



GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA

SEASON AND CROP REPORT
MAHARASHTRA STATE

1972-73

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Season

and

Crop Report

1972-73

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**SEASON AND CROP REPORT OF THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA
FOR THE YEAR 1972-73**

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No. SCR/1274/6692/S-III,
DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE,
MAHARASHTRA STATE,
PUNE-411 001.
Dated 8th December, 1975.

FROM

SHRI S. R. CHOPDE,
DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE,
MAHARASHTRA STATE,
PUNE-411 001.

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
AGRICULTURE AND CO-OPERATION DEPARTMENT,
SACHIVALAYA ANNEXE,
BOMBAY-400 032.

Sir,

I am to submit herewith the Annual Season and Crop Report of the Maharashtra State for the year ending the 31st July 1973.

Both the kharif and rabi seasons of the year were the most unfavourable ever since the formation of the State in 1960.

The kharif season was characterised by unusually low rainfall during the pre-monsoon period in most of the districts, delayed onset of the monsoon as late as in the fourth week of June and that too in not all the parts of the State. This was the third year in succession, when the south-west monsoon created a very precarious agricultural situation in the State. Although fairly widespread rains were received in the first week of July, the districts of Ahmednagar and Solapur and eastern parts of Pune, Satara and Sangli districts of the Deccan region and parts of Aurangabad, Bhir and Osmanabad districts of the Marathwada region were practically dry and kharif sowings could not be undertaken in many areas. In other parts of these regions, although sowings were completed, the crops on light soils failed completely due to the inadequacy of soil moisture. The early varieties of pulses also suffered because of the long dry spell in the months of July and August. Even in the assured rainfall areas of Konkan and eastern parts of Vidarbha, transplanting of paddy was delayed because of inadequate water in the fields in the months of July and August adversely affecting the crop yields. In Vidarbha, although kharif sowing could be completed in many areas, yet the crop condition was not good, as the long dry spells in the months of July, August and September-October coincided with the critical phases of the crop growth. The kharif season thus was very unfavourable by way of not only in the reduction in the sown area under crops but also in lowering their yield rates appreciably.

The rains received in the month of September lasted for a few days only and as the total rainfall was also inadequate, the sowing particularly of rabi jowar could be undertaken only in a limited area. The long dry spell from the 15th September to October end, interrupted the rabi sowings. In the

month of November, sowing of rabi crops was resumed but at that stage the sowing season of rabi jowar was over. As a result, although it was initially hoped that the unsown kharif areas would be diverted to rabi jowar thereby increasing its area considerably, yet actually there was an appreciable reduction in the area under this crop due to lack of adequate sowing rains. Inadequacy of soil moisture also put limitations on the sowing of rainfed wheat and gram crops. Crops normally irrigated in different parts of State were also affected due to the inadequacy of irrigation water. Hence the area under irrigated wheat also had gone down. Rabi jowar crop on light soils suffered heavily and the cold spell in the month of January 1973 further affected the crop adversely. Thus the rabi season was also very unfavourable and the hopes of wiping out a part of the deficit of the kharif season through an ambitious crash rabi programme could not be fulfilled.

Even during the kharif season, acute shortage of fodder, drinking water and irrigation water was experienced in major parts of the State and the situation worsened in the rabi season.

Summing up, it may be stated that the agricultural season 1972-73, in the State was the worst ever since the formation of the State in 1960. It was characterised by inadequate rains, failure of the monsoon in certain areas and prolonged dry spells, resulting in not only appreciable decrease in the area sown but also in reducing the yield rates and ultimately the agricultural production. Consequently scarcity conditions prevailed in 25,323 villages out of the total number of 38,825 villages in the State.

2. The incidence of ergot on bajri, aphids on kharif jowar and common pests of cotton was reported. Aerial sprayings were carried out on a large scale in Jalgaon and Akola districts against the common pests and diseases of cotton. Both prophylactic and remedial measures were promptly carried out on campaign basis in the severely affected areas.

3. The gross irrigated area during the year under report was 14.7 lakh hectares which was less than the last year's area of 16.2 lakh hectares by 9.5 per cent.

4. The area under food crops was 119.9 lakh hectares in 1972-73 as against 129.6 lakh hectares in 1971-72 showing a decrease of 7.5 per cent. Similarly the area under non-food crops decreased from 51.6 lakh ha. in 1971-72 to 49.9 lakh hectares in 1972-73 i. e. by 3.2 per cent. The year 1971-72 however was itself a scarcity affected one. Hence, the effect of unfavourable season could be brought out more clearly by comparing the figures with those in a normal year like 1968-69. In 1968-69 the areas under food and non-food crops were 137.7 lakh hectares and 56.0 lakh hectares respectively. Thus the corresponding areas in 1972-73 were less by 17.8 lakh hectares (or 12.9 per cent) and 6.1 lakh hectares (or 10.9 per cent) respectively.

5. The prices of all the agricultural commodities were higher than those in 1971-72. The wages of skilled and unskilled labour in the State, recorded a slight increase.

6. The latest available results of the quinquennial Live Stock Census 1972 show that there was a slight decrease in the number of cattle viz., by 0.2 per cent whereas the total number of buffaloes recorded an increase of

8.5 per cent over the corresponding figure of 1966 census. The number of buffaloes used for breeding purposes alone decreased by 6.5 per cent while the number of cattle in milk increased by 11.7 per cent. The number of sheep decreased by 3.5 per cent and horses and ponies by 42.3 per cent while the number of goats recorded an increase of 15.4 per cent. The poultry population showed an increase of 23.4 per cent.

7. According to the above census, the number of oil engines and tractors showed an increases of 17.2 per cent and 71.2 per cent respectively whereas the number of sugarcane crushers decreased by 50.6 per cent over the 1966 census figures. Similarly the number of electric pumps increased nearly by three and a half times while the number of ghanis declined by 47.0 per cent.

Yours faithfully,

S. R. CHOPDE,
Director of Agriculture,
Maharashtra State,
Pune-411 001.