

Foodgrain output to touch new record of 284.83 mn tonnes

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With normal monsoon season boosting the output of wheat, rice, coarse cereals and pulses, India has raised its estimate on food grain production for the ongoing crop year ending June.

The Agriculture Ministry on Tuesday released the fourth advance estimate of India's foodgrain production for the crop year 2017-18 revising the total output figure for the year from 279.51 million tonnes in May to a record 284.83 million tonnes. India's foodgrain production for the 2016-17 crop year is estimated at record 275.68 million tonnes.

The record output of foodgrain will boost the morale of the Modi Government in the run up to the upcoming Assembly polls in four States and Lok Sabha elections in 2019.

Since the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted normal monsoon for June-September period, the 2018-19 crop year



(July-June) too is expected to be good for the farm sector in terms of production. The south-west monsoon irrigates over half of India's crop land. Its arrival marks the beginning of the cultivation of rain-fed kharif crops which are heavily dependent on the monsoon—the quantity of rainfall determines agricultural production.

As per the estimates, rice output has been pegged at record 112.91 million tonnes in the country. The data says the country will also produce 99.70 million tonnes of wheat, 46.99 million tonnes of coarse

cereals, 28.72 million tonnes of maize, 25.23 million tonnes of pulses, 11.23 million tonnes of gram and 3.56 million tonnes of urad (split black gram).

The ministry releases total five estimates of foodgrain production at different stages of crop growth. Similarly, the horticulture production in 2017-18 would be 306.81 million tonnes, an increase of 2.05 percent in 2017-18. As per agriculture ministry data, Kharif crops sowing across the country has covered 995 lakh hectares so far this year.

"Wheat production has been revised upward by 1.06

million tonnes to record 99.70 million tonnes for the 2017-18 crop year from its previous projection. In 2016-17, wheat output stood at 98.51 million tonnes. Similarly, rice output for 2017-18 has been upped by 1.39 million tonnes to record 112.91 million tonnes from its previous estimate, higher than 109.70 million tonnes achieved in 2016-17," it said.

Production of coarse cereals has been revised upward by 2.12 million tonnes to record 46.99 million tonnes from its previous projection made for 2017-18 and is higher than 43.77 million tonnes during 2016-17.

Pulses production during 2017-18 is estimated at record 25.23 million tonnes, revised upward by 0.72 million tonnes. The output is higher than the previous year's output of 23.13 million tonnes. Oilseeds output has also been revised upward to 31.31 million tonnes for 2017-18 crop year, marginally higher than 31.28 million tonnes in the previous year.

In case of cash crops, sug-

arcane output has been revised upward by 21.9 million tonnes to a record 376.9 million tonnes from its previous projection made for 2017-18. The output stood at 306 million tonnes during 2016-17.

"I am happy to share the 4th advanced estimates of food grain production for the year 2017-18. The country witnesses record food grain production estimated at 284.83 million tonnes," Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh said in a Tweet.

The agriculture ministry's third advance estimates of major crops pegged the output at a record 279.51 million tonnes, raising its February forecast by 0.72%. The previous record was 275.11 million tonnes, achieved in 2016-17. The first advance estimate was issued in September 2017, followed by the second in February. The fourth and final estimate will come by August. As per the second advance estimate for 2017-18, total food-grain production was pegged at 277.49 million tonnes.