

Wheat planting area rises 10%

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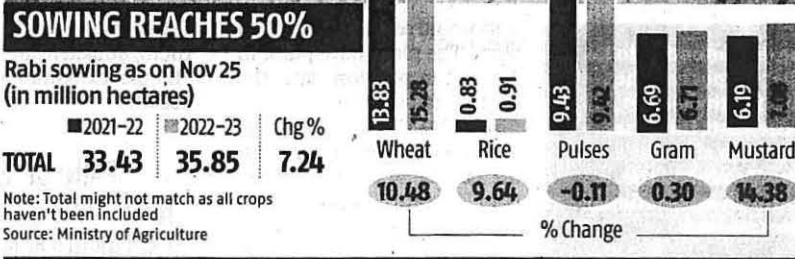
With almost 50 per cent of the normal area covered, wheat acreage could see a good jump this year, which is good news for a strong harvest if the weather remains benign in the coming months, according to traders and market players.

Till Friday, November 25, wheat was sown in around 15.28 million hectares, which is almost 10.48 per cent more than the area covered during the same period last year. As regards other crops, mustard has been sown in around 7.08 million hectares, which is 14.38 per cent more than in the same period in 2021.

Gram (chana) has been sown in around 6.71 million hectares, which is marginally more than the area covered during the same period a year ago.

In total, rabi crops were sown in around 35.85 million hectares till Friday — 7.2 per cent more than the area covered during the same period last year.

Usually, the main rabi crops are sown in around 64 million hectares. This means that so far sowing is over in nearly 56.25 per cent of the normal area, which is the average area covered in the last five years. During the week, wheat prices in the domestic markets scaled new highs, almost ₹2,900 per quintal, in North Indian markets. The Centre has said it is monitoring the situation and will take a call on resuming open market sales for wheat, lowering import duty, or extending the



Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY) beyond December at an "appropriate" time. It said it would have enough grains in its inventories even if the scheme is extended beyond December.

Under the PMGKAY, the Central government has been distributing 5 kg of wheat and rice over and above the usual monthly allocation to almost 800 million beneficiaries under the National Food

Security Act.

Meanwhile, private commodities player Origo has upped the kharif production numbers. In its September estimate, Origo had projected kharif production to fall to around 640.4 million tonnes. Origo now has projected India's kharif production for the crop year 2022-23 at 642.67 million tonnes, which is, however, 1.7 per cent lower than in the same period last year.