

INCLEMENT WEATHER

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Farmers foresee lower wheat crop yield

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The wheat crop is maturing, but farmers are expecting poor yield this year due to inclement weather conditions.

Rakesh Kumar, a farmer, said, "The weather has been unfavourable for the crop. Wheat needs cold conditions to thrive, but the temperature is going up. The production is likely to remain low this year. Not just the yield, the adverse weather has made a bad impact on the quality of the crop also."

"The rising input cost and unfavourable weather conditions have broken the backbone of the farmers. The cost of production has been increasing every year, but the hike in the minimum support price (MSP) is meager as compared to the increase in the cost of input," he said.

Madan Pal, state president, Bhartiya Kisan Union (Pateh Singh group), said, "The rates of



A wheat crop field in Ambala PHOTO DEV OUTI SHARMA

diesel and fertilisers have gone up substantially, while the water table is going down continuously. With water table declining, more power is required to fetch water and farmers have to rely on the generators as power supply remains irregular."

The farmer leader said, "The farmers have already suffered heavy losses and the government must announce a bonus of Rs 500 per quintal to compensate them."

Similarly, Gurnam Singh Charuni, Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) chief, said, "As per the estimate of last year, a farmer had to spend Rs 1,943 on production of every quintal of wheat and the cost of production has gone further up this year, whereas he will only get Rs 1,525 for one quintal wheat."

"Due to th shortage of labour, the farmers use combine harvesters, but they lose fodder in this process. The government must

implement the Swaminathan Commission report, as only this move can give some respite to the farmers in the state," he added.

Wheat procurement to begin from April 15

Chandigarh: The Haryana Government has made all arrangements for smooth procurement of wheat and other grains from April to May 15.

A spokesman of the Food and Supplies Department said here today the state government was committed to making payments to the farmers within 40-72 hours of procurement of their grains. About 75 lakh metric tonnes (MT) of wheat was expected to arrive in the mandis. The MSP for wheat had been fixed at Rs 1,525 per quintal. As many as 379 mandis or purchase centres had been set up across the state.

The Food and Supplies Department and HAFED would purchase 33 per cent each of the wheat in the mandis.

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