of rapeseed & mustard is markedly higher by 54.51% than normal sown area of 63.46 lakh hectares. Major area expansion has been attained due to implementation of Special Mustard Mission for last 2 years. During Rabi 2022-23, 26.50 lakh Seed Minikits of HYV, having yield potential of more than 20 quintals per hectare, were distributed to the farmers in 301 districts of 18 States under the National Food Security Mission- Oilseeds. Latest varieties having yield potential in the range of 2500-4000 quintals per hectare were distributed. The higher area and productivity will bring quantum jump in oilseeds production and bring down demand for imported edible oils.

Pulse production is being focused to make country self-sufficient in these commodities. Special programme (NFSM 'TMU370') under National Food Security Mission has been launched with aim of increasing productivity of 370 districts having less than state average yields of pulses due to lack of good seed and technological interventions. Area under pulses increased by 0.56 lakh hectares from 167.31 to 167.86 lakh hectares. Mung bean and lentil accounted for increase in area under pulses. About 4.04 lakh seed minikits of HYVs were distributed under 'TMU370' to farmers free of cost for lentil. States like Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Karnataka took lead in increasing area under pulse cultivation.

The United Nations General Assembly has declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets and India is at the forefront in celebrating the event in big way. This will help to create awareness throughout the world of the importance of millets, its role in sustainable agriculture and its benefits as a smart and super food. In order to meet growing demand of millets around the world, the Government is promoting millet production through the NFSM-Nutri Cereals component of National Food Security Mission (NFMS) programme in 212 districts of 14 states. Coarse cum Nutri-cereals saw an increase of 2.08 lakh hectares in area under cultivation from 51.42 lakh hectares in 2021-22 to 53.49 lakh hectares in 2022-23. India is poised to become the global hub for the millets. Besides supporting sustainable production, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is creating awareness for higher consumption, developing markets and value chain and funding research and development activities. Telangana, Rajasthan, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are at the forefront in increasing area under millets.

As part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, the Government has laid emphasis on increasing productivity of all crops with focus on crops where demand is met through costly imports like oilseeds and pulses

and millets whose demand will soar post-celebration of International Year of Millets. For this, farmers are provided with free seed minikits of HYVs along with technology support and critical inputs. In addition, farmers are provided easy credit, insured against damage by weather, remunerative prices for their produce and supported through Farmers Producers Organization (FPOs) through various government programmes.

The increased area brought under rice, oilseeds, pulses and nutri-cereals, along with higher productivity due to use of HYV seeds, will bring a milestone in foodgrain production in the country. This will bring self-sufficiency in pulses, reduce import of edible oils and meet global demands of millets. The farmers of the country will play major role in making country Aatmanirbhar in agriculture.

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