

Himachal apple growers claim over 30% of crops w damaged due to weather

Detail Introduction :

An apple grower from Rohru -Shimla district- is not optimistic ahead of the harvesting season. "Approx 30% of the crop is already damaged in my orchard," he says. The fruit has cracked and has stopped growing in size. "Premature dropping of the fruit is another common problem. Spots on the fruit are also visible," he adds.

Cracked and rusted apples, categorized as 'Grade B' and 'Grade C,' are not sold in the main market. A good crop fetches its farmers Rs 60-70 a kilogram. But these apples are sold at no more than Rs 5-10 per kg. The economic cost of this is enormous.

Another apple grower from Shimla said that the worst is not over yet, as 90% of the apple crop in the state of Himachal is rain-fed. The current apple season was the worst in terms of rainfall, and the situation has not improved in June. The weather in March, April, and May – when the apple crop is in various stages of physiological growth – was unfriendly to the crop.

R.K. Pruthi, director of the HP horticulture department, shared data with The Wire, which has revealed a loss of Rs 500 mln to the apple crop this year due to drought and hailstorm.