GIEWS Country Brief
Viet Nam

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT
- Winter/spring paddy harvest estimated at bumper level in 2019
- Exports of rice expected to remain close to average level in 2019, while imports of maize and wheat in 2019/20 forecast at near-record levels
- Outbreaks of African Swine Fever threaten livelihood and food security of millions of pig-raising households

Winter/spring paddy harvest estimated at bumper level in 2019
The 2019 main winter/spring paddy crop, which accounts for about 45 percent of the total annual output, concluded in June.

Official estimates indicate a near-record production of 20.5 million tonnes. The bumper output reflects an enlarged planted area, on account of remunerative prices, and above-average yields following generally favourable weather conditions.

Harvesting of the 2019 summer/autumn paddy crop, which on average accounts for about 35 percent of the total annual production, is ongoing and is expected to continue until the end of October. Overall, near-average precipitation between April and mid-July and adequate irrigation water supplies benefitted planting operations and crop development in most rice-producing areas. Some concerns exist for crops in parts of the Mekong River Delta (the country’s main rice-growing region in the south) and some provinces in the Central Highland and Southern Coastal regions (minor producing areas), due to below-average rains and limited irrigation water supplies.

Planting of the 2019 minor winter (10th month) paddy crop, which is mostly produced in areas under irrigation, started in mid-June and is progressing at a normal pace in the north, while minor delays were reported in the south. The latest official estimates, as of mid-September, indicate that around 1.6 million hectares were sown, which is slightly below last year’s level for the corresponding period.

Harvesting of the 2019 main maize crop was completed in June and official estimates put this year’s output at 1.9 million tonnes, close to last year’s record high. The bumper production reflects the high yields due to favourable weather conditions, which more than offset a reduction in plantings as farmers shifted to...
producing more profitable crops. Planting operations of the 2019 secondary maize crop are progressing at a near-normal pace.

Exports of rice in 2019 forecast close to average, while imports of maize and wheat set to reach near-record high in 2019/20

Rice exports are forecast at 7 million tonnes in the 2019 calendar year, close to the five-year average.

Cereal import requirements, mostly maize and wheat, in the 2019/20 marketing year (July/June) are forecast at a record high level of 14.9 million tonnes, almost 20 percent above the five-year average. Import requirements of maize are forecast close to last year’s record level of 10 million tonnes, mainly reflecting growing demand for feed use that accelerated from 2012. Import requirements of wheat, which is not produced in the country, are forecast at 4.2 million tonnes, 10 percent above the five-year average. The increased demand for wheat reflects the sustained growth in food and feed consumption.

Prices of rice declined recently

Wholesale prices of rice declined recently, reflecting improved supplies from the summer/autumn season harvest and a slowdown in sales. Overall, prices in September were generally lower year on year.

African Swine Fever threatens livelihood and food security of millions of pig-raising households

African Swine Fever (ASF), a contagious deadly viral disease affecting domestic and wild pigs, is rapidly spreading across the country, threatening the livelihood and food security of millions of people. ASF was confirmed in the country on 19 February, and current estimates indicate its presence in 63 out of the 64 administrative divisions of the country. According to the latest official estimates, as of mid-October, more than 5.4 million pigs, accounting for nearly 20 percent of the national herd, have died or have been culled due to ASF. Animal losses are expected to result in a reduction of incomes for the households that are dependent on pig farming, which according to official estimates is the main livelihood activity for at least 2.5 million households.

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