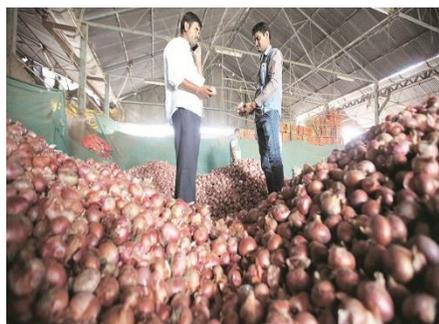


Maharashtra: Dip in kharif acreage likely to bring up onion prices again

A dip in kharif acreage of onion may result in another spell of price rise in the days to come. Agriculture department officials said that late onset of monsoon has resulted in reduced sowing, which would be difficult to bridge over given the hawkish attitude of the government towards higher onion prices. By the end of August, Maharashtra had reported sowing over 41,005.95 hectares for kharif onions, which is way below the target area of 70,000 hectares. Last year, farmers in Maharashtra had reported sowing over 97,221 hectares. Similarly, late kharif sowing this year till date is around 15,039 hectares. Depending on the time of transplantation and harvest, onion growers in the state classify their crop as kharif (May- July transplant and harvesting in October- November), late kharif (September- November transplant and harvest post January) and rabi (December - January transplant and harvest post April). These three crops feed the market round the year. Onion prices have sky rocketed across the country right at the start of the election season in Maharashtra and Haryana.



A dip in the rabi production in Maharashtra and other parts of the country, especially Karnataka, has resulted in the price rise, which had seen the central government taking a slew of measures. Post increase of the Minimum Export Price (MEP), and bringing about a stock limit for the bulb for both retail and wholesale traders — the government had also banned exports of onion. All these measures were taken to check the price rise in the wholesale markets. At Lasalagon's wholesale market, average traded price of the onion, which had peaked at Rs 4,700 per quintal, has come down by around Rs 2,000 per quintal. This has caused much resentment among farmers, who are quick to point out how they were plagued by low prices over the last year or so. The ban on exports had seen over 200 trucks carrying onions to Bangladesh being held up at the border. Dr Bharti Pawar, BJP MP from Dindori in Nashik, had issued a press statement saying the trucks were released after the intervention of Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. Onion prices might be down, but market sources do not rule out a further price rise in the days to come. Besides the delayed

monsoon, in parts of Nashik, the transplanted crop was lost due to heavy rain that lashed the area in the past two months. These two factors, sources said, would result in another shortage in the day to come. At present, majority of the onions that are coming in the market are the stored rabi crop.

Source: [Indian express, October 07, 2019](#) (verbatim reproduced)