



GIEWS Country Brief Sri Lanka

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Production of 2019 paddy crop forecast at bumper level
- Cereal import requirements in 2019 expected to decline for second consecutive year
- Prices of rice declined since beginning of 2019, while prices of wheat stable
- Food security conditions generally good

Production of 2019 paddy crop forecast at bumper level

Harvesting of the 2019 main “maha” paddy crop finalized at the end of March, while planting of the 2019 secondary “yala” paddy crop is ongoing and will be completed by the end of May. The “maha” output is officially estimated at 2.9 million tonnes, 22 percent above the five-year average, reflecting above-average planted area, mainly driven by remunerative prices and average yields, supported by adequate and well-distributed rainfall. Similarly, production prospects for the secondary “yala” crop, to be harvested in August and September, are favourable on expectations of average yields and an increase in the planted area compared to last year’s average level. Overall, the 2019 aggregate paddy output is preliminarily forecast at a bumper level of 4.5 million tonnes, 18 percent above the near-average level in 2018.

Harvesting of the 2019 main “maha” maize crop finalized in March and production is estimated at about 275 000 tonnes, 25 percent above the five-year average, as the expansion in plantings more than offset the damage inflicted by the Fall Armyworm infestation in the districts of Anuradhapura, Ampara, Badulla and Monaragala. In these areas, as of 15 April, official reports indicate that about 50 percent of the area cultivated with maize was affected and crop losses were estimated at 10 percent of the initially expected output. Assuming an average output of the ongoing secondary “yala” maize crop, to be harvested between August and September 2019, the aggregate 2019 maize production is forecast at 310 000 tonnes, about 23 percent above the five-year average.

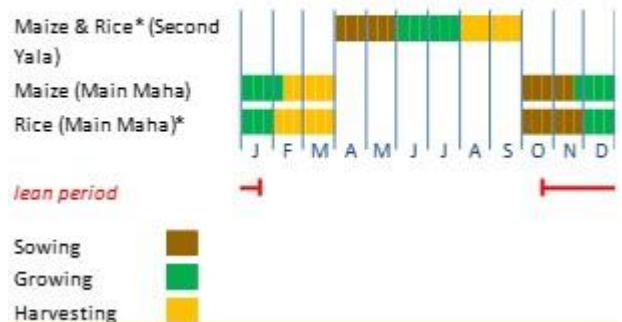
Cereal import requirements in 2019 expected to decline for second consecutive year

Cereal import requirements in the 2019 calendar year are forecast at 1.4 million tonnes, accounting for the second

Sri Lanka

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

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Cereal Production

	2014-2018	2018	2019	change
	average			2019/2018
000 tonnes				
				percent
Rice (paddy)	3 762	3 807	4 500	18.2
Maize	250	306	310	1.2
Millet	5	6	5	-16.7
Total	4 017	4 119	4 815	16.9

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

consecutive annual decline since 2017, when imports reached a record high due to the impact of drought on local production.

Import requirements of wheat in the 2019 calendar year, which account for the largest share of imports, are forecast at 1.2 million tonnes, virtually unchanged compared to the average level in 2018, reflecting sustained demand from the milling industry. Similarly, import requirements of maize are expected to remain at 130 000 tonnes, close to the above-average level in 2018, reflecting growing demand for food and feed use. By contrast, import requirements of rice in the 2019 calendar year are forecast at a well below-average level of 50 000 tonnes, reflecting ample domestic availabilities from the 2018 paddy output and expectations of a bumper crop in 2019.

Prices of rice declined since beginning of 2019, while prices of wheat stable

Prices of rice firmed up steadily since September 2018 until January 2019, in line with seasonal trends and declined between February and April 2019, pressured by the harvest of the main “maha” paddy crop. Overall, prices of rice in April 2019 were close to their year-earlier levels.

Prices of wheat flour remain overall stable in 2019 so far, reflecting adequate availabilities from imports. Overall, prices of wheat were slightly above their year earlier levels in April 2019.

Food security conditions generally good

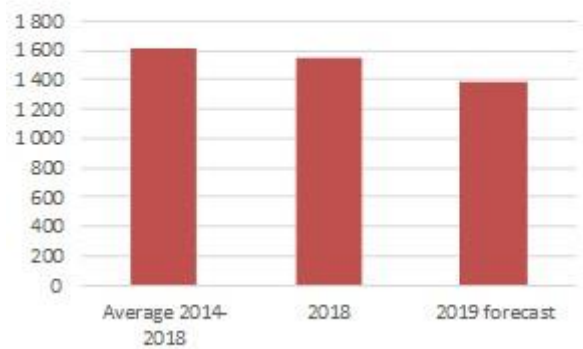
Overall, the country is food secure and has recovered from the 2017 drought that affected approximately 900 000 people.

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Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

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Retail prices of rice and wheat flour in Colombo

Sri Lanka Rupee per kg



Source: FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool.