



GIEWS Country Brief Mauritania

Reference Date: 30-April-2021

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Land preparation for 2021 cropping season underway
- Record cereal production harvested in 2020
- Food prices generally stable following seasonal trends
- Food assistance needed for vulnerable households

Land preparation for 2021 cropping season underway

Seasonal dry weather conditions are prevailing across the country and planting operations for sorghum, maize and millet are expected to begin in July with the onset of the rains, while planting of irrigated rice, the major cereal crop produced in the country, will start in June. The harvests of all cereal crops are expected to start in October.

In March, despite the ongoing pastoral lean season, forage availability was overall satisfactory in the main grazing areas of the country. The return of livestock from transhumance in neighbouring Senegal and Mali will normally take place in May and June. The health situation remains overall good and stable, with just some localized outbreaks of seasonal diseases, including Peste des petits ruminants, bacterial anthrax and symptomatic anthrax.

Record cereal production harvested in 2020

The 2020 aggregate production of cereals, mainly rice, is estimated at a record of 480 000 tonnes, almost 40 percent above the five-year average. The good performance mainly reflects favourable weather conditions and a substantial supply of inputs, mostly provided by the Government with the support of international partners' organizations. Major year-on-year production increases were recorded for sorghum and rice (paddy). However, localized production shortfalls were recorded in several areas due to flooding in July and August 2020.

Imports account for two-thirds of the national cereal utilization in the country. Cereal import requirements for the 2020/21 (November/October) marketing year, mainly wheat, are forecast at a near-average level of 580 000 tonnes.

Mauritania

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

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Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 estimate	change 2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	262	255	365	42.9
Sorghum	72	68	93	36.8
Maize	11	16	15	-4.0
Others	12	13	7	-43.9
Total	357	352	480	36.4

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

Food prices generally stable following seasonal trends

The off-season local rice harvests are underway and continue to guarantee satisfactory market availability in most producing areas. Despite the reintroduction of customs taxes on food products, after the suspension in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the price of imported rice remained relatively stable since early 2021. However, in some markets, prices were above their year-earlier levels due to the impacts of COVID-19 restrictive measures on internal trade flows.

In most livestock markets, the supply of animals is adequate and prices are generally stable. In March 2021, the livestock-to-cereal terms of trade for pastoralists improved if compared to one year before as the average price of live animal (small ruminants) increased up to 18 percent from the previous year's level.

Food assistance needed for vulnerable households

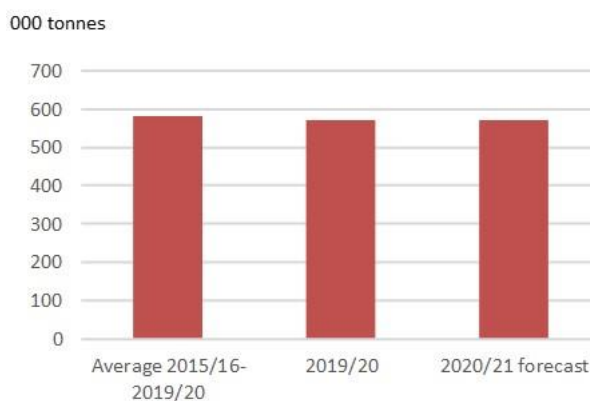
The overall food security situation remains stable and favourable across the country. However, continued assistance is needed for the most vulnerable population. According to the March 2021 "Cadre Harmonisé" analysis, about 196 000 people are estimated to need food assistance in March-May 2021. This number is projected to increase to 457 000 people during the peak of the lean season (June-August 2021), if mitigation measures are not taken.

As of March 2021, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), over 70 500 refugees were present in the country, mostly from northern Mali due to the persisting civil conflict. Most of the refugees are heavily dependent on humanitarian assistance following the severe disruption of their livelihoods.

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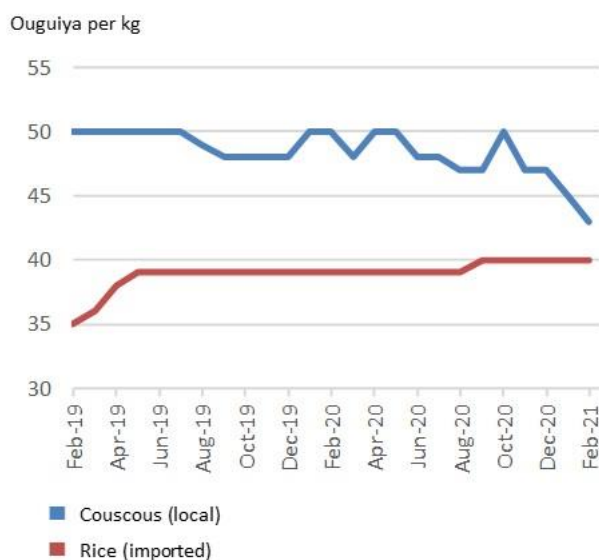
Cereals Imports



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.

Mauritania

Selected retail food prices in Nouakchott



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