

Assam tea industry looks at major crop loss now due to poor rainfall

The study by North Eastern Tea Association (NETA), an organisation of tea producers, says the crop deficit from January to May this year will be about 60 million kgs in comparison to that of the same period in 2019

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Assam's tea industry, which has still not recovered from last year's Covid-19 lockdown, may now witness 40% crop deficit in the first five months of this year due to poor rainfall across the state, says a study.

The study by North Eastern Tea Association (NETA), an organisation of tea producers, says the crop deficit from January to May this year will be about 60 million kgs, or about 40%, in comparison to that of the same period in 2019.

"We have not compared crop figures with 2020 because last year, the crop deficit from January to May was 78 million kgs due to Covid lockdown," said NETA advisor Bidyananda Barkakoty.

While in 2019, the annual tea production in Assam was 716.49 million kgs, it was down to 618.20 million kgs in 2020, a 14% drop owing largely to the lockdown.

According to NETA, the average rainfall deficit is about 45% between January and April this year in comparison to that of the same period last year in the main tea growing districts of Assam. Even in 2019, the state did not report poor rainfall.