

## COTTON IMPORTS MAY RISE TO 22 LAKH BALES DURING THE CURRENT SEASON

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Import of cotton in the 2018-2019 cotton season is expected to be 22 lakh bales, almost seven lakh bales higher compared with the previous season.

The Cotton Advisory Board, which met on Tuesday, estimated (provisional) cotton production this season (October 2018 to September 2019) to be 337 lakh bales of 170 kg each.

“Though the area under cotton has been almost the same for the last two years, productivity has dropped. The board, in its previous meeting, estimated production in the current season to be 361 lakh bales. However, it is learnt that farmers did not go in for the fourth or fifth pickings for various reasons. Hence, the production estimate was revised,” said K. Selvaraju, secretary general, Southern India Mills’ Association, who took part in Tuesday’s meeting.

“In our estimate, the actual imports can be between 28 lakh bales and 30 lakh bales when the season ends. The board has estimated it to be 22 lakh bales,” he added.

The international price of cotton is lower compared to the domestic price. It is not just the mills, but traders are also importing, especially African cotton. There are offers for American cotton too, added J. Thulasidharan, president of Indian Cotton Federation.

Meanwhile, cotton consumption (total demand) during the current season is expected to be lower at 361.5 lakh bales as against 386.65 lakh bales last season.

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