



GIEWS Country Brief The Niger

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Near-average cereal output expected in 2020
- Above-average cereal import requirements forecast in 2020/21
- Improved supplies from recently harvested crops exert downward pressure on prices in most markets
- Continued assistance needed for most vulnerable households

Near-average cereal output expected in 2020

Harvesting of the 2020 main season crops, including millet, sorghum, rice (paddy) and maize, was almost completed in December and production is expected at near-average levels. Abundant rainfall amounts in 2020 benefitted crop development across the country. However, flooding and attacks of Fall Armyworms (FAW) caused localized losses of crops. The persisting conflict in Diffa, Tahoua and Tillabery regions also continued to impact agricultural activities and hampered access to land, leading to localized production shortfalls. Overall, the 2020 national cereal production is estimated at about 5.8 million tonnes.

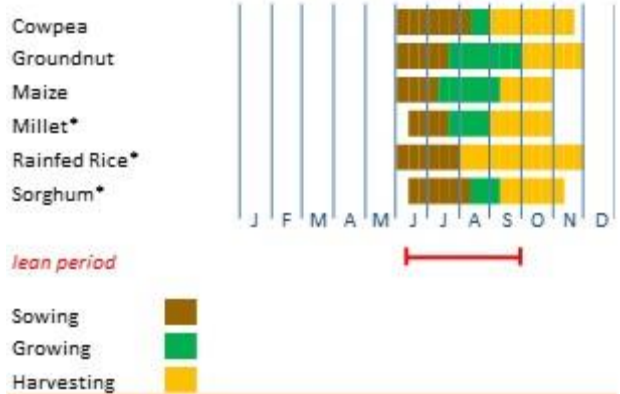
The pastoral situation is overall satisfactory, with abundant quality pasture and water resources for livestock in several areas of the country. In addition, crop residues from the main harvest are contributing to improve livestock body conditions and enhance animal market value. However, the persisting civil conflict in Diffa, Tahoua, Tillabery and Maradi regions continues to limit grazing land and hamper access to pastoral resources. Moreover, the clustering of animals in secure areas is resulting in the rapid degradation of available fodder and water resources as well as increasing tensions between farmers and herders with a severe impact on the livelihoods of the affected households. The animal health situation is overall stable, with only seasonal outbreaks of epizootic diseases such as Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) in sheep and goats and Foot and Mouth (FMD) in cattle, mainly in Agadez, Zinder and Tahoua regions.

Above-average cereal import requirements forecast in 2020/21

To cover its domestic cereal requirements, the country relies on imports, particularly rice that account for approximately 70 percent of the total cereal imports. Since August 2019, the flow of imports of cereals from Nigeria (the main source) has drastically reduced because of the border closure. Imports of

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Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS, FEWSNET.

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Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 forecast	change 2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Millet	3 701	3 569	3 850	7.9
Sorghum	1 958	1 970	1 922	-2.4
Rice (paddy)	124	120	91	-23.9
Others	31	23	26	14.0
Total	5 815	5 680	5 889	3.7

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

cereals from other neighbouring countries (Benin, Mali) have also decreased in volume, while costs and time of transportation have increased since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 preventive measures. Despite the near-average 2020 cereal production, import requirements for the 2020/21 marketing year (November/October) are expected at an above-average level of 700 000 tonnes as traders aim to replenish their stocks.

Improved supplies from recently harvested crops exert downward pressure on prices in most markets

The supply of major commodities is generally satisfactory in most markets in the country with the arrival of recently harvested crops. The demand is overall weak during the harvest period due to self-consumption by most agricultural and agro-pastoral households and the closure of the border that prevents Nigerian traders to purchase in the local markets. Prices of coarse grains started to decline in September but remained always above the level of a year earlier, mainly due to localized production deficits, the effects of anti-COVID-19 measures and the persistent insecurity in parts of Diffa, Maradi, Tahoua and Tillabery regions.

In November 2020, the animal-to-cereals terms of trade slightly improved compared to the previous months as the market value of animals was enhanced by the overall good pastoral conditions, while cereal prices were declining at the beginning of the harvest. However, the terms of trade are significantly down compared to year-earlier levels on most markets due to low export demand as a result of the continued depreciation of the local currency, the closure of Nigeria's borders in connection with restrictive trade measures and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Continued assistance needed for most food insecure households

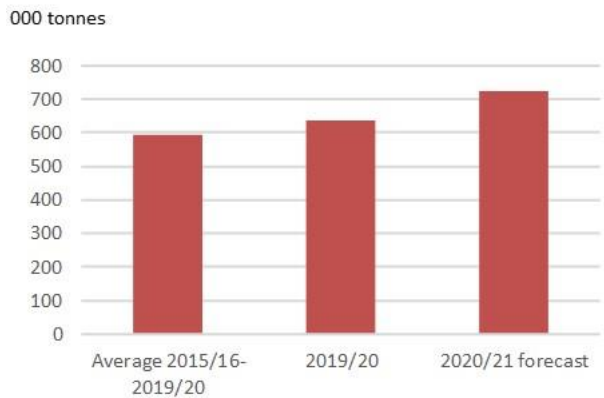
According to the November 2020 "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis, the aggregate number of severely food insecure people (CH Phase 3: "Crisis" and above) is estimated at about 1.2 million during the October-December 2020 period, including about 61 000 people in severe food insecurity (CH Phase 4). The number is expected to increase to 1.7 million people between June and August 2021, during the peak of the next lean season, if no mitigation actions are taken.

In recent months, the increase in security incidents continued to cause large population displacements in Diffa, Tillabery and Tahoua regions. This has resulted in widespread disruption of agricultural and marketing activities, diminishing livelihood opportunities of households and their food security. Most displaced households lost their livelihoods and rely on external assistance to cover their basic food needs. As of October 2020, the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR) reported that over 257 000 people have been displaced in Diffa, Tahoua and Tillabery regions. In addition, the country hosts approximately 230 000 refugees, mainly from Nigeria and Mali.

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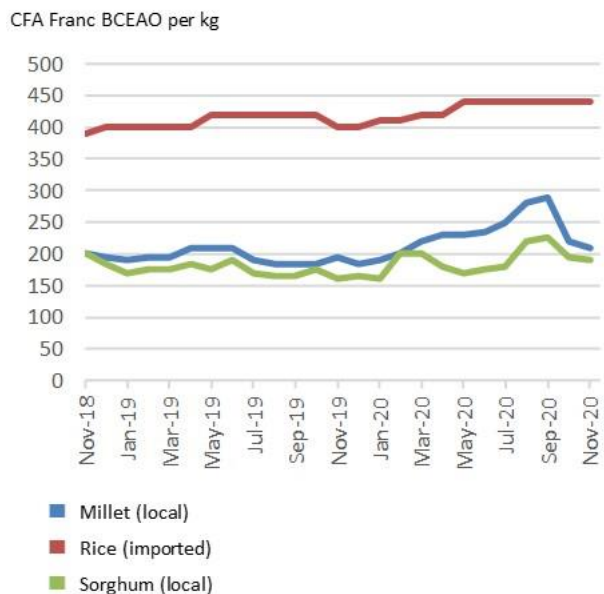
Cereals Imports



Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

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Selected wholesale cereal prices in Niamey



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