

Wheat harvesting to be delayed in Punjab, Haryana

Inclement weather takes a toll; farmers, facing financial losses, a worried lot in both the States.

The recent rain could delay harvesting of the standing wheat crop by at least a week in Punjab and Haryana, an agriculture expert and farmers said on Sunday. Standing crop in the two States had been hit by heavy rain, wind and hailstorm in the past few days, after which both the State governments had ordered “girdawari” (revenue survey) to assess crops damage. Most parts of Punjab and Haryana experienced widespread rain with gusty winds in the past week, according to the Meteorological Department. Another forecast of rain, expected to hit the region from March 20, has only increased the worry of the farmers. Dilbag Singh, a farmer in Patiala’s Fatehpur, who has sown wheat in around 16 acres, said there’s no doubt that the harvesting will be delayed due to inclement weather. “Rain water is still standing in my field. Gusty winds have flattened the crop. At least 50% of my crop is damaged. Even if clear weather prevails now it will difficult to recover the losses,” he said. Wheat, the main rabi (winter) crop is sown between late October till December while the harvesting of the crop usually starts from April onwards. The wheat procurement season in Punjab and Haryana usually begins on April 1. P.S. Rangi, an agriculture expert and former Punjab State Farmers Commission adviser told The Hindu that the unseasonal rain has damaged the wheat crop not just in Punjab and Haryana but also in western Uttar Pradesh. “The crop, which has flattened in fields, will be difficult to harvest.. even when it is harvested, mostly manually, the yield will certainly drop. Also water logging at this time will damage the crop. The inclement weather has caused extensive damage to the wheat crop in may parts, and if it rain in coming days then definitely it could be a cause of worry for farmers,” he said.



‘Unfavourable condition’

Mr. Rangi said that the harvesting of wheat is likely to be delayed by at least a week on account of unfavourable weather conditions. “The wheat crop now needs bright sunshine as the crop is all set to be harvested in the next few days. If overcast condition prevail and it rains the wheat crop will absorb moisture, which will delay harvesting.

[Source: The Hindu, March 16, 2020 \(verbatim reproduced\)](#)