

India Lowers Foodgrain Target for 2026-27

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Agriculture

Why in News?

In response to El Niño, drought, and irregular monsoon patterns, the Agriculture Ministry set a reduced foodgrain production target of 373.93 million tonnes for 2026-27.

India Lowers Foodgrain Target for 2026-27		
Parameter		2026-27
 Overall foodgrain target		373.93 MT
 Reduction from estimated 2025-26 output		2.63 MT
 Rabi foodgrain target		177.72 MT
 Kharif acreage as of Sept. 11		109.65 million ha
 Kharif acreage, corresponding period previous year		111.25 million ha

- **District-Level Planning** – States have been directed to develop district-level Rabi crop plans that consider both water availability and soil moisture conditions.

Drought and Rainfall Situation

- As of September 28, 2026, India recorded a rainfall deficit of approximately 12%.
- According to the **India Drought Monitor, IIT Gandhinagar**, 52.5% of India's geographical area was experiencing dry or drought conditions as of September 16.
- Approximately one month earlier, 38.9% of the country's area was affected. In Maharashtra, 265 out of 358 talukas have been declared drought-affected.
- In **Karnataka**, the number of drought-affected taluks increased during September.
- Both **Maharashtra and Karnataka** have requested assistance from the central

government.

Strategic Framework for Rabi Season Planning

- **District-level Rabi season plans** will incorporate the following considerations:
 - Assessment of water availability
 - Current reservoir storage levels
 - Rainfall patterns and weather forecasts
 - Soil moisture status
 - Availability of irrigation infrastructure
 - Groundwater resource availability
 - Selection of suitable crop varieties

Crop Diversification Initiatives

The government intends to implement the following measures:

- Discourage the cultivation of **water-intensive crops** in regions experiencing water scarcity.
- Promote the cultivation of **pulses and oilseeds**.
- Encourage **diversification of cropping patterns**.
- Encourage the cultivation of pulses in areas left **fallow following paddy cultivation**.
- Shift farmers towards crops suited to local water availability.

Khet Bachao Abhiyan

- The campaign has been extended to include the **Rabi season**.
- It will run nationwide from **October 22 to November 30, 2026**.
- The campaign will focus on the following areas:
 - Improving soil health
 - Providing scientific support to farmers
 - Promoting crop diversification
 - Encouraging water-efficient cropping decisions

Reduction in Kharif Crop Acreage

- The total area under Kharif crops declined from **111.25 million hectares to 109.65 million hectares**.
- A substantial portion of this reduction is attributable to decreased paddy cultivation.
 - In 2026, paddy was cultivated on **42.68 million hectares**.
 - This represents a decline of nearly 1.7 million hectares compared to the corresponding period in the previous year.
- Major declines in paddy acreage were reported in **Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra**.

Reference

[Down to Earth | India Sets Lower Food Production Target](#)



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