



GIEWS Country Brief

The Republic of Namibia

Reference Date: 09-October-2024

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Poor rainfall outlook for 2024/25 cropping season
- El Niño-linked drought-reduced cereal harvest in 2023/24
- Cereal import requirements increase in response to drought-stricken domestic harvest
- Food price increases ease in 2024
- Acute food insecurity expected to worsen in 2024/25 due to drought

Poor rainfall outlook for 2024/25 cropping season

Planting of the 2025 cereal crops is expected to begin in November, with harvesting anticipated to start in May.

Weather forecasts point to a likely emergence of a La Niña event late in 2024, normally associated with higher-than-average rainfall quantities across Southern Africa. However, there is still uncertainty in these predictions and current [seasonal weather outlooks](#) from September indicate an increased likelihood of below-average rainfall amounts between November 2024 and March 2025 in the key northern agricultural areas of the country. If these conditions materialize, they could potentially have negative impacts on both the area planted and yields, with soil moisture already at below-average levels in September 2024 due to a poor previous rainy season. Continuous monitoring of climate predictions is advised, given the levels of uncertainty, to enable appropriate and effective planning for the upcoming agricultural season.

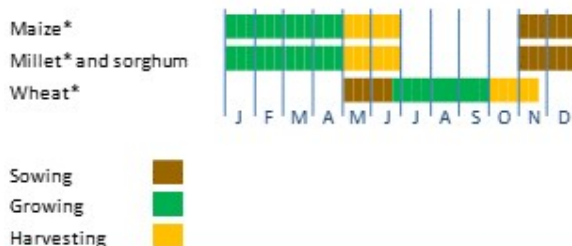
El Niño-linked drought-reduced cereal harvest in 2023/24

Total cereal production from the 2023/24 cropping season is forecast at 85 000 tonnes, about a third lower than the five-year average. The low cereal outturn was caused by a poor rainy season, characterized by reduced rainfall amounts and an uneven temporal distribution, while above-normal temperatures exacerbated the negative effects of rainfall deficits on crop development. A lower maize harvest accounts for the bulk of the aggregate cereal production decline, reflecting the crop's generally high sensitivity to water deficits compared to millet and sorghum, the two other key cereal crops.

Namibia

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Namibia

Cereal Production

	2019-2023 average	2023	2024 forecast	change 2024/2023
	000 tonnes			percent
Maize	72	85	37	-57.1
Millet	48	36	25	-30.7
Wheat	14	30	20	-32.9
Others	4	4	3	-25.0
Total	139	155	85	-45.4

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Drought has also adversely affected the availability and quality of pasture resources, which are expected to have an adverse impact on livestock body conditions, and potentially livestock productivity.

Cereal import requirements increase in response to drought-stricken domestic harvest

The country is a net importer of cereals, with imports accounting, on average, for about two-thirds of the national cereal consumption requirement. Given the steep production downturn in 2024, cereal import needs in the 2024/25 marketing year (May/April) have increased to an above-average level of about 330 000 tonnes, the bulk of which is maize, including both white (for human consumption) and yellow (for feed) varieties. The pace of maize imports in the first five months of the 2024/25 marketing year is almost double the level of the previous year, reflecting the increased needs for imports.

Food price increases ease in 2024

The annual food inflation rate eased to 4.8 percent in August 2024, down from 9.8 percent in the corresponding month of 2023. However, a source of concern for potential domestic price hikes in the coming months is the record high prices of white maize grain in South Africa, which is the country's main trading partner for grains.

Acute food insecurity expected to worsen in 2024/25 due drought

A projected 1.26 million people (41 percent of the national population) are expected to face severe acute food insecurity (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC] Phase 3 [Crisis] or above) between [October 2024 and March 2025](#). This figure is almost double the level of the same period in 2023/24, primarily reflecting the impact of the drought on 2024 crop production and the consequent reduction of households' food stocks. The IPC analysis highlights that households are likely to have exhausted their food supplies from their own production as of October 2024 and will increasingly resort to negative coping strategies, including selling assets, to meet food consumption gaps in the coming months.

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This brief was prepared using the following data/tools:

FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet (CCBS) <https://www.fao.org/giews/data-tools/en/>.

FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool <https://fpma.fao.org/>.

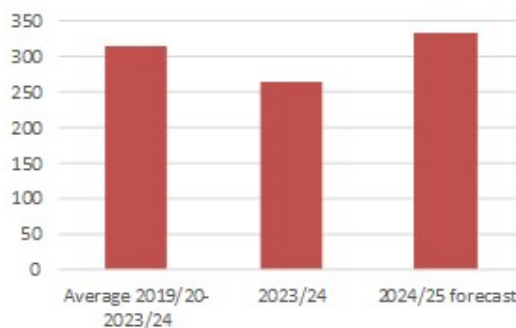
FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation for Crop Monitoring <https://www.fao.org/giews/earthobservation/>.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) <https://www.ipcinfo.org/>.

Namibia

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



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

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Retail prices of maize meal

Namibia dollar per Kg

