

Cotton acreage to rise in 2 States

Punjab, Haryana farmers expecting better returns on produce

Farmers in Punjab and Haryana have sown more cotton this season as against the corresponding period last year on expectation of better returns on the produce, experts and officials told *The Hindu*. In Punjab, cotton crop has been sown in nearly 4 lakh hectares and may go up by 10,000 hectares as the sowing is still going on, according to the State Agriculture department. The acreage was nearly 2.84 lakh hectares in 2018. In Haryana, farmers had sown cotton in 6.35 lakh hectares till June 6. Last year the total area under cotton was 6.61 lakh hectares. “The area in Punjab and Haryana has seen an increase this year as farmers are expecting to fetch better price. Last season the yield was good and incidence of disease was less, which has motivated the farmers to opt for cotton this year,” India Cotton Association Limited president Mahesh Sharda told *The Hindu*.

Bt cotton

In Punjab and Haryana, Bt cotton is sown in over 95% of the total area, the rest 5% cotton are usually the indigenous (desi) varieties. Cotton is usually planted from mid-April till late May in most parts of the States. Punjab Agriculture Secretary K.S. Pannu said that cotton acreage is likely to surpass the 4 lakh-hectare mark as the rise in the minimum support price last year had helped farmers fetch better returns. “After the whitefly attack in 2015, the farmers were a little reluctant to sow cotton, but after reaping a good yield last couple of years their confidence has increased,” said Mr. Pannu.

Haryana Agriculture department Joint Director Jagraj Dhandi said, “the area under cotton is likely to remain the same as last year or could even surpass it as the sowing is still going on. This year the cotton sowing has been delayed as the wheat crop was harvested late on account of intermittent rains.”

[Source: The Hindu, June 10, 2019 \(verbatim reproduced\)](#)