



GIEWS Country Brief Nepal

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Area planted with 2021 wheat crop estimated at above-average level
- Cereal production in 2020 close to record level
- Near-average cereal import requirements forecast for 2020/21 marketing year (July/June)
- Monsoon floods and COVID-19 pandemic heighten food insecurity

Area planted with 2021 wheat crop estimated at above-average level

Planting of the 2021 mostly irrigated wheat crop, for harvest next March, has just concluded. Favourable weather conditions since the beginning of October and ample supplies of irrigation water, following above-average May to September monsoon rains, supported planting activities and benefitted crop germination. The area planted is estimated at an above-average level, driven by strong local demand.

Cereal production in 2020 close to record level

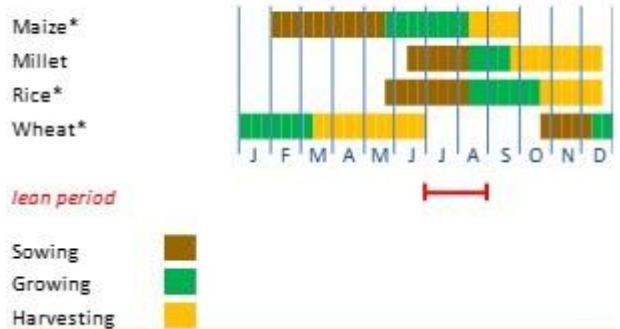
Harvesting of the 2020 main season crops, mostly rice and maize, has just concluded. The 2020 paddy production is estimated at a near-record level of 5.6 million tonnes, reflecting the high level of plantings. Localized damages to standing crops were reported in western and central parts of the country due to floods following heavy rains in June and late September. The 2020 maize output is estimated at a record level of 2.7 million tonnes, continuing the steady increase observed during the last eight consecutive years, supported by high level of plantings driven by strong demand of the feed industry. The 2020 wheat output, harvested in June, is estimated at a bumper level of 2.2 million tonnes, owing to above-average levels of both area planted and yields. Overall, the 2020 aggregate cereal production is estimated at about 10.8 million tonnes, similar to the 2019 record level.

Near-average cereal import requirements forecast for 2020/21 marketing year

Cereal import requirements for the 2020/21 marketing year (July/June) are forecast at a near-average level. Rice (refers to calendar year 2021) and maize imports are expected to reach 740 000 and 400 000 tonnes, respectively. Wheat imports are forecast at 100 000 tonnes, well below the five-year average, reflecting bumper outputs for two consecutive years.

Nepal

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS, FAO/WFP CFSAM 2007.

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Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 estimate	change 2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	5 168	5 551	5 621	1.3
Maize	2 483	2 650	2 700	1.9
Wheat	1 953	2 200	2 200	0.0
Others	344	352	352	0.0
Total	9 948	10 753	10 873	1.1

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Monsoon floods and COVID-19 pandemic heighten food insecurity

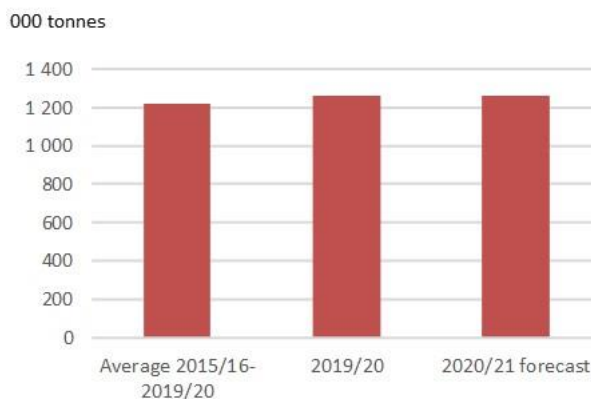
The overall food security situation is good, following four consecutive years of bumper harvests. Concerns remain for an estimated 2.8 million food insecure people, accounting for about 10 percent of the total population, mostly concentrated in the remote northern parts of far-western and mid-western mountainous regions. In these regions, generally low agricultural productivity and poorly functioning markets limit the access to food for the most vulnerable population. However, the number of food insecure people is on the rise due to income losses associated with the COVID-19-related economic downturn and a decrease in remittances. Since May 2020, UNICEF conducted several surveys, called “Child and Family Tracker”, to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and their families. According to the results of the August survey, over 60 percent of the interviewed households reported significant losses of income and 25 percent of the households had inadequate access to food.

Heavy monsoon rainfall in June and September 2020 caused flooding and landslides in few parts of the country, hitting particularly the Gandaki and Bagmati provinces. According to the Nepal Disaster Risk Reduction Portal, the floods and landslides affected about 65 000 families and caused losses of lives, damage to housing and infrastructure.

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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.