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Rain brings cheer to wheat farmers in Haryana, Punjab

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Overnight rains intensified the cold wave conditions, but raised farmers' hopes of better yield and reduction in incidents of yellow rust in Punjab and Haryana.

Reports of rain came in from almost all places in Punjab and Haryana, but the intensity of the showers varied. Agriculture experts said the winter rain was very beneficial for the rabi crop and would help the wheat crop. Potato seeds, however, could be negatively affected.

In Yamunanagar, farmers who have sown wheat, mustard and gram were jubilant. Experts from the Haryana Agricultural University (HAU), Hisar, and the Directorate of Wheat Research, Karnal, said the rain would aid vegetative growth of plants in early and late sown wheat.

Mangal Singh Sandhu, Director Agriculture, Punjab, said the showers would push up yield and productivity. Punjab has about 35 lakh hectares under wheat cultivation as against 25 lakh hectares in Haryana.

Sandhu said the Punjab Government was giving pesti-

Agri Dept takes insecticide samples

Agriculture Department teams conducted surprise checks at insecticide dealers at Bilaspur, Radaur and Sadhaura in Yamunanagar district on Tuesday and Wednesday and took 21 samples of pesticides, weedicides and fungicides. Dr Rakesh Kumar Jangra, Quality Control Officer, Agriculture Department, Yamunanagar, said the samples would be sent for testing of its active ingredient.

cide at 50 per cent subsidy to farmers whose crop was under attack from yellow rust, but advised spray only once the disease had been identified. Punjab has set a target to procure 170 lakh tonnes of wheat, while Haryana is expecting over 100 lakh tonnes.

Farmers heaved a sigh of relief as growing power cuts in the agriculture sector had caused inconvenience. The Meteorological Department of HAU said nearly 4 mm rainfall was reported in the region and would have considerable positive impact on crops.

"For most of the wheat crop, it's time for the second round of irrigation as farmers sowed early this season. Mustard varieties don't need much water and the rain will be sufficient. The crop would be ready for harvesting in the next two months," said Dr Ram Niwas, head of the Agrometeorological Department.

(With inputs from Deepender Deswal and Shiv Kumar Sharma)

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