



GIEWS Country Brief The Republic of Panama

Reference Date: 29-September-2023

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Harvesting of 2023 minor season paddy and maize crops ongoing
- Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2023/24 marketing year

Harvesting of 2023 minor season paddy and maize crops ongoing

Harvesting of the 2023 minor season paddy started in September with some delay, as below-average rainfall amounts in the April to May planting period resulted in the belated start of the cropping season. Remote sensing imagery in August indicated stressed conditions in parts of main producing western and eastern areas (VHI map), reflecting below-average rainfall amounts between April and July and above-average temperatures that intensified evapotranspiration. Planting of the 2023 main season paddy crop, to be harvested from November, is nearing completion. Weather forecasts point to average precipitation amounts in the October to December period over most cropping areas, bolstering yield expectations for the main crop. In the eastern region, below-average rainfall amounts are forecast during the above-mentioned period and are likely to constrain yields.

The area planted to the 2023 paddy crop is officially targeted at 93 000 hectares, near the five-year average. The 2023 aggregate production of paddy crops, mostly rainfed, is preliminarily forecast at slightly a below-average level of 350 000 tonnes due to below-average yields of the minor crop, on account of adverse weather conditions.

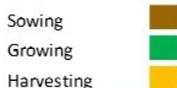
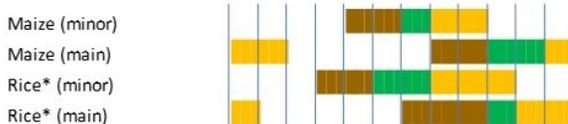
Similarly, harvesting of the minor season maize crop is ongoing and rainfall deficits between May and August are likely to result in below-average crop conditions in the key producing province of Los Santos, in the southern part of the country. Favourable rainfall forecasts in the coming months are expected to replenish soil moisture deficits and improve yields of the 2023 main maize crop, to be harvested from December.

The government took a series of measures to protect agricultural livelihoods, including the provision of [low interest rate a \(1 percent\) loans](#) to small and medium-sized farmers, the implementation of projects to [strengthen resilience](#) through restoration of dams and construction of wells, and rainwater harvesting system, with a total budget of USD 10 million. To

Panama

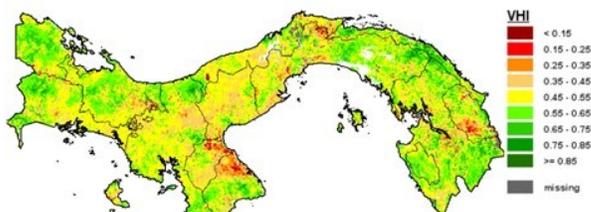
Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Panama - Vegetation Health Index (VHI)

August 2023



Panama

Cereal Production

	2018-2022 average	2022	2023 estimate	change 2023/2022
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	364	360	350	-2.8
Maize	121	123	113	-8.1
Sorghum	5	5	5	0.0
Total	490	488	468	-4.1

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

guarantee the supply of staple food, the government [approved](#) imports of about 90 000 tonnes of paddy at a zero tariff in 2023. By end-August 2023, about 70 000 tonnes of paddy were [imported](#). In July 2023, the maximum ceilings on retail prices of 18 staple food products such as rice, vegetable oil, spaghetti, milk powder and whole chicken, were [extended](#) for additional six months.

Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2023/24 marketing year

Cereal import requirements in the 2023/24 marketing year (August/July) are forecast at an above-average level of 875 000 tonnes. This is due to the sustained demand of wheat for human consumption and maize by the feed industry, compounded by the expected decline in domestic cereal production in 2023.

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This brief was prepared using the following data/tools:

FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet (CCBS) <https://www.fao.org/giews/data-tools/en/>.

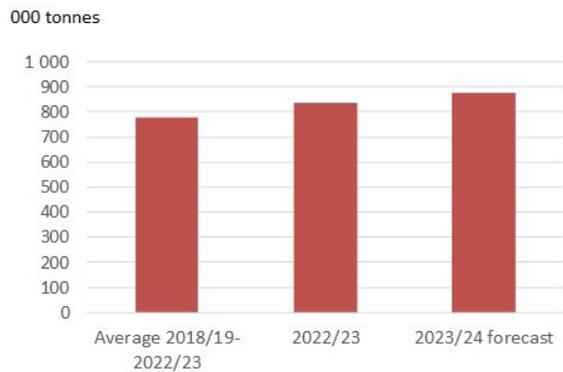
FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool <https://fpma.fao.org/>.

FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation for Crop Monitoring <https://www.fao.org/giews/earthobservation/>.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) <https://www.ipcinfo.org/>.

Panama

Cereals Imports



Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split years refer to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).