



Ban on Wheat Export

Context:

Recently, the government effectively banned the export of wheat.

Relevance:

GS III- Agriculture

Dimensions of the Article:



1. Why were wheat exports banned?
2. What led to the decrease in production?

Why were wheat exports banned?

- The government revised down its wheat production estimates from 111.32 million tonnes (MT) to 105 MT for the crop year ending June.
- The decrease in production estimates and a considerable fall in wheat procurement raised concerns that domestic consumption may get impacted.
 - Moreover, the local prices started to rise.
- The wholesale inflation of wheat crossed the 14% mark, though it eased a bit to about 10% in April.
- Retail inflation of wheat flour accelerated to 9.59% from an already higher 7.77% in March.
- The average retail price of wheat flour was ₹33.05 per kg. The maximum price had touched ₹59/kg.
- Both these factors forced the government to ban wheat exports after the decision to send delegates to nine countries to explore the option of enhancing exports was taken.

What led to the decrease in production?



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- The extreme temperatures recorded in March and April, across north India, were the reason behind the sudden turnaround of the government.
 - For instance, across Punjab, in April the maximum temperature was over 6°C higher than the usual, compared to the long period average.
 - The actual maximum temperatures have been consistently hovering over the 40°C mark across the State in April.
 - The extreme heat led to a marked decrease in wheat yields across north India.
 - For instance, in Punjab, crop cutting experiments showed that the wheat productivity was below 18 quintals per acre this year, down from the average yield of 19.7 quintals per acre last year.
 - Hence, the wheat arrivals in Punjab's mandis were 20% lower in the first twenty days of the 2022 season compared to the same period in 2021.
 - In the first twenty days, 73 lakh metric tonnes of wheat had reached the mandis in 2022, compared to the 92.4 lakh recorded in 2021.

-Source: The Hind