

Kharif sowing begins, records 16 pc rise so far

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AHMEDABAD, JUNE 20

WITH MONSOON arriving on time, farmers in Gujarat have started sowing for the Kharif season, covering 2.53 lakh hectares in the first two weeks of June, a 16 per cent rise in sowing compared to the same period in 2021.

Cotton and groundnut farmers have taken the lead accounting for almost 2.33 lakh hectares of total area sown till June 13, states latest data from the Directorate of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat. During the same period last year, sowing was done in 2.18 lakh hectares.

Among the groundnut farmers, those in Saurashtra region have taken a lead by sowing 98,400 hectares. Similarly, cot-

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ton also has seen maximum sowing in Saurashtra in 94,300 hectares.

Among districts, the highest sowing in the state so far has been in Morbi district with 42,000 hectares, followed by Junagadh 39,300 hectares, Rajkot with 39,100 hectares and Surendranagar 368 hectares. Except for Surendranagar that has received 27 per cent more rainfall, all other districts in Saurashtra have rainfall deficits ranging around 88-19 per cent.

While, monsoon is yet to

cover the entire state, there is a 50 per cent deficit in rainfall. In most of South and Central Gujarat districts that also have similar rainfall deficit, Kharif sowing is yet to begin on a large scale. Panchmahal, Dahod, Mahisagar, Chhota Udepur, Bharuch, Dang and Valsad are the among the districts where sowing is yet to begin. These are also the districts that have large tribal population.

The Gujarat government has already estimated that farmers in Gujarat will need 19.95 lakh metric tonnes of chemical fertilisers for Kharif 2022 that will be 19 per cent more than last year. The government will provide a subsidy of Rs 5,278 crore this season.

Meanwhile, sowing of bajra, jowar, urad, sesamum, castor, tobaaco and guar seed is yet to commence.