

Bumper harvest of horticulture yield as production crosses 295 MT

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Farmers across the country reaped a bumper harvest of horticulture produce with production crossing 295 million tonnes in 2016-17 which is 3.2 per cent higher as compared to the previous year's 2015-16 estimates.

With 21.6 million tonnes estimated onion production in the country, there is an increase of 3 per cent over the previous year. Potato production has increased from 43.4 million tonnes to 46.5 million tonnes in the current year.

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estimated to be increased from 43.4 million tonnes to 46.5 million tonnes in the current year.

The Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare has released the Second Advance Estimates of Area and Production of Horticulture Crops for 2016-17. These estimates are based on the information received from different State/UTs in the country.

The fact, that, horticulture crops are grown in about 12 per cent of India's gross cropped area, compared to over 50 per cent of the area

used to grow foodgrain, also signals the success of small and marginal farmers in growing more fruits and vegetables, driven by higher demand.

According to estimates, the major onion producing States are Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Gujarat while major Potato growing States are Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab.

As far as tomatoes is concerned, tomato production is estimated to be around 19.7 million tonnes which is 5.1 per cent higher than the previous



year. The major tomato growing States are Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha and Gujarat.

Production of flowers is estimated to be around 2.2 million tonnes which is 2.9 per cent higher than the previous year

while production of Aromatics and Medicinal Plants is estimated to be around 1.03 million tonnes which is marginally higher by 0.8 per cent than the previous year.

As per second advance estimates, production of spices is estimated to be around 7.1 million tonnes which is 1.3 per cent higher than the previous year.

The area under horticulture crops has increased from 245 lakh ha to 249 lakh ha in 2016-17 recording an increase of 1.9 per cent over previous year. Fruits production during the current year is estimated to

be 93 million tonnes which is 2.9 per cent higher than the previous year. Production of vegetables is estimated to be around 175 million tonnes which is 3.5 per cent higher than the previous year.

The data shows that Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra are the top three fruit-producing States, accounting for nearly a third of India's fruit production. Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh are the top three vegetable producers, contributing nearly 40 per cent to the total production.

"A growing market for horticulture crops and quicker cash flows have led farmers to grow more fruits and vegetables", said an official with the agriculture ministry, on the condition of anonymity. "Horticulture crops can be harvested in shorter durations compared to foodgrains. Many youngsters have moved into horticulture in states like Maharashtra, Karnataka and Haryana due to the promise of higher returns," the official said. "Now is the time to invest in post-harvest management and move away from increasing production."