

Gujarat witnessing record sowing of castor during kharif season

FE BUREAU

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GUJARAT IS WITNESSING record sowing of castor during the current kharif season due to extended monsoon.

Generally, castor sowing completes in Gujarat by mid-September, but this year prolonged rain till the first week of October inspired farmers to take risk by utilizing uncultivated land for the crop, says a senior official with the state agriculture department.

Against the average of last three years castor sowing in Gujarat is nearly 6.37 lakh hectares, already the progressive area of sowing for the current kharif season has crossed 6.52 lakh hectares.

During the previous season, castor sowing was much below average at around 6.33 lakh hectares. In the year 2019, castor sowing was as high as 7.40 hectares.

Due to lower production of castor seeds the previous year, a bullish trend was seen in the commodity. As a result, prices of castor seeds touched at ₹1400 per 20 kg against normal prices of around ₹800 to Rs 1000 per 20 kg.

India's castor seed crop remained less than 19 lakh tonnes for the year 2020-21 against over 19.50 lakh tonnes in 2019-20. "Looking at the current trend of sowing, there would be higher yield of castor seeds in Gujarat. With continuous decrease in Covid-19 cases, there would be good export demand for castor seeds and its derivative castor oil. This encouraging situation would fetch good prices to farmers in castor seed growers in Gujarat and other states," claims the official.