

Russian grain crop not at risk despite flooding – agri minister

By Elizabeth Schroeder | 20 April 2024 | 6:00 am

Russia expects to record its second largest grain harvest on record in 2024, following the record 147 million metric tons harvested in 2023, easing fears that the heavy flooding in several regions would result in the destruction of crops.



[Reuters reported](#) that Russian Agriculture Minister Dmitry Patrushev announced that the area planted to grain this year would be increasing by 300 000 hectares to 84,5 million hectares.

Fears were raised about crop failure after large swathes of northern Kazakhstan and the Russian Ural region were devastated by the worst floods in living memory, forcing more than 125 000 people to flee their homes.

This occurred after meltwater resulted in the rapid rise of water levels in the tributaries of the world's seventh-longest river system in recent weeks.

As a result, the agriculture ministry announced that a state of emergency had been declared in the Orenburg, Altai, Kurgan, and Tyumen regions, with the Volga River's Samara region also at risk of widespread flooding, it said.

However, according to industry experts, the industry would only be able to assess the real extent of the damage once the floodwater had subsided. Elsewhere in Central Asia, dozens of people died in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and tens of thousands were forced to flee their homes in Kazakhstan.

According to authorities in these countries, the flooding was likely to get worse, with more rain predicted during the coming week, and already swollen rivers bursting their banks. According to Reuters, scientists were blaming the unprecedented rainfall on climate change.

Lightning and heavy rain killed at least 36 people in Pakistan, mostly farmers, during a three-day period, emergency response officials said Monday, 15 April, with a state of emergency being declared in the southwest of that country.

Most of the deaths were attributed to farmers being struck by lightning and houses collapsing due to torrential rain, Associated Press reported, quoting a regional disaster management spokesperson, Arfan Kathia.

[According to Associated Press](#), heavy flooding had killed at least 33 people in neighbouring Afghanistan as well and left more than two dozen others injured during the same three-day period.

The spokesperson for that country's disaster management agency, Abdullah Janan Saiq, said flash floods had hit the capital, Kabul, and several other provinces, resulting in more than 600 homes being damaged or destroyed completely, while hundreds of hectares of farmland were destroyed, and scores of farm animals perished.