

DAP imports up 59% in October but still short of rabi crop demand

YIELD MAY NOT BE HIT. Fertilizer Ministry dismisses shortage claims, blames Red Sea issue for shipment delays

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The import of Di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) — a key fertilizer for rabi crops such as wheat, mustard, and chana (gram) — surged 58.6 per cent to 8.17 lakh tonnes (lt) in October 2024 from 5.15 lt in the corresponding period last year. However, it has not been able to meet the demand for the month, which is estimated at 18.69 lt.

Latest official data show that DAP sales were recorded at 11.48 lt last month, lower than 13.64 lt a year ago.

Experts said while single super phosphate (SSP) is an alternative to DAP in the case of mustard, there is no alternative in the case of the

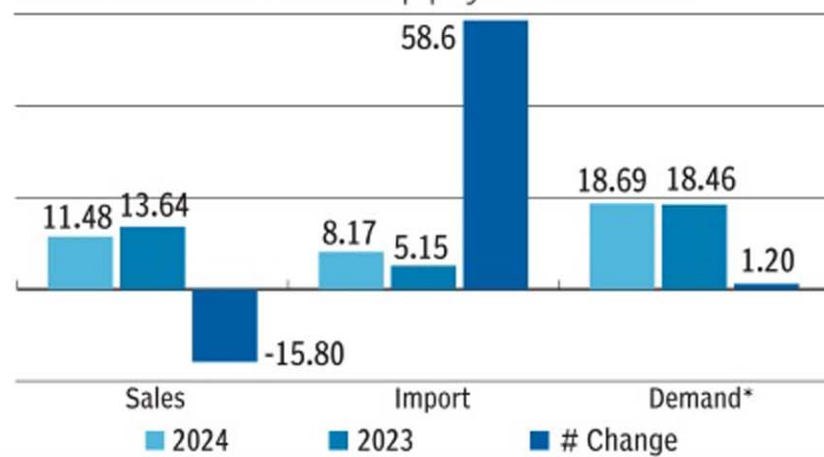
wheat, and farmers are buying complex fertilizer at higher prices to get the same yield due to the shortage of DAP.

As the normal window for wheat sowing in Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan is already over, any planting from now on may lower the yield, said SK Singh, an agriculture scientist.

A top wheat breeder said there may not be any drop in yield due to DAP shortage as farmers who could afford it have used the complex fertilizer, and the number of farmers who have not used either DAP or Complex may be very small.

However, the major concern this year is delayed sowing in most places of the country, he said, adding the real deciding factor for

DAP's demand & supply in October



Source: Fertilizer Ministry; *Estimated by agriculture ministry based on States' feedback

wheat yield will be the temperature in February-March.

The Union Agriculture Ministry has been considering a plan to discontinue the weekly sowing update from this rabi season, sources said, adding a final call will be taken by Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Sources also said out of

the major wheat growing States, over 81 per cent of the crop had been harvested in Punjab and Haryana, while it is 70-72 per cent in Uttar Pradesh and 50 per cent in Madhya Pradesh as of November 17.

MARITIME CHAOS

On October 30, the Fertilizer

Ministry termed media reports on the DAP shortage in Punjab as misleading, misplaced, and devoid of factual position. It said the import of DAP was affected due to the Red Sea crisis and admitted that the crisis had been “ongoing since January.”

It also claimed that the government had maintained stable prices of DAP at ₹1,350 for a 50-kg bag.

“When the government was aware in January itself that there was a delay in transit period, planning should have been done accordingly so that the fertilizer reaches in time. Unless there is a policy decision to reduce the use of DAP, the chemical fertilizer has to be made available. This is not the way to reduce sales,” said a top industry official, requesting anonymity.