**10 questions**

**Tomato tale**

By [TT Bureau](https://www.telegraphindia.com/author/tt-bureau/39)

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Agriculture specialist A. Wadood, who is professor of agro-meteorology and environment science at Birsa Agricultural University, on rising prices of tomato and the progress of the monsoon

**TT: Tomatoes prices have shot up, but not of other vegetables. Why?**

AW: The local tomato growing season is coming to an end. Supply is dwindling leading to price rise

**Is it true that the quality of local tomato is inferior?**

Yes. It is inferior because of its seed quality. If farmers choose better quality seeds and take care of other farming aspects, the quality will surely be better

**How helpful has the monsoon been for farming so far?**

The monsoon was initially week due to western disturbances but picked up later. Now, the atmosphere has good moisture content and is favorable for showing

**Can we expect a good crop this year?**

For that, the rains need to continue. Transplantation, particularly in low land, needs water. I hope it rains well… the year’s prediction is 96 per cent average rainfall

**Will we surpass last year’s production figures?**

That depends on the progress of the monsoon. Last year was good with 1,456 mm rainfall. The total production of paddy was over 50 lakh tons

**You deal with Agro-meteorology**

Yes, Agro-meteorology is the study of the impact of various weather parameters like temperature, rainfall, humidity, cloud cover, moisture and evaporation on agriculture. The idea is to use the information to enhance crop production

**How does it help farmers?**

It is a part of the Centre’s Grameen Krishi Mausam Seva run by the Indian Meteorological Department. Its issues forecast and farm advisories through bulletins every Tuesday and Friday

**How helpful are the bulletins?**

Farmers get advance information about the weather. The bulletins reach farmers via SMS, emails and
personal contact

**How do the advisories help farmers plan farm strategy?**

IMD also issues long-term forecasts about expected rainfall. Farmers can plan strategy using that advisory

**The state government dug a large number of dobas (farm ponds) last year. Did this  help?**

They helped recharge ground water levels and supported farming.

***(AS TOLD TO Achintya Ganguly)***