

Gujarat: Sowing nears average mark in state, cotton acreage better than mean

With the state receiving normal rainfall and better spatial distribution of precipitation, farmers have completed sowing in 82.80 lakh hectare (lh) or around 98 per cent of normal plantation area with acreage of cotton and groundnut, the two main cash crops of the state, as well as that of food grain and oilseeds being average or better than average. However, acreage of pulses is lagging at only 68 per cent. After a deficient July, the state received good rainfall in August. As of September 3, the state as a whole has received an average 814 mm rainfall which is 99.79 per cent of its long-term average. The good rainfall, which has better spatial distribution this year, has propped up sowing figures.



As of September 3, farmers completed sowing in 82.80 lh or 97.68 per cent of last three years' average of 85.76 lh, data available with the office of directorate of agriculture of Gujarat shows. It included 37.69 lh in Saurashtra region (45.52 per cent of the total area sown in state), 16.62 lh in north Gujarat region, 15.77 in central Gujarat and 7.19 lh in south Gujarat. Kutch, the largest district of the state has reported sowing in 5.51 lh. Officers say that total sowing area in the state is likely to remain average. "It is very likely that the total sowing area will remain around 85 lh which is the normal sowing area of the state. The figures of Tuesday are likely to be revised upwardly in coming weeks as sowing of castor districts like Kutch is still in progress. Similarly, some improvement will also be reported from other districts. We shall get final figure by around September 15," Vijay Korat, deputy director of agriculture (input) of Rajkot region said.

Meanwhile, cotton acreage has already crossed the normal range of 25.86 lh and stands at 26.64 lh. It amounts to 103 per cent of average of the last three years. However, it is marginally lower than 27.03 lh (98.56 per cent) recorded during the corresponding time last year. However, 26.64 lh acreage of cotton constitutes 32 per cent of total planted area of the state. Saurashtra region leads the chart in overall sowing and cotton sowing also. Out of 37.69 lh area sown in 11 districts of the region, cotton accounts for 18.89 lh or more than 50 per cent of the total area. But 18.89 lh is around 71 per cent of the total 26.64 lh area under cotton cultivation this year. Within Saurashtra, the largest area under cotton is Amreli

district where farmers have sown the fibre crop in 4.02 lh. It is followed by Surendranagar with 3.55lh, Rajkot with 2.64 lh, Bhavnagar 2.37 lh, Morbi 1.86 lh, Jamnagar 1.66 lh and Botad 1.63 lh. The balance 1.12 lh plantation is reported from Porbandar, Gir Somnath, Devbhoomi Dwarka and Junagadh districts.

Similarly, groundnut has retained its position as the second largest crop sown in the state this Kharif season also. Its acreage of 15.50 lh forms around 19 per cent of the state's total 82.80 lh and around 99 per cent of the last three year's average acreage of 15.70lh. However, it amounts to 105 per cent of the last year's figure of 14.67 lh though monsoon remained highly deficient in many parts of Saurashtra. Just like cotton, bulk acreage of this short-duration crop is reported from Saurashtra. The region which has received 90 per cent of its long-term-average rainfall so far has recorded groundnut sowing in 12.67 lh. That translates to around 82 per cent of the total groundnut acreage in the state.

Besides cotton, acreage of paddy (103 %), pearl millet (105%) castor (102%), and fodder (107%) has been reported more than their respective average. Paddy has been sown in 8.23 lh, while fodder crops have been sown in 11.85 lh. Food grain crops, including paddy, pearl millet, jowar and maize, have been sown in a total of 13.40 lh or 99 per cent of their average and marginally higher than 13.15 lh reported during the corresponding period last year. Acreage of oilseeds, which include groundnut, sesame seeds, castor and soya bean etc stands at 23.41 lh or 98 per cent of their average. Plantation of cash crops like cotton, tobacco together with vegetable and fodder is more than average-42.03 lh or 101 per cent. However, acreage of pulses is lagging at just 68 per cent of its average. Farmers have sown pulses, including red gram, green gram, moth bean and black gram etc in total 3.94 lh. That is significantly low as compared to 4.31 reported at this time of the year last season.

Source: [Indian Express, September, 05, 2019](#) (verbatim reproduced)