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FOOD CHAIN DISRUPTIONS

Bolivia is said to lose millions in losses due to smuggling (for instance, more than 130,000 tons of maize are smuggled every three months), which also affects agricultural producers and consumers, due to the fact that smuggled goods do not comply with the international health standards. For this reason, the producers have recently urged the authorities to implement measures that could curb smuggling. In the United States, on the other hand, the coming end of two USDA food supply programs in 2021 in North Texas is expected to increase food insecurity for thousands of households that rely on the federal government's assistance.

Smuggling in Bolivia causes economic losses to producers and threatens consumers' health

Agricultural producers (of beef, rice, maize, chicken, pork, vegetables, among the others) in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, have recently urged the local authorities to enhance border controls in order to constrain smuggling, which is causing significant economic losses to growers and farmers, and, ultimately, to the State. Most of the agricultural products are smuggled at the border with Argentina, and since they do not comply with international health standards, this could also represent a danger for the Bolivian consumers.

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Food insecurity expected to increase in Texas due to the end of food supply programs

According to the North Texas Food Bank, thousands of people will face a potential decrease in food supply by tens of millions of pounds in the coming months, unless the federal government acts quickly. In fact, in addition to the difficulties posed by the coronavirus pandemic, two important food supply programs from the USDA will end next year, which will entail the loss of around 17 million pounds of food. For example, the Food Purchase Distribution Plan so far has allowed the federal government to purchase food from farmers that were unable to export them, and to distribute it to people in need.

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IMPACT ON COMMODITIES AND FOOD PRICES

Over the weekend, Saudi Arabia (the world's largest barley importer, followed closely by China) announced the first barley tender for 2021 delivery, and Australian barley is officially in the mix: China has been a significant buyer of Australian barley since 2013, but this year it has banned imports for several Australian agricultural commodities (including barley), so Saudi Arabia currently represents a good opportunity for Australia to fill the gap left by China. Pakistan, on the other hand, has been struggling with a wheat shortage for a year now, but thanks to the increased imports, the central government has recently claimed that the prices are starting to decrease. However, all the provinces of the country are likely to face a shortage of wheat seeds next year.

Australia fills the gap left by China by exporting barley to Saudi Arabia

Earlier this week, Australia won its first significant barley tender to Saudi Arabia (the world's largest barley importer) in recent years, thanks to the fact that Australian barley prices are very competitive. This represents a great opportunity for the country to fill the gap left by the loss of China as main barley importer, due to the ban that the latter posed on Australian imports. All the significant barley exporters have benefitted from the trade tensions between China and Australia: starting in July 2020, for example, China has been importing on average 86% of French barley every month.

[Link 1](#) – [Link 2](#)

Wheat prices are decreasing in Pakistan, but provinces will probably face shortage of seeds

For more than a year, Pakistan has been experiencing a shortage of wheat, flour and sugar that has driven the prices of these commodities to unprecedented levels. However, the country's central government has been easing the shortage through enhanced imports, and it now claims that the prices are registering a downward trend. However, all provinces in Pakistan are likely to face also a shortage of wheat seeds during the next sowing season, as the supply of quality wheat seeds has increased by only 23,000 tons over the last year.

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COUNTRIES' RESPONSE

The North-Eastern region of Nigeria will largely benefit from the USD 15 million that the UN Central Emergency Response Fund has allocated to the country (which is only one of 6 beneficiaries, that will get the remaining amount of USD 85 million) to support the mitigation of the risk of famine. Furthermore, the Lagos State Government has recently announced a recovery plan that aims at supporting the recovery of the state's micro, small and medium enterprises that were hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Ghana, on the other hand, is planning to consolidate the gains of the local coffee industry (in order to propel this commodity to a similar status as cocoa) through a development programme that is mainly focused on R&D, seedling distribution and extension support.

UN Central Emergency Response Fund provides USD 100 million to mitigate risk of famine

The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (a humanitarian fund established in 2005) has announced that it will support Nigeria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with USD 100 million to prevent possible situations of famine, caused by poor economic environments, insecurity and climate change. More in particular, Nigeria will receive the aid of USD 15 million alongside Afghanistan, while Yemen will receive USD 30 million. Finally, South Sudan and DRC will both get USD 7 million, and USD 6 million will go to Burkina Faso.

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Ghana implements program to double the production of coffee

Ghana's government has recently introduced the Coffee Development Programme, which aims at supporting the growth of the coffee industry in the country, through research, extension support, seedling distribution, disease control, marketing and processing activities. The programme, spearheaded by the Ghana Cocoa Board, has already led to the doubling of the coffee output to above 12,000 tons per year, with yields of about 1.4 tons of coffee beans per hectare.

[Link 1](#) – [Link 2](#)

Lagos State Government implements Covid-19 recovery plan for MSMEs

The Lagos State Government has recently launched a NGN 5 billion economic recovery support plan (the Lagos Economic Acceleration Programme) for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the state through the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund, to help them recover from the negative effects of the coronavirus pandemic and to create more jobs. The sectors with substantial employment creation opportunities include agriculture, renewable energy and healthcare, among the others.

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REGIONAL FOCUS

In Latin America, the impact of Hurricane Eta on Honduras' agriculture has had repercussions on the country's banana production and on the commodity's prices in the region (which have increased in Ecuador, for example). In South and Southeast Asia, on the other hand, Japan has been steadily increasing its banana imports from the Philippines on the back of a firmer consumer demand during the coronavirus pandemic, and it is poised to overtake China as the Philippines' main export market for bananas. Finally, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Kenya Space Agency is currently making available to all users satellite imagery data on forest cover, land use and land change in five African countries.

AMERICAS – Hurricane Eta affected banana production and prices in Latin America

Earlier this month, Hurricane Eta has hit banana production hard in Honduras, affecting around 10,000 hectares of crops and boosting the price of the fruit in the region: in Ecuador, for example, the price of a box of bananas has increased to USD 7, but a possible banana shortage could raise the price to USD 8 next week. Since banana production is the main source of income for many people, Hurricane Eta has threatened the livelihoods of many communities in Honduras.

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AFRICA – KSA provides satellite imagery for land use monitoring in five African countries

To promote its earth observation services, the Kenya Space Agency (KSA) is currently developing a Satellite Imagery Analysis Portal, an open source geospatial data management software. Furthermore, the KSA provides 17 years of satellite imagery for five African countries (Kenya, Ghana, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Tanzania) through the Africa Regional Data Cube, a platform that is currently used to monitor forest cover, land use and land change monitoring.

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ASIA – Japan is poised to become the Philippines' top banana importer

Japan is slowly overtaking China as the Philippines' top banana export market this year, as the Japanese banana imports from the Philippines have increased by 8.8% in September (reaching a total of 1.1 million tons from January to September, 27% more than the Chinese imports over the same period), driven by an increasing consumer demand during the coronavirus pandemic. On the other hand, banana shipments from the Philippines to China have decreased by 32% year-on-year.

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