

# Pulses area rises, rabi crops coverage inches up

**TOP GAINERS.** Wheat and maize acreage increase while area under groundnut makes a last minute surge

**Our Bureau**

New Delhi

The coverage under rabi crops was down to 24 lakh hectares (lh) last week from 32 lh the previous week, with the area under pulses showing some improvement. With the sowing window set to close by mid-January, lower acreage under oilseeds continues to be a concern.

As much as 97 per cent of the normal area (last five years' average) of 635.6 lh under rabi was completed as of December 27, the Agriculture Ministry said in a statement. The total area under all rabi crops reached 614.94 lh, up a tad from 611.80 lh in the year-ago period.

The acreage of all pulses reached 136.13 lh against 136.05 lh with nearly 11 lh getting covered during the

past week. Chana (gram) was the major contributor with its area at 93.98 lh. This was 0.9 per cent higher from 93.17 lh a year ago. But the area under masur (lentil) dipped 1.9 per cent at 17.43 lh from 17.76 lh a year ago.

The normal pulses area in the rabi season is 140 lh whereas last year, it was 137.39 lh.

## MUSTARD SOWING

Sowing of mustard, the key rabi oilseed, seemed to have been completed as no progress was noticed in the past week, and the acreage remained 5.6 per cent lower at 88.5 lh from 93.73 lh.

Groundnut acreage, which was trailing by 7.4 per cent until December 20, improved to 3.32 lh from 3.31 lh. Safflower area was down at 64,000 hectares from 66,000 hectares while the

## Edging up

Sowing area\* under Rabi crops (lakh hectare)

	2024-25	2023-24	% change
Wheat	319.74	313	2.2
Paddy	14.37	13.61	5.6
Pulses	136.13	136.05	0.1
Gram	93.98	93.17	0.9
Lentil	17.43	17.76	-1.9
Nutri/Coarse Cereals	48.55	47.77	1.6
Jowar	22.24	22.52	-1.2
Maize	18.93	17.53	8
Barley	6.62	7.01	-5.6
Oilseeds	96.15	101.37	-5.2
Rapeseed & Mustard	88.5	93.73	-5.6
Groundnut	3.32	3.31	0.3
Safflower	0.64	0.66	-1.9
<b>All Crops</b>	<b>614.94</b>	<b>611.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>

\*As of Dec 20, 2024; Source: Agriculture Ministry

acreage under all rabi oilseeds crops fell 5.2 per cent



to 96.15 lh from 101.37 lh. Sowing of wheat, the key rabi

season cereal, continued its lead despite a delayed start and was up by 2.2 per cent at 319.74 lh as of December 27 from 313 lh in the year-ago period. As much as 7 lh got covered in the past week. The normal wheat acreage is 312.35 lh.

States such as Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are paying bonus for wheat crop over and above the minimum support price (MSP) of ₹2,425/quintal whereas the open market rates are high this year. *Atta* (wheat flour) price has already crossed ₹40/kg in the growing belt of wheat.

## PADDY GAINS

Among other rabi crops, paddy acreage was higher by 5.6 per cent at 14.37 lh against 13.61 lh a year ago. The area under maize was up by 8 per cent with a coverage

of 18.93 lh from 17.53 lh. Barley acreage was down by 5.6 per cent at 6.62 lh against 7.01 lh a year ago as last year's figure got corrected from 8.01 lh until December 20, 2023.

The government has fixed the production target of 115 million tonnes (mt) for wheat, 14.55 mt for rice, 12 mt for maize, 13.65 mt for chana, 1.65 mt for masur, 13.8 mt for mustard and 2.25 mt for barley during current rabi season.

The acreage of crops is the key factor to determine production as farmers normally select crops which command higher prices in the market.

In the total foodgrains target of 341.55 mt set for 2024-25 crop year (July-June), the contribution of rabi season's foodgrains are set to be 164.55 mt or more than 48 per cent.