



GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 18-November-2022

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Production of cereals in 2022 expected slightly above average
- Cereal imports in 2022 forecast at well above-average levels
- Prices of rice and other key food products increased steadily in 2022 and well above year-earlier levels
- About 1.61 million people estimated to face acute food insecurity in 2022

Production of cereals in 2022 expected slightly above average

Harvesting of the 2022 paddy rice, the main cereal grown in the country, and minor coarse grains (maize, millet and sorghum) crops is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of December. Seasonal rains were conducive for crop development as cumulative amounts between April and October were adequate to satisfy crop water requirements. Localized crop losses have been caused by rainfall deficits in July and August, and by floods in August in northwestern, western and southern areas. Planted area to cereal crops, mostly paddy, is estimated to have increased year-on-year, reflecting the government's efforts to support mechanized farming, in particular by enhancing farmers' access to tractors and the provision of subsidized rice seeds and fertilizers.

Aggregate cereal production in 2022 is preliminarily forecast at 1.4 million tonnes, about 6 percent above the previous year's average level, owing to favourable weather conditions and expansion of the planted area.

Cereal imports in 2022 forecast at well above-average levels

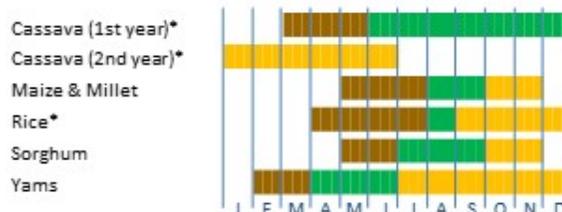
The country relies on imports of cereals, mainly rice and wheat, to cover its consumption needs. In the 2022 calendar year, rice imports are anticipated at 480 000 tonnes, a 20 percent yearly increase and about 25 percent above the five-year average, reflecting the lingering need to bolster the local supply following a drop in production in 2019 and 2020, and growing domestic demand. Imports of wheat in 2022 are forecast at about 115 000 tonnes, about 8 percent above the previous year's level and 22 percent above the five-year average, underpinned by increasing domestic consumption.

In order to support imports of essential foods and products in

Sierra Leone

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



lean period



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Sierra Leone

Cereal Production

	2017-2021	2021	2022	change
	average		forecast	2022/2021
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 186	1 160	1 260	8.6
Sorghum	62	80	65	-18.7
Millet	39	40	38	-5.0
Others	38	38	36	-6.3
Total	1 325	1 318	1 399	6.1

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

2022, the government established the Food and Fuel Facilities in April, allocating USD 50 million to support the import of rice, wheat flour and sugar as well as USD 50 million to support the import of fuel.

Prices of rice and other key food products increased steadily in 2022 and well above year-earlier levels

Prices of locally produced rice, the country's main staple, levelled off in August and September, following a steady increase since the beginning of 2022, while prices of imported rice varieties increased further during those two months. Compared to their previous year's levels, prices of local and imported rice varieties were up to 35 and 40 percent, respectively, higher. Prices of other key food products, including palm oil and cassava, an important substitute for rice for poor households, also registered significant increases throughout 2022, and as of September, they were up to 50 percent higher on a yearly basis. The high prices mostly reflect trends in international markets, high energy costs and the significant depreciation of the national currency.

The average price of fuels such as gasoline, diesel and kerosene continued to increase in the third quarter of 2022, reaching SLL 19 333, up about 20 percent higher compared to the previous quarter. The leone was equivalent to about SLL 14 500/USD 1 in September 2022 compared to SLL 10 480/USD 1 in August 2021, increasing the costs of imports. Overall, the year-on-year food inflation was estimated at 35.2 percent in September 2022, up from 13.3 percent in the same month in 2021.

About 1.61 million people estimated to face acute food insecurity in 2022

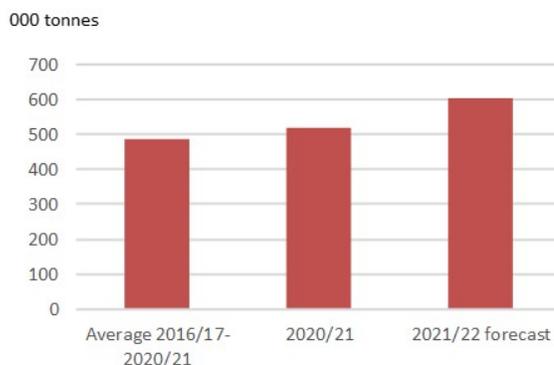
According to the March 2022 "Cadre Harmonisé" (CH) analysis, about 1.61 million people were estimated to face acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 [Crisis] and above) from June to August 2022, including 26 400 people in CH Phase 4 (Emergency). This is below the 1.76 million people estimated to be in CH Phase 3 (Crisis) and above levels of acute food insecurity during the same period in 2021.

Despite the ongoing cereal harvests, which are expected to improve food availability, concerns about access to food persist. Prices of food stand at elevated levels and household purchasing power remains under pressure, amid severe macroeconomic difficulties, including increased trade deficits, rampant inflation and the depreciation of the national currency. High debt levels, monetary tightening and reduced domestic private consumption slowed down economic growth in 2022, reducing income-generating opportunities for the most vulnerable households. In addition, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), about 8 000 people were affected by floods in August in northwestern, western and southern areas, increasing the risk of a deterioration of food security conditions. According to the World Food Programme, as of August 2022, 4.3 million people had insufficient food consumption levels, of which 4.2 million were engaging in crisis or emergency food-based coping strategies.

New CH estimates of the number of people facing acute food insecurity in the last quarter of 2022 are expected to be released by the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) in late November.

Sierra Leone

Cereals Imports

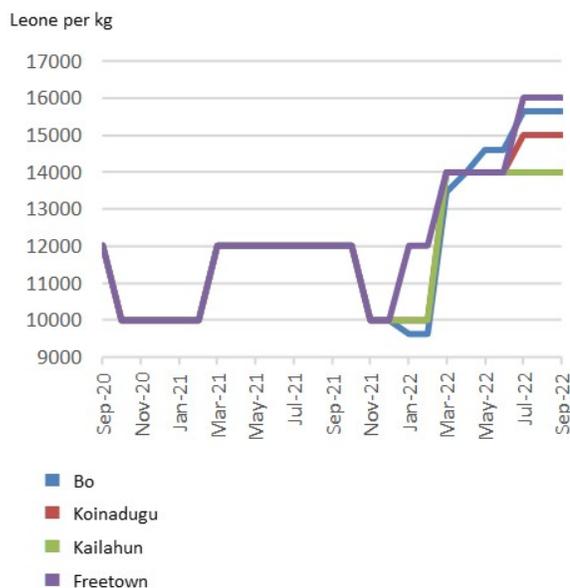


Notes: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Sierra Leone

Retail prices of rice (local)

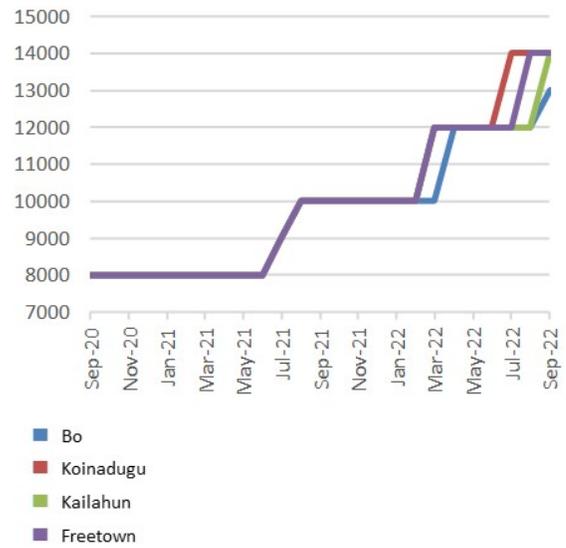


Source: FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool.

Sierra Leone

Retail prices of rice (imported)

Leone per kg



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



GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 30-April-2021

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Timely start of 2021 cropping season
- Below-average cereal crop production harvested in 2020
- Food prices at significantly high levels
- Continued assistance needed for most food insecure households

Timely start of 2021 cropping season

Following a timely onset of seasonal rains in late March, planting operations for paddy rice, the major cereal grown in the country, are underway in the main producing areas in the South, in some parts of Eastern uplands and in riverine areas. The harvest is expected to start from September. Cumulative rainfall amounts have been average to above average, supporting the development of early planted crops. While planting activities will continue until end-July, the crops already in place are at sprouting, seedling and tillering stages in most planted areas and weeding activities are regularly underway. In the most northern and northwestern areas of the country, land preparation activities are presently underway, for planting maize, millet and sorghum crops in May. The harvests are expected to start in October.

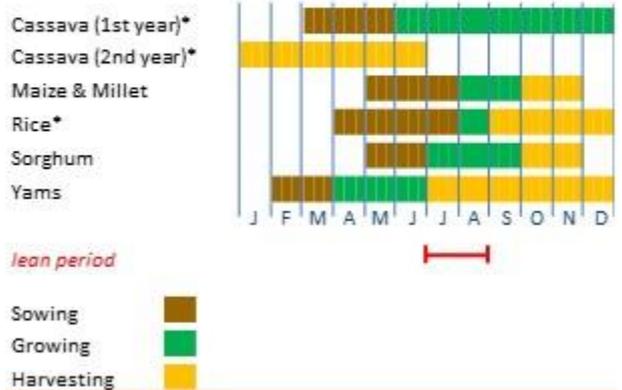
The latest Forum of the Agro-Hydro-Climatic Seasonal Forecast in Sudano-Sahelian Africa (PRESASS) points to above-average rainfall amounts during the July-September period, with a likely positive impact on crop yields and availability of pasture and water for livestock.

Forage availability is currently satisfactory in the main grazing areas of the country, allowing animals to maintain good body conditions and enhance their market value. The return of livestock from transhumance from lowland areas of the northern parts of the country occurred in March. The health situation remains overall good and stable, with just some localized outbreaks of seasonal diseases, including Peste des petits Ruminants, worms and foot rot in sheep and goats, Foot and Mouth as well as Trypanosomiasis in Koinadugu, Bombali, Kambia, Tonkolili and Kono districts in cattle and Newcastle in poultry.

Sierra Leone

Crop Calendar

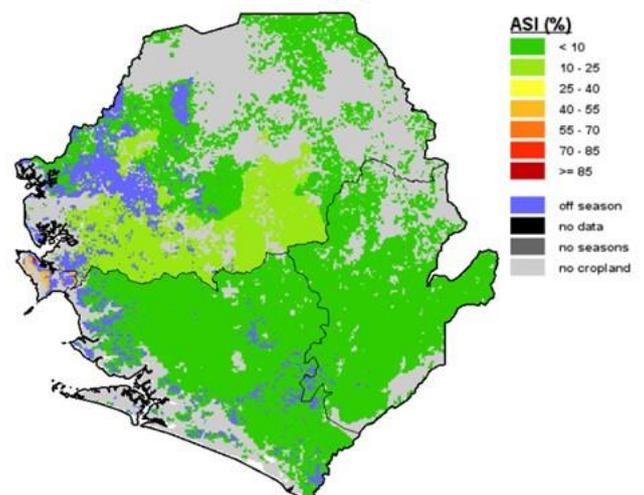
(*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Sierra Leone - Agricultural Stress Index (ASI)

from start of season 1 to dekad 2, April 2021



Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.

Below-average cereal production harvested in 2020

Despite the intervention of the Government and its partners to provide inputs to farmers, the 2020 national cereal production is estimated at 1.1 million tonnes, 17 percent below the average. The decline in production is mainly explained by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures implemented to control it on the availability of farm labour and inputs.

Import requirements for the 2020/21 marketing year (November/October) are forecast at an above-average level of 600 000 tonnes as local traders are aiming to replenish their stocks.

Food prices at significantly high levels

The supply of major commodities is generally satisfactory in most markets in the country due to regular import flows. However, field reports indicate that prices of locally produced food increased since the beginning of 2021 and are significantly above the level of a year earlier. This is mainly due to the general inflation situation in the country, the effects of the COVID-19 restrictions on the movement of goods from surplus producing areas to areas with high demand and the weakening of the local currency.

According to Statistics Sierra Leone, the year on year food inflation is estimated at 15.45 percent in March 2021, compared to 9.9 percent one year before. The current large trade deficit is exerting downward pressure on the exchange rate, which weakened from SLL 9 600 per US dollar in early 2020 to about SLL 10 200 per US dollar in early 2021.

Continued assistance needed for most food insecure households

According to the March 2021 “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis, about 1.5 million people is estimated to need food assistance from March to May 2021, up from 1 million people estimated in March to May 2020. This number is expected to increase to 1.7 million people during the lean period from June to August 2021, if no mitigation actions are taken. The main drivers of the food insecurity are the effects of adverse weather events (flooding), Fall Armyworm attacks on maize in some localized areas, high inflation rate, weakening local currency and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the value chain.

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Sierra Leone

Cereal Production

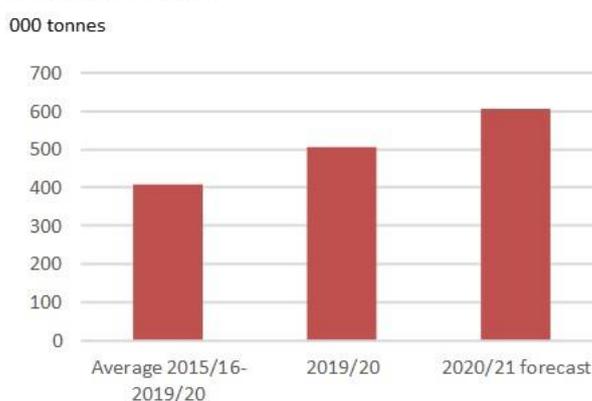
	2015-2019	2019	2020	change
	average		estimate	2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 177	947	971	2.5
Sorghum	49	50	52	2.5
Millet	39	38	32	-15.8
Others	35	51	49	-4.0
Total	1 300	1 086	1 104	1.6

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Sierra Leone

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.



GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 05-May-2020

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Timely start of 2020 cropping season
- Average cereal crop production harvested in 2019
- Increasing staple food prices due to inflation
- Pockets of food insecurity remain in country

Timely start of 2020 cropping season

Following a timely onset of the seasonal rains in late March, planting operations for paddy rice, the major cereal grown in the country, are ongoing mostly in the south and some part of the east upland and riverine areas. In the most northern and northwestern areas of the country, land preparation activities are presently underway, for the planting to take place during May. The harvests are expected to start in September. Since the beginning of the season, adequate rainfall amounts supported soil moisture content for crop development. In most planted areas, crops are at sprouting, seedling and tillering stages, and weeding activities are regularly underway. However, the latest Forum of the Agro-Hydro-Climatic Seasonal Forecast in Sudano-Sahelian Africa (PRESASS) points to below-average rainfall amounts during the July-September period, with a likely negative impact on crop yields and availability of pasture and water for livestock.

During the dry season in early 2020, there was a scarcity of pasture and fodder for livestock. Rains usually contribute to the recovery of pasture conditions and, in May 2020, forage availability is satisfactory in the main grazing areas of the country, allowing animals to maintain good body conditions and enhance their market value. The animal health capacity is very weak and mostly dependent on partners' support to prevent seasonal outbreaks including Peste des petits ruminants (PPR) in sheep and goats, Foot and Mouth (FMD) in cattle and Newcastle in poultry.

Average cereal production harvested in 2019

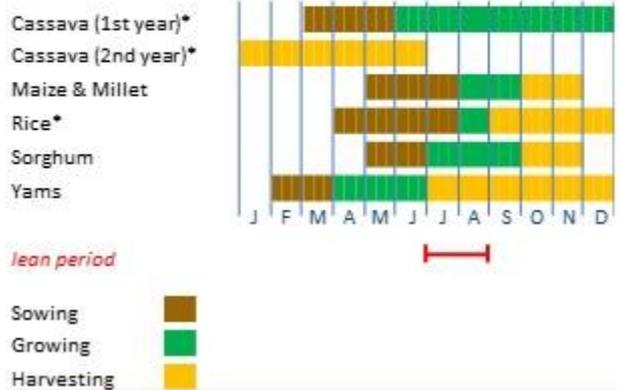
Despite the excess rainfall, which caused some flooding in July-August, the 2019 national cereal production is estimated at an average level of 1.3 million tonnes.

Import requirements for the 2019/20 marketing year (November/October) are forecast at an above-average level of 425 000 tonnes as local traders are aiming to replenish their stocks.

Sierra Leone

Crop Calendar

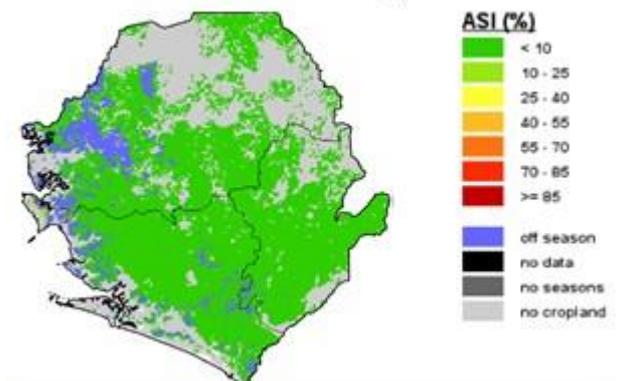
(*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Sierra Leone - Agricultural Stress Index (ASI)

from start of season 1 to Dekad 2, April 2020



Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.

Increasing staple food prices due to inflation

Markets are well supplied with both local and imported commodities across the country. However, field reports indicate that prices of staple food continued to increase in early 2020 due to some macro-economic factors including the high inflation rate, the liberalization of the exchange rate and the weakening of the local currency. According to Trading Economics, the year-on-year food inflation increased to 8.30 percent in February 2020. The large trade deficits are maintaining a downward pressure on the exchange rate, which weakened from SLL 8 900 per USD in early 2019 to about SLL 9 600 per USD in early 2020.

Pockets of poverty remain in country

According to the March 2020 “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis, about 1 million people are estimated to need food assistance from March to May 2020. This number is expected to increase to 1.3 million during the lean period from June to August 2020, if no mitigation actions are taken.

COVID-19 and measures adopted by the Government

In view of the evolving COVID-19 situation, the Government has decreed a partial country lockdown. The Government has taken some sanitary, social and economic measures. In early April, the World Bank through the International Development Association (IDA) approved a USD 7.5 million grant to strengthen the preparedness of the national health system in terms of prevention, detection and response to the threat posed by the virus. Official restrictions on population movements, combined with heightened levels of fear, have led many people to stay at their homes. These measures have already affected the flow of farm produce to the markets and further restrictions on population movements could hamper the access to land and have a negative impact on 2020 agricultural production.

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Sierra Leone

Cereal Production

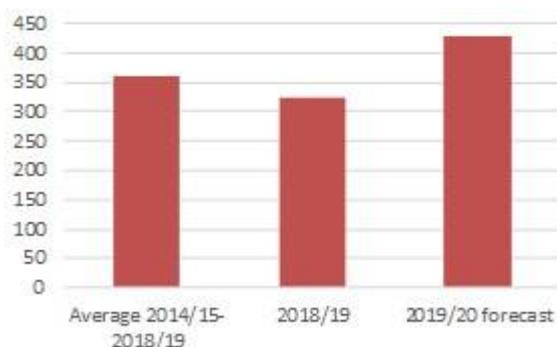
	2014-2018 average	2018	2019 estimate	change 2019/2018
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 219	1 381	1 228	-11.1
Sorghum	48	48	50	4.3
Millet	39	38	38	0.0
Others	33	53	46	-13.3
Total	1 338	1 520	1 362	-10.4

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Sierra Leone

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



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.



GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 20-May-2019

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Planting season in 2019 started on time
- Above-average cereal crop production harvested in 2018
- Increasing economic growth and decreasing food price inflation projected in 2019
- Pockets of food insecurity remain in the country

Timely start of 2019 planting due to favourable moisture conditions

Following a timely onset of seasonal rains, planting of paddy rice, to be harvested from September, started in April 2019. Rainfed paddy is the major cereal grown in the country. Planting operations for maize, millet and sorghum are ongoing and the harvests are expected to start in August. The cumulative rainfall amounts since February/March is supporting favourable soil moisture conditions for crop growth and development. This is also contributing to the recovery of pasture conditions across the country. Weeding activities are underway in most cropping areas.

Above-average cereal output gathered in 2018

Despite the erratic rainfall at the beginning of the season and Fall Armyworm infestation, the 2018 national cereal production is estimated at 1.5 million tonnes, about 16 percent above the five-year average.

Imports account for about 20 percent of the country's total cereal requirements. Following the above-average harvest in 2018, the cereal import requirements for 2018/19 (November/October) are estimated at 330 000 tonnes, about 15 percent below the average.

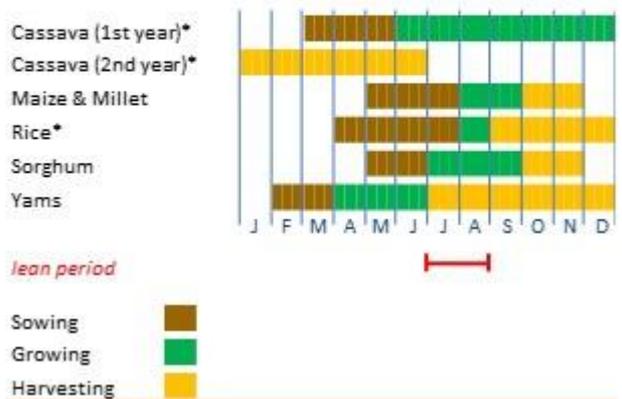
Increasing economic growth and decreasing food price inflation projected in 2019

According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), the economy is expected to grow by about 4.4 percent in 2019, up from an estimated 3 percent in 2018. This growth is supported mostly by strong private and public investments in mining, agriculture and service sectors. However, it is expected that the local currency will weaken from SLL 7 931 per USD in 2018 to about SLL 8 500 per USD in 2019 as a result of large trade deficits, which is maintaining a downward pressure on the exchange rate. Despite the depreciation of the local currency, the year-on-year food inflation is expected to fall from 16.9 percent in 2018 to

Sierra Leone

Crop Calendar

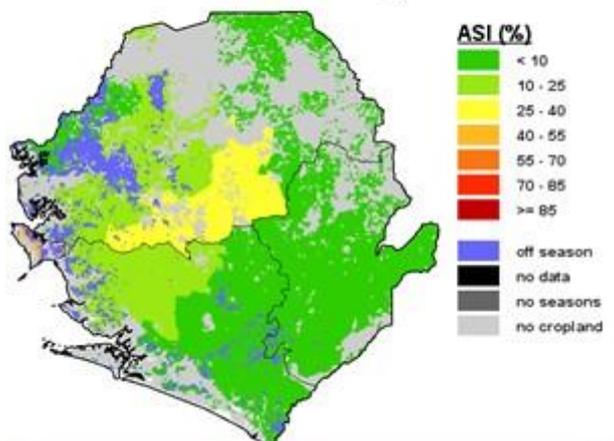
(*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Sierra Leone - Agricultural Stress index (ASI)

from start of season 1 to Dekad 2, April 2019



Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.

15.2 percent in 2019 mainly as a result of the reduction in domestic fuel prices which was decided by the Government in response to the public unrest in January 2019.

Pockets of poverty remain in the country

Despite the overall favourable food security conditions, some vulnerable households still need external food assistance. According to the March 2019 “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis, about 67 000 people are estimated to be in need of food assistance from March to May 2019. This number is expected to increase to 124 000 during the June to August 2019 period, if no mitigation actions are taken.

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Sierra Leone

Cereal Production

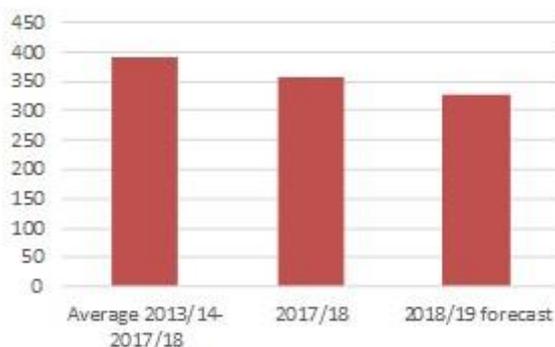
	2013-2017 average	2017	2018 estimate	change 2018/2017
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 194	1 401	1 410	0.6
Sorghum	46	57	49	-12.9
Millet	39	39	38	-2.6
Others	32	25	28	14.3
Total	1 311	1 521	1 525	0.2

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Sierra Leone

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



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.



GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 02-August-2018

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Favourable moisture conditions in 2018 cropping season allow timely planting of rice
- Above-average cereal crop production harvested in 2017
- Strong economic growth projected in 2018, food price inflation decreasing
- Pockets of food insecurity remain

Timely start of 2018 planting season

The timely onset of the rains in late February and early March 2018 allowed for a normal start of the cropping season. Planting of paddy crops, to be harvested from September to December, was completed in July. Rainfed paddy is the major cereal grown in the country. Planting operations for maize, millet and sorghum were completed in July and the harvest will start in October. The cumulative rainfall amounts since February/March resulted in favourable soil moisture conditions for crop growth. Weeding activities are underway in most cropping areas.

Abundant rainfall amounts are also contributing to the recovery of pasture conditions.

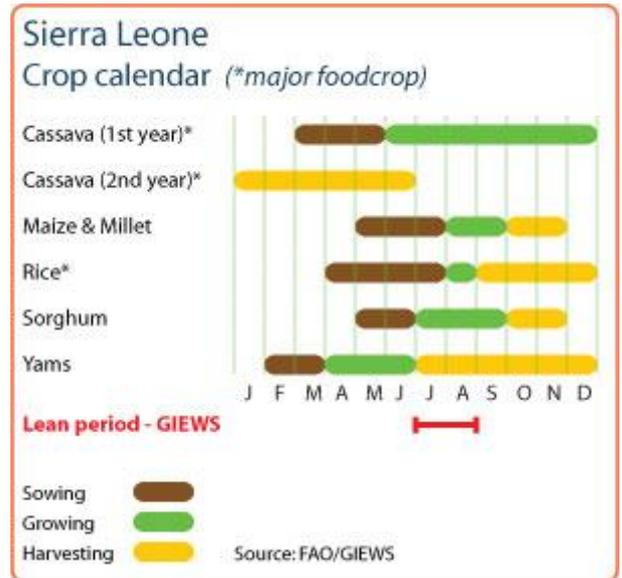
Above-average cereal output gathered in 2017

Despite the presence of Fall Armyworm across the country, the 2017 national cereal production was estimated at 1.5 million tonnes, about 20 percent above the previous year's average level.

Imports account for about 20 percent of the country's total cereal requirements. Following an above-average harvest, the cereal import requirements are estimated at 356 000 tonnes, with a decrease of 20 percent compared to previous year and 8 percent compared to the average.

Strong economic growth projected in 2018, food price inflation decreasing

Marketing activities have significantly recovered since the effects of the Ebola outbreak (June-August 2014) on the national economy (movement restrictions and limited trade flows). According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), the economic economy grew at about 5.7 percent in 2017, driven mostly by recovering iron ore production, agriculture and services. Although growth is expected to slow down, at 4.9 percent in 2018, it



Sierra Leone
Cereal production

	2012-2016 average	2016	2017 estimate	change 2017/2016
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 142	1 161	1 401	21
Sorghum	43	49	56	14
Millet	39	38	39	3
Others	37	23	24	4
Total	1 260	1 271	1 521	20

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

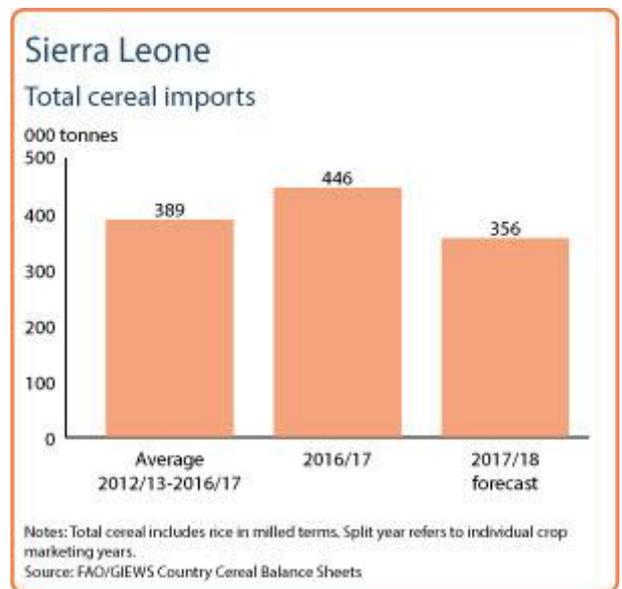
remains strong due to private and public investments in agriculture and mining.

Field reports indicate that prices of imported commodities are rising due to the liberalization of the exchange rate which led to an overvalued and weakening local currency (around SLL 7 950 per USD in July 2018 compared to around SLL 7 528 per USD a year earlier). However, the year-on-year food inflation was set at 15.14 percent in April 2018, down from the 18.91 percent reported in April 2017 due to a slower currency depreciation and stable aggregate demand.

Pockets of poverty remain

As the economy continues to recover, household livelihoods and incomes are returning to the levels observed prior to the Ebola crisis. However, pockets of poverty still remain. According to the October 2017 “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis, about 12 000 people were estimated to be in need of food assistance from October to December 2017 (last figures available), showing a substantial improvement from about 159 000 a year earlier. This number is expected to increase to 138 000 during the June to August 2018 period if no mitigation actions are taken.

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GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 07-February-2018

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Above-average cereal crop harvested in 2017**
- **Prices have generally been stable or declining since August 2017**
- **Pockets of food insecurity remain with about 12 000 people in need of assistance**

Above-average harvest gathered in 2017

Harvesting of the 2017 rice crop, virtually the only cereal grown in the country, was completed in December 2017. Yields benefited from abundant rainfall. Despite the presence of Fall Armyworm across the country, cereal production is estimated at well above average 1.5 million tonnes, including 1.4 million tonnes (over 90 percent) of rice.

Abundant rainfall contributed to the recovery of pasture conditions. However, with 60 percent of the cattle and small ruminant population being concentrated in limited area, high stock density with limited possibility to supplement grazing with other sources of feed presents a challenge for pastoralists. Some 8 000 square km of land (about 10 percent of the total area) are reported to be overgrazed.

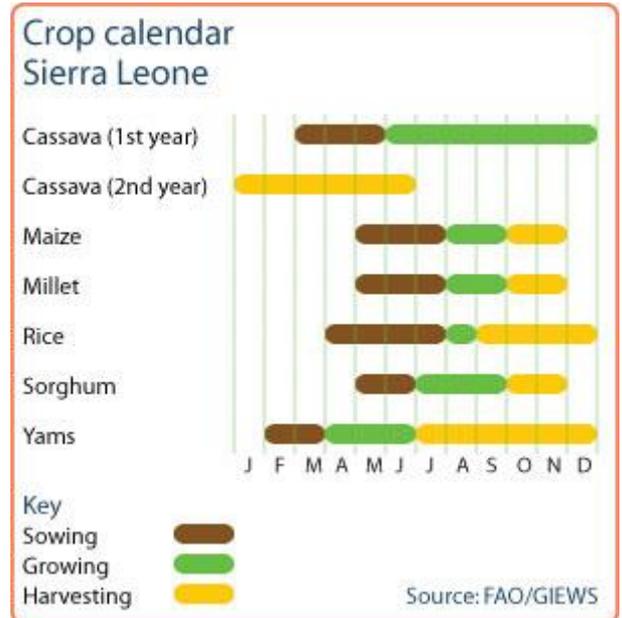
Below-average import requirement

Although the country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing in recent years, it remains a net importer, with a cereal import dependency ratio of about 20 percent. Following an above-average harvest, the cereal import requirement is estimated at a slightly below average level.

Food situation continues to improve

The economy grew at an estimated 5 percent in 2017 as iron ore prices recovered, up from a 20 percent contraction recorded in 2015. However, most economic activities continue to be negatively affected by the lingering effects of the Ebola virus outbreak of 2014 and the collapse of iron ore prices in 2016. More than 60 percent of the population lives on less than USD 1.25 per day. Subsistence agriculture accounts for about half the GDP and employs 60 percent of the total workforce.

Following the above-average harvest, cereal prices have been generally stable or declining since August 2017, but remain above their levels of one year ago, supported by the currency devaluation. The local currency depreciated from SLL 4 500 per USD in 2014 to SLL 7 400 per USD in 2017. In 2017, the annual



Sierra Leone Cereal production

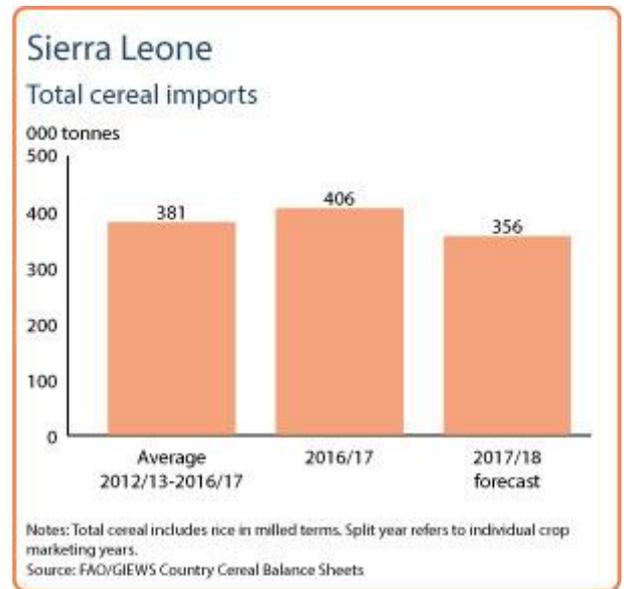
	2012-2016 average	2016	2017 estimate	change 2017/2016 percent
	000 tonnes			
Rice (paddy)	1 142	1 161	1 401	21
Sorghum	43	49	56	14
Millet	42	42	42	0
Others	57	43	44	2
Total	1 283	1 294	1 544	19

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

food price inflation ranged from 18 to 22 percent, affecting the purchasing power of the most vulnerable households.

Despite the above-average harvest, pockets of food insecurity remain in some parts of the country. According to the latest “Cadre Harmonisé” (Harmonized Framework) analysis, between October and December 2017, almost 12 000 people (out of 7.4 million inhabitants) are estimated to be in Phase 3: “Crisis” and above, showing a substantial improvement from about 159 000 people a year earlier.

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GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 24-November-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Above-average rice production expected in 2016
- Coarse grain prices showed seasonal increases in previous months but declined in August with end of lean season
- In spite of significant improvements in food security situation, about 392 000 people still need food assistance

Above-average harvest anticipated in 2016

Harvesting of the 2016 paddy crop, virtually the only cereal grown in the country, is underway and is scheduled to be completed by the end of December. According to satellite imagery, rains and soil moisture have been generally favourable in most regions since the beginning of the cropping season, allowing the satisfactory development of crops. Rice production is forecast to expand further this year.

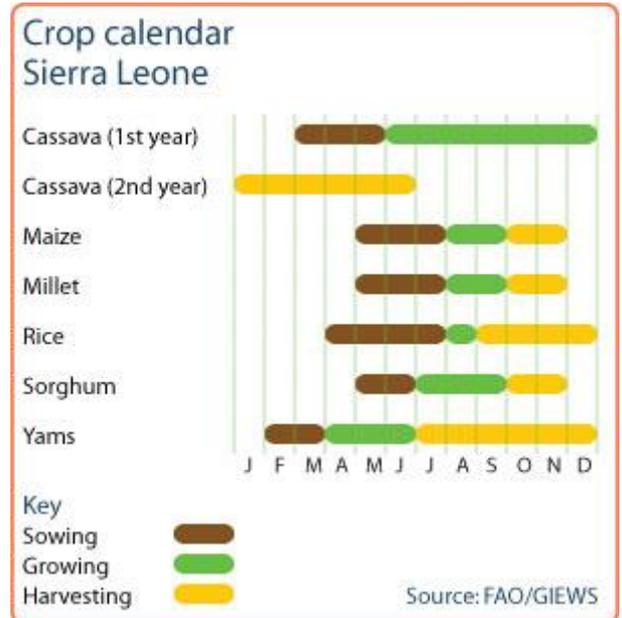
An above-average harvest was already gathered in 2015, owing to favourable climatic conditions in the main rice-growing regions. In spite of the floods in some areas, which partly affected the production of rice and tubers, the 2015 cereal production is estimated to have increased by 10 percent compared to the previous year's output. Production of rice, the main cereal grown in the country, also increased by 10 percent. Similarly, the cassava harvest increased significantly.

In 2014, the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak resulted in a serious shock to the agriculture and food sectors. Rice production declined by 8 percent compared to 2013. In particular, cereal production in the Kailahun District was substantially affected by the outbreak that started to spread when crops were being planted and grew during the crop maintenance period, and then expanded rapidly during the critical harvesting period for the staple rice, maize and cassava crops.

Food markets and trade activities continue to improve

Although the country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing in recent years, it remains a net importer, with a cereal import dependency ratio of about 18 percent. Trade flows of agricultural commodities to Guinea, Mali and Senegal have recovered significantly.

In addition, most public gathering restrictions have been lifted improving domestic food markets and trade activities. Prices of



**Sierra Leone
Cereal production**

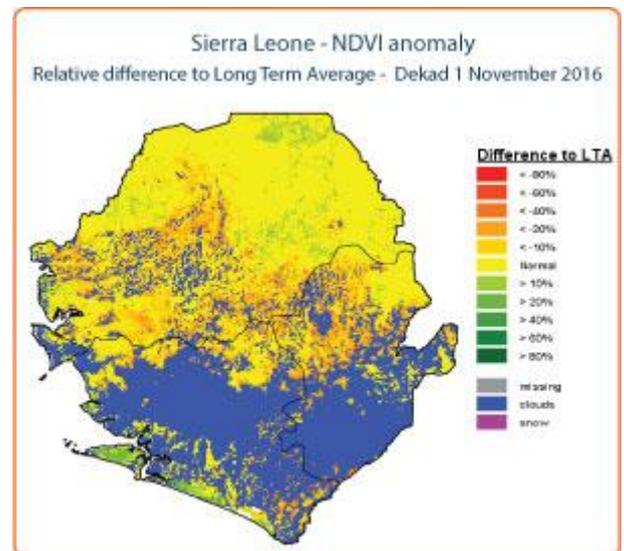
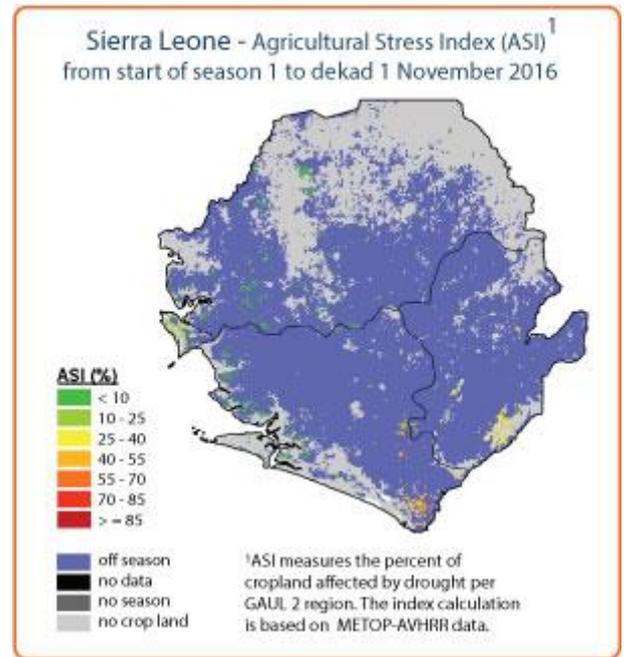
	2010-2014 average	2015	2016 forecast	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 142	1 271	1 271	0
Millet	42	44	42	-5
Maize	40	42	40	-5
Others	64	60	63	5
Total	1 287	1 417	1 416	0

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

local staples, including local rice and cassava, showed seasonal increases in recent months, which were amplified by the significant depreciation of the Leone which led to an 80 percent increase in domestic oil price. However, food prices declined slightly in August reflecting new supplies from the first harvests in August and the end of the 2016 lean season.

Food situation improving

Beyond its impact on the agriculture and food sector, the EVD has seriously affected all other sectors of the economy. The mining, manufacturing and service sectors have been the hardest hit. According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), Sierra Leone's real GDP grew by just 4.6 percent in 2014, compared to 20.9 percent in 2013 before the EVD. In 2015, the effects of the EVD epidemic resulted in a sharp decline of 25 percent. With the EVD largely under control, real GDP is predicted to grow by 1 percent in 2016. The disruption of food chains due to the closing of markets, road blocks and quarantines, restricted cross-border trading, as changes in traders' behaviour due to the fear of Ebola, significantly reduced the income of EVD-affected communities, including producers, consumers and traders. Specifically, income-generating activities typically led by women, such as small trading, were hit hard and the ban on bush meat has also deprived many households of an important source of nutrition and income. Although the Ebola outbreak has ended and the economic situation is improving, about 392 000 people were estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" between June and August and continued to need food assistance. This represents a significant improvement from the 1.1 million estimated during the Ebola crisis.





GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 23-September-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Above-average rice production expected in 2016**
- **Coarse grain prices showed seasonal increases in previous months but declined in August marking end of lean season**
- **In spite of significant improvement of food situation, about 420 000 people still need food assistance**

An above-average harvest is anticipated in 2016. Harvesting of the main rice crop, the main cereal produced and consumed in the country, has begun. Rains and soil moisture have been generally favourable in most regions since the beginning of the cropping season, allowing the satisfactory development of crops according to satellite imagery. Rice production is forecast to expand further this year.

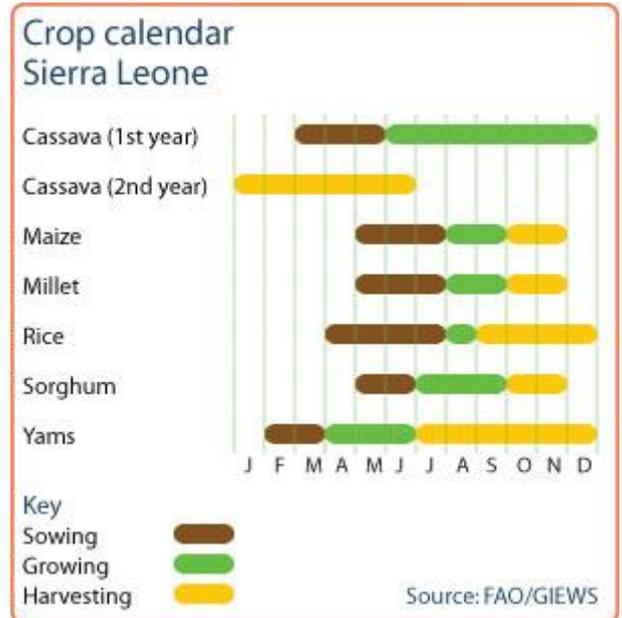
An above-average harvest was already gathered in 2015, owing to favourable climatic conditions in the main rice growing regions. In spite of the floods in some areas, which partly affected the production of rice and tubers, the 2015 cereal production is estimated to have increased by 10 percent compared to the previous year's output. Production of rice, the main cereal grown in the country, also increased by 10 percent. Similarly, the cassava harvest increased significantly.

In 2014, the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak resulted in a serious shock to the agriculture and food sectors. Rice production declined by 8 percent compared to 2013. In particular, cereal production in the Kailahun District was substantially affected by the outbreak that started to spread when crops were being planted and grew during the crop maintenance period, and then expanded rapidly during the critical harvesting period for the staple rice, maize and cassava crops.

Food markets and trade activities continue to improve

Although the country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing in recent years, it remains a net importer, with a cereal import dependency ratio of about 18 percent. Trade flows of agricultural commodities to Guinea, Mali and Senegal have recovered significantly.

In addition, most public gathering restrictions have been lifted improving domestic food markets and trade activities. Prices of local staples, including local rice and cassava, showed seasonal increases in recent months, but declined slightly in August



Sierra Leone Cereal production

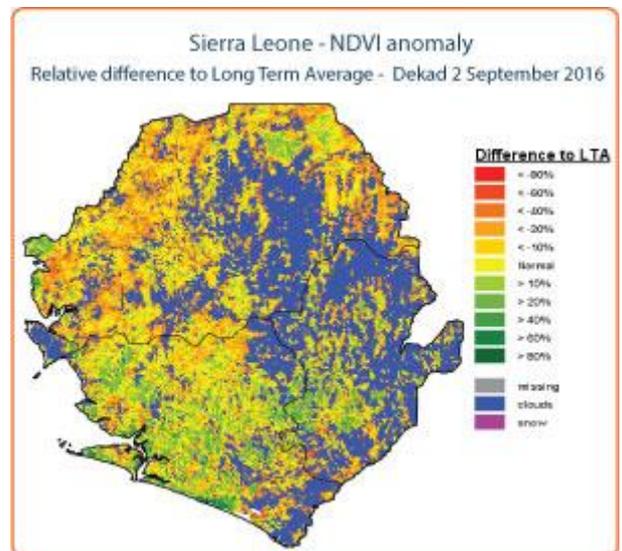
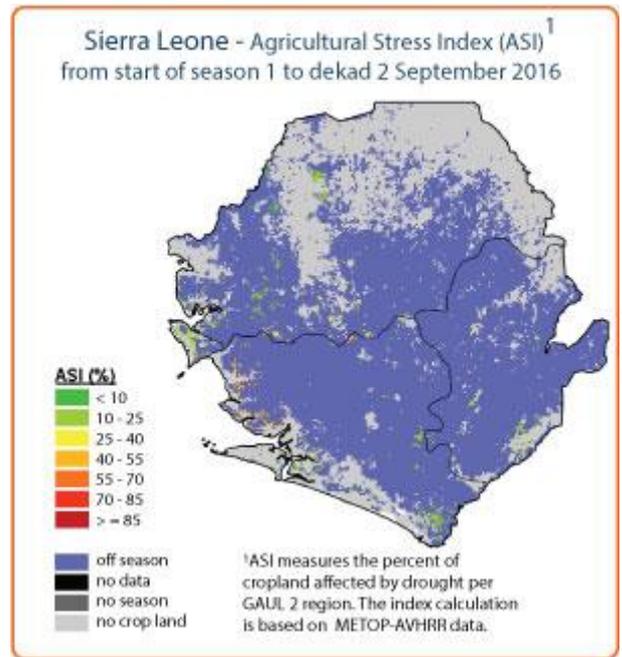
	2010-2014 average	2014	2015 estimate	change 2015/2014 percent
	000 tonnes			
Rice (paddy)	1 142	1 155	1 271	10
Maize	42	38	42	11
Millet	40	40	44	10
Others	64	60	60	0
Total	1 287	1 293	1 417	10

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

reflecting new supplies from the first harvests in August and the end of the 2016 lean season.

Food situation improving

Beyond its impact on the agriculture and food sector, the EVD has seriously affected all other sectors of the economy. The mining, manufacturing and service sectors have been the hardest hit. According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), Sierra Leone's real GDP grew by just 4.6 percent in 2014, compared to 20.9 percent in 2013 before the EVD. In 2015, the effects of the EVD epidemic resulted in a sharp decline of 25 percent. With the EVD largely under control, real GDP is predicted to grow by 1 percent in 2016. The disruption of food chains due to the closing of markets, road blocks and quarantines, restricted cross-border trading, as changes in traders' behaviour due to the fear of Ebola, significantly reduced the income of EVD-affected communities, including producers, consumers and traders. Specifically, income-generating activities typically led by women, such as small trading, were hit hard and the ban on bush meat has also deprived many households of an important source of nutrition and income. Although the Ebola outbreak has ended and the economic situation is improving, about 420 000 people are currently estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" and are in need of urgent assistance across the country, according to the latest "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis. This represents a significant improvement from the 1.1 million estimated during the Ebola crisis.





GIEWS Country Brief Sierra Leone

Reference Date: 5-August-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Above-average rice production is expected in 2016**
- **Coarse grain prices have showed seasonal increases during lean season**
- **In spite of significant improvement of food situation, about 420 000 people still need food assistance**

Above-average harvest anticipated in 2016

Harvesting of the main rice crop, the main cereal produced and consumed in the country, is expected to begin in September. Rains and soil moisture have been generally favourable in most regions since the beginning of the cropping season, allowing satisfactory development of crops according to satellite imagery. Rice production is forecast to expand further this year.

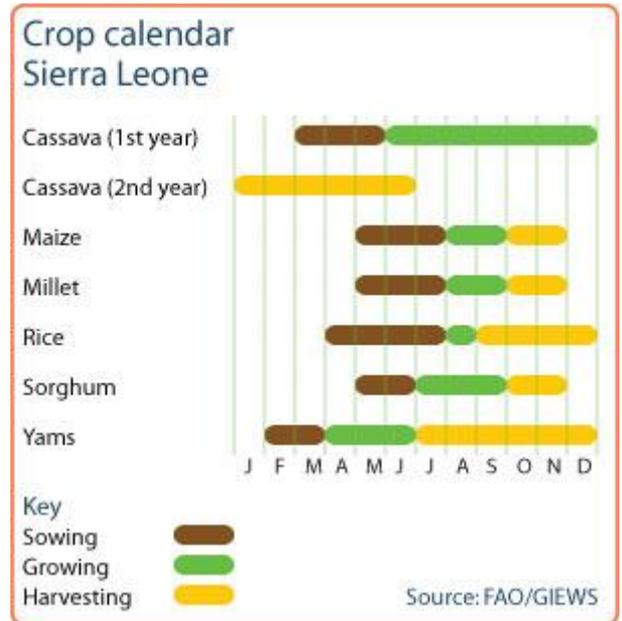
An above-average harvest was already gathered in 2015, owing to favourable climatic conditions in the main rice growing regions. In spite of floods in some areas, which partly affected the production of rice and tubers, the 2015 cereal production is estimated to have increased by 10 percent compared to the previous year's output. Production of rice, the main cereal grown in the country, also increased by 10 percent. Similarly, the cassava harvest increased significantly.

In 2014, the EVD outbreak resulted in a serious shock to the agriculture and food sectors. Rice production declined by 8 percent compared to 2013. In particular, cereal production in the Kailahun district was substantially affected by the outbreak that started to spread when crops were being planted and grew during the crop maintenance period, and then expanded rapidly during the critical harvesting period for the staple rice, maize and cassava crops.

Food markets and trade activities recovered significantly; coarse grain prices showed seasonal increases

Although the country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing in recent years, it remains a net importer, with a cereal import dependency ratio of about 18 percent. Trade flows of agricultural commodities to Guinea, Mali and Senegal have recovered significantly.

In addition, most public gathering restrictions have been lifted improving domestic food markets and trade activities. Prices of local staples, including local rice and cassava, showed seasonal



**Sierra Leone
Cereal production**

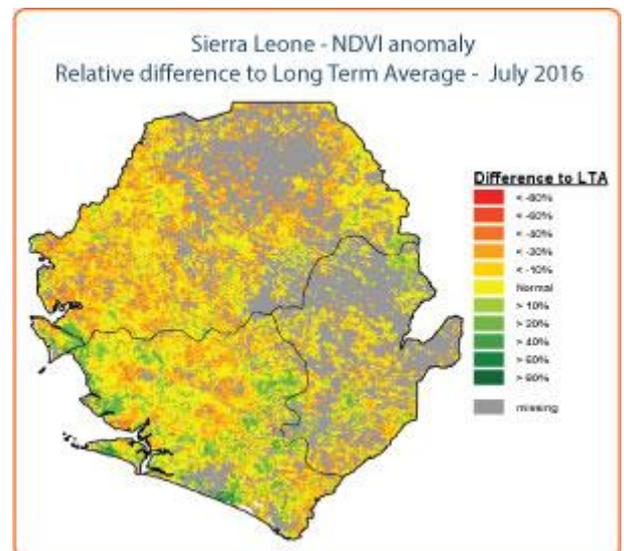
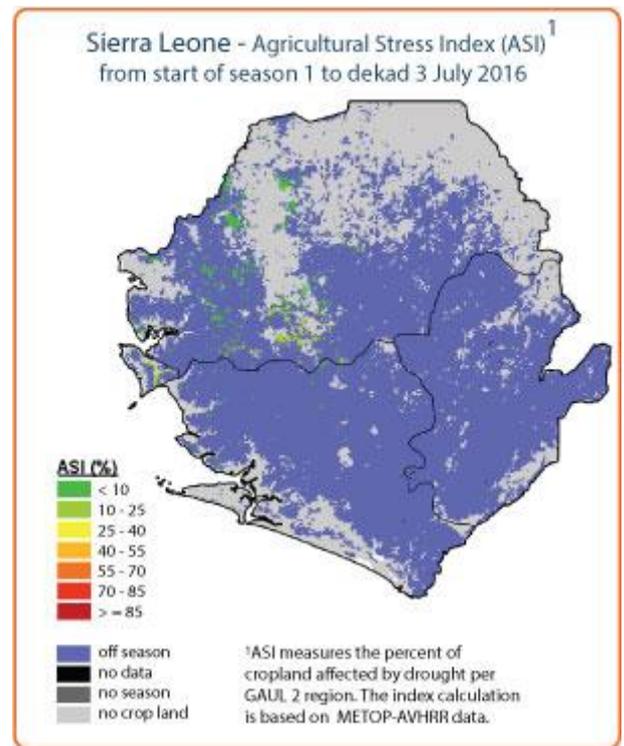
	2010-2014 average	2014	2015 estimate	change 2015/2014
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 142	1 155	1 271	10
Maize	42	38	42	11
Millet	40	40	44	10
Others	64	60	60	0
Total	1 287	1 293	1 417	10

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

increase in recent months. Similarly, prices of imported food commodities are on the increase, driven mostly by the continued depreciation of the country's currency.

Food situation improving

Beyond its impact on the agriculture and food sector, the EVD has seriously affected all other sectors of the economy. The mining, manufacturing and service sectors have been the hardest hit. According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), Sierra Leone's real GDP grew by just 4.6 percent in 2014, compared to 20.9 percent in 2013 before the EVD. In 2015, the effects of the EVD epidemic resulted in a sharp decline of 25 percent. With the EVD largely under control, real GDP is predicted to grow by 1 percent in 2016. The disruption of food chains due to the closing of markets, road blocks and quarantines, restricted cross-border trading, as well as, changes in traders' behaviour due to the fear of Ebola, significantly reduced the income of EVD-affected communities, including producers, consumers and traders. Specifically, income generating activities typically led by women, such as small trading, were hit hard and the ban on bush meat has also deprived many households of an important source of nutrition and income. Although the Ebola outbreak has ended and the economic situation is improving, about 420 000 people are currently estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" and are in need of urgent assistance across the country, according to the latest "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis. This represents a significant improvement from the 1.1 million estimated during the Ebola crisis.



Reference Date: 10-March-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Cereal production in 2015 recovered significantly from previous year's Ebola-affected level
- Prices of main staples generally stable
- In spite of significant improvement of food situation, about 420 000 people still need food assistance

Recovery in 2015 cereal production compared to previous year's Ebola-affected harvest

Harvesting of the 2015 main rice crop was completed in December. Rains and soil moisture were generally adequate during the cropping season, allowing satisfactory development of crops. Moreover, Sierra Leone was declared free of the Ebola virus transmission in the human population in November 2015. The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak had a serious impact on labour availability during last year's cropping season. In spite of floods in some areas, which partly affected the production of rice and tubers, preliminary estimates indicate that 2015 cereal production increased by 10 percent compared to the previous year's output. Production of rice, the main cereal grown in the country, is also estimated to have increased by 10 percent. Similarly, the cassava harvest increased significantly.

In 2014, the EVD outbreak resulted in a serious shock to the agriculture and food sectors. Rice production declined by 8 percent compared to 2013. In particular, cereal production in Kailahun was substantially affected by the outbreak that started to spread when crops were being planted and grew during the crop maintenance period, and then expanded rapidly during the critical harvesting period for the staple rice, maize and cassava crops.

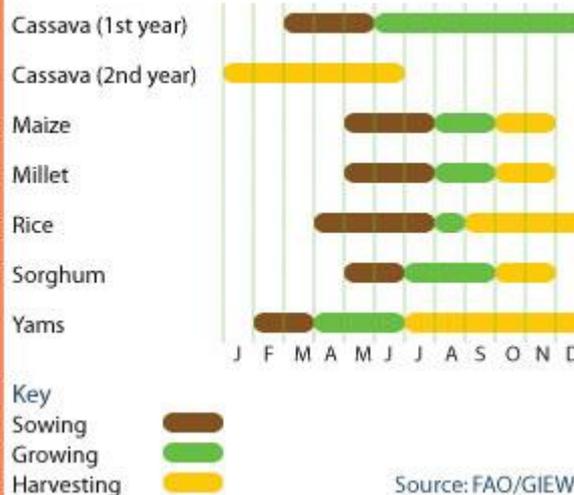
Food prices mostly stable

Although the country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing in recent years, it still remains a net importer, with a cereal import dependency ratio of about 18 percent. Trade flows of agricultural commodities to Guinea, Mali and Senegal have recovered significantly. Prices of rice, cassava, and sweet potato have generally been stable in recent months.

Food situation improving

Beyond its impact on the agriculture and food sector, the EVD has seriously affected all other sectors of the economy. The mining, manufacturing and service sectors have been the hardest hit. According to the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), Sierra Leone's real GDP grew by just 4.6 percent in 2014, compared to 20.9 percent in 2013 before the EVD. In 2015, the effects of the EVD epidemic resulted in a sharp decline of 25 percent. With the EVD largely under control, real GDP is predicted to grow by 1 percent in 2016. The disruption of food chains due to the closing of markets, road blocks and quarantines, restricted cross-border trading, as well as changes in traders' behaviour due to the fear of Ebola, significantly reduced the income of EVD-affected communities, including producers, consumers and traders. Specifically, income generating activities typically led by

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone

Cereal production

	2010-2014 average	2014	2015 estimate	change 2015/2014
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 142	1 155	1 271	10
Maize	42	38	42	11
Millet	40	40	44	10
Others	64	60	60	0
Total	1 287	1 293	1 417	10

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

women, such as small trading, were hit hard and the ban on bush meat has also deprived many households of an important source of nutrition and income. Although the Ebola outbreak has ended and the economic situation is improving, about 420 000 people are currently estimated to be in Phase 3: “Crisis” and are in need of urgent assistance across the country, according to the latest “Cadre Harmonisé” analysis. This represents a significant improvement from the 1.1 million estimated during the Ebola crisis.

Reference Date: 22-July-2015

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

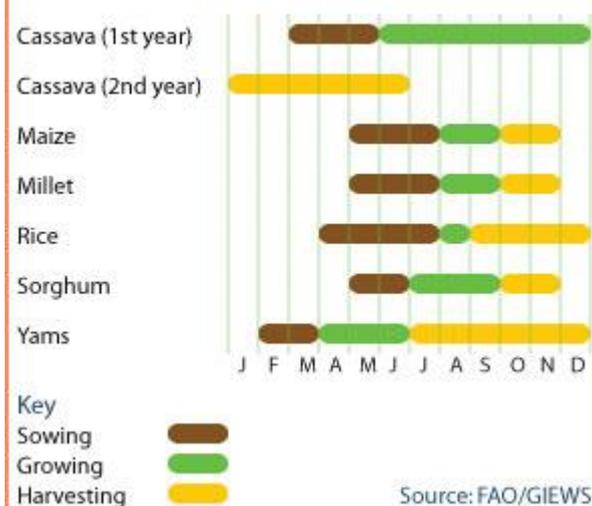
- Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) continues to disrupt agricultural labour and farming activities in some districts
- After several years of steady growth, rice production dropped by 8 percent in 2014 due to the effects of the EVD outbreak
- Food markets continue to function at below-average levels
- Number of food insecure people estimated at about 1.1 million people between June and August 2015

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) continues to affect farming activities in some areas

Planting of the 2015 main rice crop is almost completed. According to satellite imagery, precipitation was average to above-average from April to the first dekad of July, allowing for land preparation and planting. However, new cases of the EVD continue to be confirmed every week in the country and the Government has maintained the state of health emergency. As of mid-July 2015, Sierra Leone has reported 13 209 cumulative Ebola cases, including 3 947 deaths. Although ten of the 14 districts have been declared Ebola-free, having gone 42 days without reporting any new cases, movement restrictions continue to be implemented in affected districts such as Kambia and Port Loko. As a result, restrictions on the gathering of people as well as below-average incomes continue to limit farming activities in affected communities. According to a recent World Bank survey, while rice planting activities have not been disrupted, working hours are still below the baseline and may hamper the 2015/16 agricultural production.

Last year, the EVD outbreak resulted in a serious shock to the agriculture and food sectors in 2014. The epidemic started to spread when crops were being planted and grew during the crop maintenance period, and then expanded rapidly during the critical harvesting period for the staple rice, maize and cassava crops. Various farming activities, including crop maintenance (such as weeding, fencing and application of chemicals) and harvesting have been disrupted mostly through labour shortages. Production of rice, the main staple crop in the Mano River Region, has been most affected. Based on the GIEWS Disease Impact on Agriculture – Simulation (DIAS) Model and the findings of Rapid Assessments carried out in the country, the aggregate food crop production in 2014 is estimated at 2.09 million tonnes (including cassava in cereal equivalent and rice in milled terms), which is 5 percent lower than the record harvest of 2013. Of this total, milled rice production (using the milling rate of 66.7 percent) is estimated at 770 000 tonnes, 8 percent lower than the year before and accounts for about 85 percent of the cereal production. Total coarse grains (maize, sorghum, millets and other small grains) and cassava in cereal equivalent (32 percent of fresh weight) are estimated to have declined by 4 percent and 3 percent, respectively. The relatively low level of impact at the national level masks the sub-national production and food security impacts. For example, the negative impact on rice production is estimated as high as 17 percent in Kailahun.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone Cereal production

	2009-2013 average	2013	2014 estimate	change 2014/2013
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 088	1 256	1 155	-8
Maize	40	40	38	-5
Millet	37	42	40	-5
Others	64	60	60	0
Total	1 230	1 398	1 293	-8

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data. Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Food markets have been disrupted by outbreak and continue to function at below-average levels

Although the country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing in recent years, it still remains a net importer, with a cereal import dependency ratio of about 18 percent. Border closures, quarantine measures and other restrictions have seriously disrupted marketing of goods, including agricultural commodities. Trade activities are estimated to have declined significantly, particularly in quarantined districts.

According to a recent FEWSNet survey, as of May 2015, 46 percent of people surveyed reported that the most important market in their area was closed or operating at reduced levels. Twenty-eight percent of traders also reported that agricultural and market activities continue to function at below-average levels. The economic slowdown due to Ebola has resulted in low income levels and weak household purchasing power.

In May 2015, local rice prices remained mostly stable, except in rural parts of the Western Area where they rose by 5 percent and in Freetown where prices increased by 3 percent. Prices of imported rice increased by 13 percent in Kenema and by 7 percent in urban parts of the Western Area.

Food security severely affected by EVD outbreak

Beyond its impact on the agriculture and food sector, the EVD has seriously affected all other sectors of the economy. The mining, manufacturing and service sectors have been the hardest hit.

According to the World Bank's revised estimates, 2015 GDP will grow by 5.7 percent instead of the earlier forecasted 7.7 percent, with serious impact on livelihoods, income and access to food. The disruption of food chains due to the closing of markets, road blocks and quarantines, restricted cross border trading, as well as changes in traders' behaviour due to the fear of Ebola has significantly reduced the income of EVD-affected communities including producers, consumers and traders. Specifically, income generating activities typically led by women, such as small trading, have been hit hard and the ban on bush meat has also deprived many households of an important source of nutrition and income. This has in turn negatively impacted on the food security situation of large number of people in the affected communities. Overall, according to the latest "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis, about 1.1 million people are currently estimated to be in Phase 3: "Crisis" and above and are in need of urgent assistance across the country.

Reference Date: 23-January-2015

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- After several years of steady growth, rice production is estimated to have dropped by 8 percent in 2014 due to Ebola Virus Disease outbreak
- Cereal import requirements in 2015 are, therefore, estimated to increase compared to last year's level
- Trade activities have declined significantly across the country, particularly in quarantined districts
- Number of food insecure people estimated at about 450 000 people as of December 2014, is projected to increase to 610 000 by March 2015

Ebola Virus Disease outbreak severely affected agricultural production

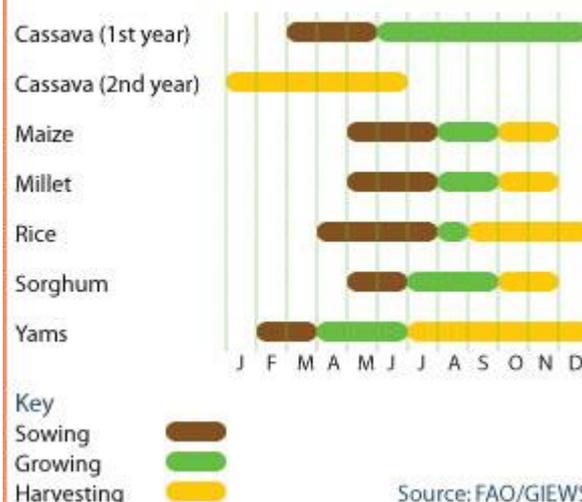
Harvesting of the 2014 main rice crop was completed in December. The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak resulted in a serious shock to the agriculture and food sectors in 2014. The epidemic started to spread when crops were being planted and grew during the crop maintenance period, and then expanded rapidly during the critical harvesting period for the staple rice, maize and cassava crops. Various farming activities, including crop maintenance (such as weeding, fencing and application of chemicals) and harvesting have been disrupted mostly through labour shortages. Production of rice, the main staple crop in the Mano River Region, has been most affected. Based on the GIEWS Disease Impact on Agriculture – Simulation (DIAS) Model and the findings of Rapid Assessments carried out in the country, the aggregate food crop production in 2014 is estimated at 2.09 million tonnes (including cassava in cereal equivalent and rice in milled terms), which is 5 percent lower than the record harvest of 2013. Of this total, milled rice production (using the milling rate of 66.7 percent) is estimated at 770 000 tonnes, 8 percent lower than the year before and accounts for about 85 percent of the cereal production. Total coarse grains (maize, sorghum, millets and other small grains) and cassava in cereal equivalent (32 percent of fresh weight) are estimated to have declined by 4 percent and 3 percent, respectively. The relatively low level of impact at the national level masks the sub-national production and food security impacts. For example, impact on rice production is estimated as high as -17 percent in Kailahun.

Food markets have been disrupted by the outbreak

Although the country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing in recent years, it still remains a net importer, with a cereal import dependency ratio of about 18 percent. Border closures, quarantine measures and other restrictions have seriously disrupted marketing of goods, including agricultural commodities. Trade activities are estimated to have declined significantly, particularly in quarantined districts.

Cereal import requirements in 2015 are estimated at 300 000 tonnes, slightly up from last year. Rice import requirements account for about 215 000 tonnes of the total. With commercial imports estimated at 285 000 tonnes, the uncovered gap is estimated at about 55 000

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone Cereal production

	2009-2013 average	2013	2014 estimate	change 2014/2013
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	1 088	1 256	1 155	-8
Maize	40	40	38	-5
Millet	37	42	40	-5
Others	64	60	60	0
Total	1 230	1 398	1 293	-8

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

tonnes for which additional resources and international assistance is required. The significant impact of Ebola on export earnings is expected to have compromised the country's ability to import more. Prices of imported rice remained mostly stable in recent months, except in localized areas, where relatively high prices persisted reflecting reduced trading activity and increased transport costs.

Food security severely affected by EVD outbreak

Beyond its impact on the agriculture and food sector, the EVD is seriously affecting all other sectors of the economy. The mining, manufacturing and service sectors have been the hardest hit. According to the World Bank's revised estimates, 2014 GDP growth fell by more than half to 4.0 percent from 11.3 percent expected before the Ebola crisis, with serious impact on livelihoods, income and access to food. In particular, the ban on bush meat is depriving many households of an important source of nutrition and income. About 450 000 people, or 7.5 percent of the population, are estimated to be severely food insecure as of December 2014. The impact of EVD accounts for more than a quarter of the food insecure. The number of food insecure is projected to increase to 610 000 by March 2015, 280 000 of which are attributed to EVD. About 76 percent of the Ebola-related food insecure individuals live in rural areas. The most food insecure households include food crop producers; fishermen and hunters; and unskilled labourers.

GIEWS Country Brief

Sierra Leone



Reference Date: 11-February-2014

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- An above average rice production was gathered in 2013
- Inflation dropped, driven by more stable currency

Above-average harvest gathered in 2013

Harvesting of the 2013 main rice crop was completed in September. Rains and soil moisture have been generally adequate during the cropping season, allowing satisfactory development of crops. The 2013 rice production (paddy) is estimated to increase by 10 percent compared to the 2012 above-average output. Similarly, a good cassava harvest was gathered.

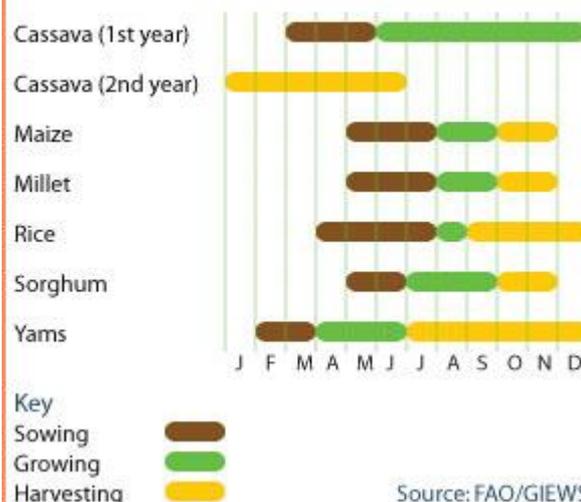
An above-average harvest was already gathered in 2012. The 2012 rice production was estimated at about 1.4 million tonnes, 9 percent higher than in 2011 and well above the average of the previous five years. Yield levels for rice have grown only gradually since the end of the civil war, and production gains are mainly as a result of an expansion in the cultivated area, which has grown each year since 2003.

Access to food has improved, reflecting lower inflation

The country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing however, it is still a net rice importer, with imports expected to reach approximately 80 000 tonnes, about 15 percent of total utilisation in 2013.

Access to food has improved in recent months, driven mostly by lower prices of imported commodities. The steep depreciation of the Leone (local currency) since 2009 led to higher inflation rates. Average national inflation is estimated to have reached 16 percent in 2011. However, the national currency became relatively stable from early 2012 on, pushing inflation down to 12.9 percent in 2012. Consumer price inflation is estimated to have dropped further to 12.2 percent in 2013 driven by the continuing recovery of the Leone and more stable international commodity prices. Nearly 50 percent of households' expenditure in urban, peri-urban and rural areas is allocated to food purchases, according to a WFP recent assessment.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone

Cereal production

	2008-2012 average	2012	2013 estimate	change 2013/2012
	000 tonnes		percent	
Rice (paddy)	973	1 141	1 255	10
Maize	34	39	39	0
Sorghum	29	30	30	0
Others	52	58	58	0
Total	1 088	1 268	1 382	9

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Reference Date: 04-September-2013

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- An above average rice production is expected in 2013
- Inflation dropped, driven by more stable currency

Above-average harvest anticipated in 2013

Harvesting of the main rice crop is expected to begin in September. Rains and soil moisture have been generally adequate since the beginning of the cropping season, allowing satisfactory development of crops according to satellite imagery. Rice production is forecast to expand further this year.

An above-average harvest was gathered in 2012, owing to favourable climatic conditions in the main rice growing regions. The 2012 rice production was estimated at about 1.4 million tonnes, 9 percent higher than the 2011 good output and well above the average of the previous five years. Similarly, a good cassava harvest was gathered.

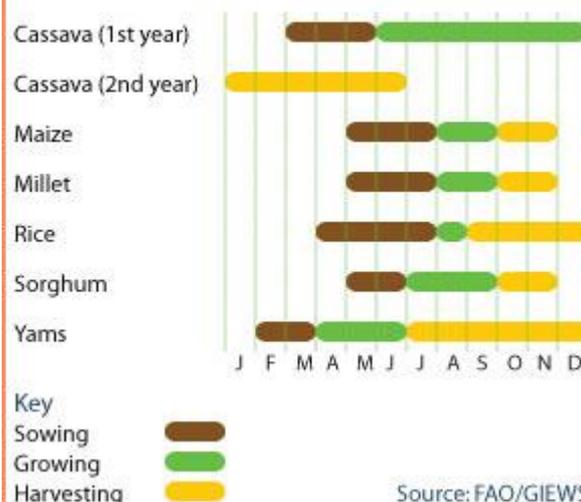
Yield levels for rice have grown only gradually since the end of the civil war, and production gains are mainly as a result of an expansion in the cultivated area, which has grown each year since 2003.

The country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing; however, it is still a net rice importer, with imports expected to reach approximately 80 000 tonnes in 2013, about 15 percent of requirements.

Access to food has improved reflecting lower inflation

Access to food has improved in recent months, driven mostly by lower prices of imported commodities. The steep depreciation of the Leone (local currency) since 2009 led to higher inflation rates. Average national inflation is estimated to have reached 16 percent in 2011. However, the national currency became relatively stable from early 2012 on, pushing inflation down to 12.9 percent in 2012. Consumer price inflation is forecast to drop further to 12.2 percent in 2013 driven by a continuing recovery of the Leone and more stable international commodity prices. Nearly 50 percent of households' expenditure in urban, peri-urban and rural areas is allocated to food purchases, according to a WFP recent assessment.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone

Cereal production

	2007-2011 average	2011	2012 estimate	change 2012/2011
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	874	1,184	1,300	10
Maize	31	38	39	3
Sorghum	27	30	30	0
Others	44	58	58	0
Total	976	1,310	1,427	9

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Reference Date: 27-March-2012

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- An above average rice production was gathered in 2011
- Currency depreciation led to higher inflation

Estimates point to a larger rice harvest in 2011

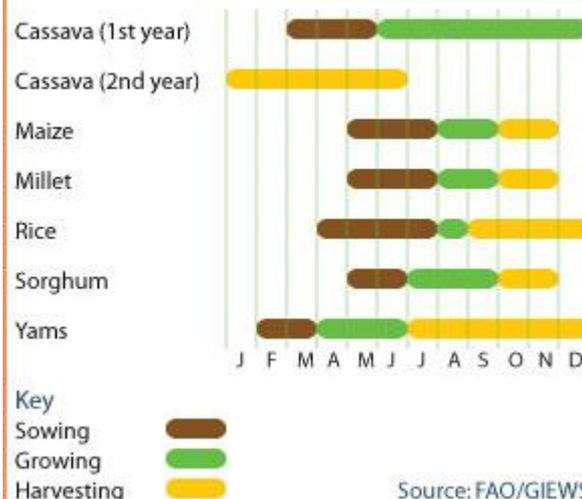
Harvesting of the 2011 rice crop was completed last December. Following above average rains throughout the growing season, rice production (paddy) is estimated to have increased by 15 percent compared to the previous year's good output. Similarly, a good cassava harvest was gathered. Yield levels for rice have grown only gradually since the end of the civil war, and production gains are mainly as a result of an expansion in the cultivated area, which has grown each year since 2000.

The country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing; however, it is still a net rice importer, with imports expected to reach approximately 100 000 tonnes in 2012, about 20 percent of requirements.

Currency depreciation increases imported inflation

The steep depreciation of the Leone (local currency) since 2009 led to higher inflation rates. Average national inflation is estimated to have reached 18 percent in 2011. In spite of last year's good crop, prices are likely to remain firm this year due to the continuing depreciation of the Leone and persistently high international food prices. The Government decided in 2011 to ban rice exports to limit price increases. Nearly 50 percent of households' expenditure in urban, peri-urban and rural is allocated to food purchases, according to a WFP assessment in 2009.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone

Cereal production

	2006-2010 average	2010	2011 estimate	change 2011/2010
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	749	1 028	1 184	15
Maize	31	51	59	16
Sorghum	25	30	30	0
Others	38	58	58	0
Total	843	1 167	1 331	14

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Reference Date: 12-January-2012

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Preliminary estimates point to an above average rice production in 2011
- Currency depreciation led to higher inflation

Estimates point to a larger rice harvest in 2011

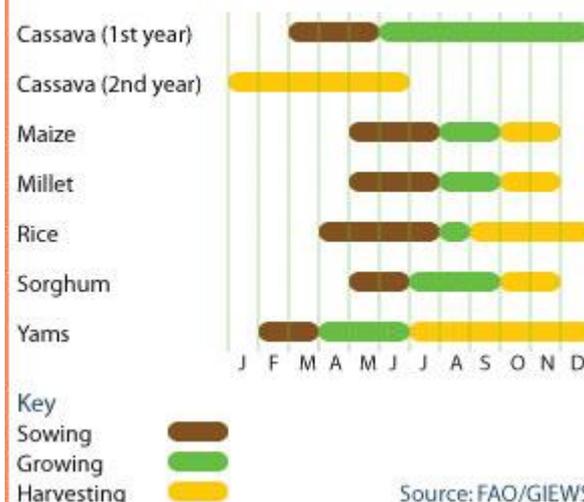
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The country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing; however, it is still a net rice importer, with imports expected to reach approximately 90 000 tonnes in 2012.

Currency depreciation increases imported inflation

The steep depreciation of the Leone (local currency) since 2009 led to higher inflation rates. Average national inflation is estimated to have reached 18 percent in 2011. In spite of last year's good crop, prices are likely to remain firm this year due to the continuing depreciation of the Leone and persistently high international food prices. Government decided in 2011 to ban rice export to limit price increases. Nearly 50 percent of households' expenditure in urban, peri-urban and rural is allocated to food purchases, according to a WFP assessment in 2009.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone

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Sorghum	25	30	30	0
Others	38	58	58	0
Total	843	1 167	1 331	14

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Reference Date: 21-April-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- The 2011 cropping season has started in April
- Preliminary estimates point to an above average rice production in 2010
- Currency depreciation led to higher inflation

The 2011 cropping season has begun with seasonal rains

Seasonal rains commenced in April, allowing land preparation and planting of the 2011 rice crop, the main cereal produced and consumed in the country.

Estimates point to a larger rice harvest in 2010

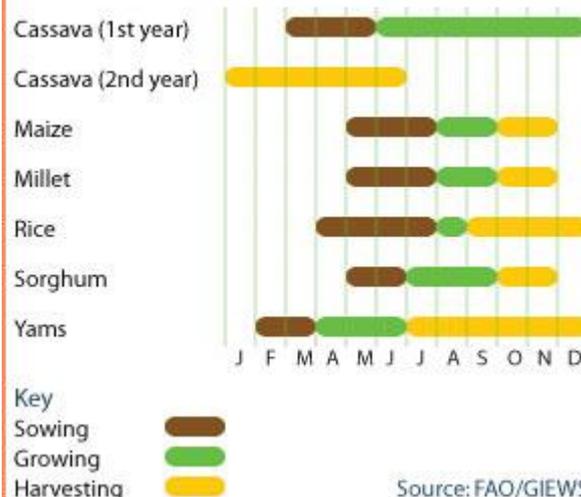
Harvesting of the 2010 rice crop was completed last December. Following above average rains throughout the growing season, rice production (paddy) is estimated to have increased compared to the previous year's good output. Similarly, a good cassava harvest was gathered. Yield levels for rice have grown only gradually since the end of the civil war, and production gains are mainly as a result of an expansion in the cultivated area, which has grown each year since 2000.

The country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing; however, it is still a net rice importer, with imports expected to reach approximately 80 000 tonnes in 2011.

Currency depreciation increases imported inflation

The steep depreciation of the Leone (local currency) during 2009 and 2010 led to higher inflation rates. Average national inflation is estimated to have reached 16.5 percent in 2010. In spite of last year's good crop, prices are likely to remain firm this year due to the continuing depreciation of the Leone and persistently high international food prices. Government decided in mid-February to ban rice export to limit price increases. Nearly 50 percent of households' expenditure in urban, peri-urban and rural is allocated to food purchases, according to a WFP assessment in 2009.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone

Cereal production

	2005-2009 average	2009	2010 estimate	change 2010/2009
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	633	784	830	6
Maize	24	35	29	-17
Sorghum	23	35	30	-14
Others	32	64	58	-9
Total	712	918	947	3

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

GIEWS Country Brief

Sierra Leone



Reference Date: 11-February-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Preliminary estimates point to an above average rice production in 2010
- Currency depreciation led to higher inflation

Estimates point to a larger rice harvest in 2010

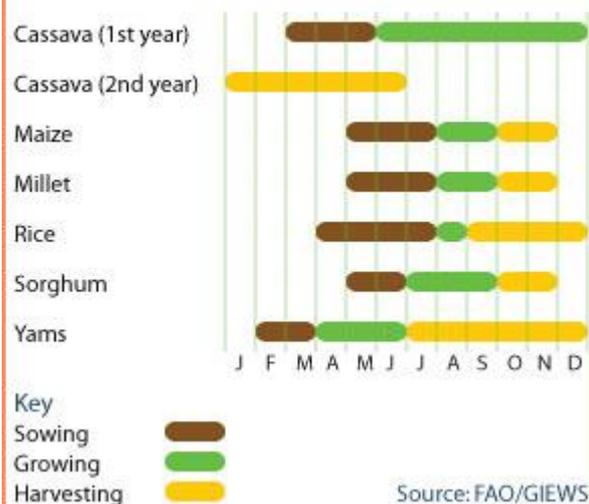
Harvesting of the 2010 rice crop, the main cereal produced and consumed in the country, was completed last December. Following above average rains throughout the growing season, rice production (paddy) is estimated to have increased compared to the previous year's good output. Similarly, a good cassava harvest was gathered. Yield levels for rice have grown only gradually since the end of the civil war, and production gains are mainly as a result of an expansion in the cultivated area, which has grown each year since 2000.

The country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing; however, it is still a net rice importer, with imports expected to reach approximately 80 000 tonnes in 2011.

Currency depreciation increases imported inflation

The steep depreciation of the Leone (local currency) during 2009 and 2010 led to higher inflation rates. The year-on-year national inflation rate was estimated at 16.76 percent in September 2010. In spite of last year's good crop, prices are likely to remain high this year due to the continuing depreciation of the Leone and increasing international food prices. Nearly 50 percent of households' expenditure in urban, peri-urban and rural is allocated to food purchases, according to a WFP assessment in 2009.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone

Cereal production

	2005-2009 average	2009	2010 estimate	change 2010/2009
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	633	784	830	6
Maize	24	35	29	-17
Sorghum	23	35	30	-14
Others	32	64	58	-9
Total	712	918	947	3

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Reference Date: 14-April-2010

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Import requirements for rice decrease, but still remain at a high level
- Currency depreciation led to higher inflation

Heavy rains recorded in southern and eastern areas in March

Land preparation is underway for planting of the 2010 rice crop (the main cereal crop grown in the country), which usually starts in April. Southern and eastern regions received above average rains at the beginning of March, but rainfall levels declined for the last two decades of the month.

Estimates point to a larger rice harvest in 2009

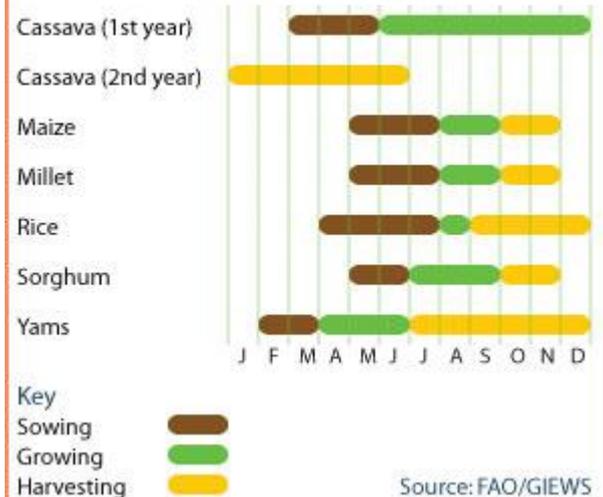
Preliminary production estimates for 2009, released by the government, indicate an increased rice and maize harvest. Rice production is estimated to have increased by 15 percent to approximately 785 000 tonnes, while maize production expanded by approximately 26 percent relative to the 2008 output. Yield levels for rice have grown only gradually since the end of the civil war, and production gains are mainly as a result of an expansion in the cultivated area, which has grown each year since 2000.

The country's dependency on imported rice has been decreasing since 2000; however, it is still a net rice importer, with imports expected to reach approximately 80 000 tonnes in 2010.

Currency depreciation increases imported inflation

The steep depreciation of the leone during 2009 led to higher inflation rates. The year-on-year national inflation rate in December was at its highest level in 2009, following a marginal fall between October and November. Although the currency has stabilized during the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010, the high food prices will have a negative impact on households' purchasing power and food security conditions. Nearly 50 percent of households' expenditure in urban, peri-urban and rural is allocated to food purchases, according to a WFP assessment in 2009.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone Cereal production

	2004-2008 average	2008	2009 estimate	change 2009/2008
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	585	680	785	15
Maize	23	24	30	25
Sorghum	20	20	20	0
Others	22	23	23	0
Total	650	747	858	15

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Reference Date: 18-January-2010

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Below normal rainfall received during the main cropping season
- Imported inflation remains high due to the currency depreciation

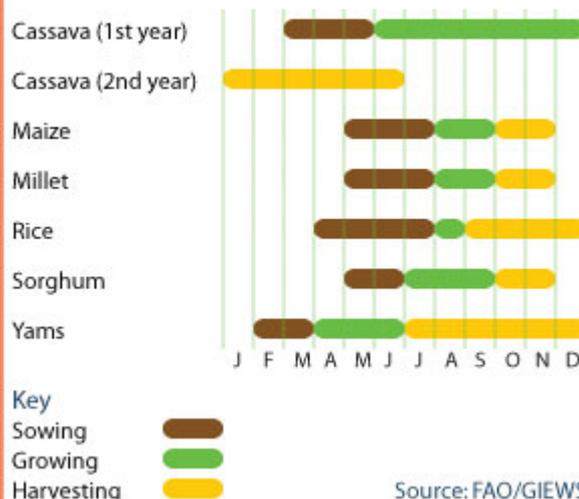
Decline in rice production for the 2009/10 season

Harvesting of the 2009 paddy crop, virtually the only cereal grown in the country is nearly complete. Below normal rainfall levels during the beginning of the cropping season have led to slightly lower production estimates for the 2009 rice crop. Satellite analysis confirms poor vegetative growth during the cropping season.

Currency depreciation increases imported inflation

The year-on-year inflation rate in October 2009 increased for the seventh consecutive month, since reaching a low in April, but was at a lower level relative to the rate in 2008. Furthermore, the steep depreciation of the Leone during 2009 has meant that lower global food prices have not been transferred to the domestic market, resulting in a loss of purchasing power. The Government has implemented a number of policies to create a more liberalised grain market, including the removal of the export ban on rice in January 2009. Import tariffs on selected food items (rice, wheat and wheat flour) were also eliminated in 2008 to help lower national food prices.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



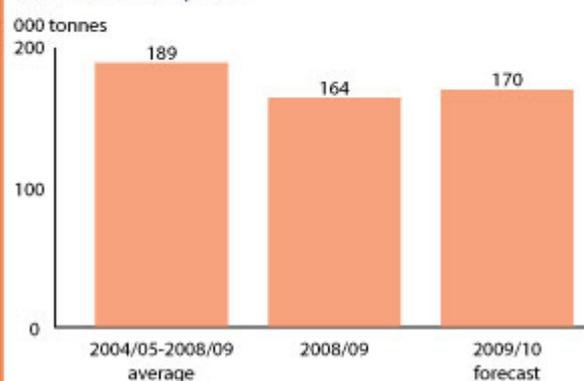
Sierra Leone

Cereal production

	2004-2008 average	2008	2009 forecast	change 2009/2008
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice	910	1200	1150	-4
Maize	45	55	55	0
Sorghum	20	20	20	0
Others	22	23	23	0
Total	998	1298	1248	-4

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Total cereal imports



Notes: Total cereal includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Reference Date: 24-September-2009

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Lower harvest expected in 2009
- Heavy rainfall during August caused localised flooding across the country

Reduced harvest for 2009 anticipated

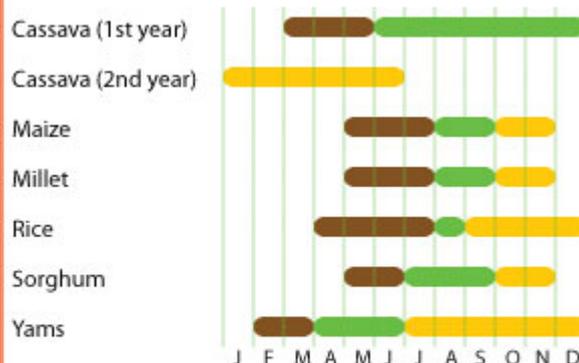
Harvesting of the main rice crop is expected to begin in September. Below normal rainfall levels during the beginning of the cropping season have led to lower production estimates for the 2009 rice crop. Satellite analysis confirms poor vegetative growth.

Food prices continue to increase during first half of 2009

From January to June 2009, the national food price index continued on its increasing trend, but at a slower rate compared to the same period in 2008. The year-on-year inflation rate in June 2009 was only 8 percent compared to 17 percent recorded a year earlier. The Government is implementing a number of policies to create a more liberalised grain market, including the removal of the export ban on rice in January 2009. Import tariffs on selected food items (rice, wheat and wheat flour) were also eliminated in 2008 to help lower national food prices.

Heavy rain during August has caused flooding in the Western, Northern and Eastern Areas of the country.

Crop calendar Sierra Leone



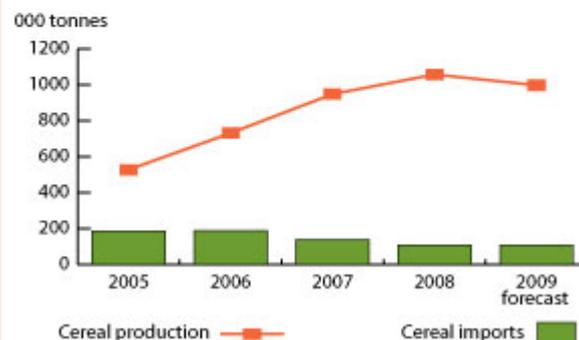
Key

- Sowing (Brown)
- Growing (Green)
- Harvesting (Yellow)

Source: FAO/GIEWS

Cereal production and imports Sierra Leone

Cereal production	2004-2008 average	2008	2009 forecast	change 2009/2008
	000 tonnes		percent	
Rice (milled)	645	960	900	-6.3%
Maize	45	55	55	0%
Sorghum	20	20	20	0%
Other	20	23	23	0%
Total Cereals	733	1058	998	-5.7%



Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets