

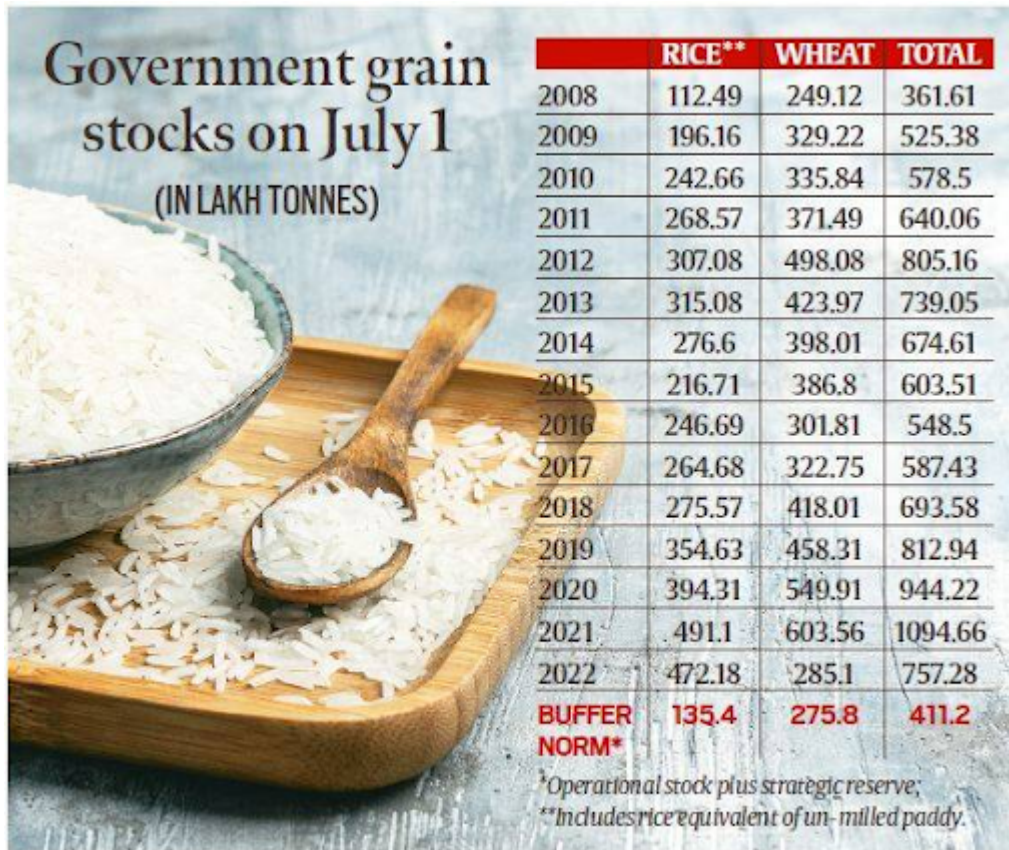
Crisis in Rice production

July 19, 2022

In news– Though overall crop coverage has risen, the paddy (rice) acreage as of July 15, 2022 was down from that of 2021's.

Causes for the worry-

- **Government godowns had over 47.2 million tonnes (mt) of rice on July 1.**
- These were nearly **three-and-a-half times the minimum level of stocks**, to meet both “operational” (public distribution system) and “strategic reserve” (exigency) requirements for the quarter.
- Rice is **India's largest agricultural crop (accounting for over 40% of the total foodgrain output)**, with the country also being the **world's biggest exporter.**
- **Unlike with wheat, the options for import in rice due to any production shortfall are limited**, when India's own share in the global trade of the cereal is more than 40%.



Reasons for fall in the acreage-

- The Vast **paddy-growing belt, from Uttar Pradesh to West Bengal, has had very little rain.**
- Cumulative **rainfall has been around 45-55.5% below** the long period average in West UP, East UP, Bihar, Jharkhand and Gangetic West Bengal.
- **Deficient rainfall has meant that farmers in these states had transplanted less paddy** until July 15.

Is there a crisis ahead in rice?

- The India Meteorological Department has forecast that the current monsoon trough, which is active and south of its normal position, is very likely to shift gradually northwards.
- It would provide much-needed relief to farmers in the Gangetic plains within the next few days.
- Secondly, paddy cultivation takes place across a wider geography, unlike wheat that is grown only in a few states north of the Vindhyas.

- Also, rice is both a kharif (monsoon) and rabi (winter-spring) season crop. So, **the losses in one area or season can potentially be recouped from the other.**
- Rice is less likely to throw up huge negative surprises and with the present stocks, it should be manageable.

Further

Reading:

<https://journalsofindia.com/direct-seeding-of-rice-dsr-technique/>