

Monthly News Report on Grains

MNR Issue 106 - September 2014

About the MNR:

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The main purpose of the MNR is to establish a communication vehicle for closer dialogue between the FAO Secretariat and the Members of the Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Grains as well as the general public.

The MNRs are dispatched electronically on the last working day of the month except in July and December.

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Market News:

Russia's wheat prices fall on pressure by global market

30 September 2014

Business Recorder

Russian wheat export prices fell last week and are expected to continue declining this week as local traders seek to stay competitive with the low prices of major global rivals, analysts said on Monday. Russia, one of the world's largest wheat exporters, has been less competitive in its traditional export markets in recent weeks due to strong domestic demand. Its prices have been relatively high despite a near record harvest and weakening of the rouble.

"This time Russian wheat was not able to ignore a new wave of sales on global markets," Russia's SovEcon, an agriculture consultancy, said in a note. November wheat futures in Paris last week touched their weakest level since July 2010. SovEcon pegged free-on-board (FOB) prices for Russian wheat with 12.5 percent protein content in deep-water ports at \$237 per tonne, down \$8.50 on the week. In shallow-water ports prices were down \$3.50 at \$215 per tonne, it said.

Russia's September grain exports are likely to reach 3.7 million tonnes, down from a previously expected 4.2 million tonnes, said Dmitry Rylko, the head of IKAR, another agriculture consultancy. Russian prices for wheat fell to \$236 per tonne at the end of last week from \$240 per tonne a week ago, according to IKAR. Its quote was on an FOB basis seen in the Black Sea at the end of last week.

"Partially it was caused by a weather factor: there were storms in the Black Sea. But there was also some cooling in demand," Rylko said. Since the start of September, Russia has shipped about 3 million tonnes of grain to customers, including the major consumers of its wheat in North Africa and the Middle East.

SovEcon also expects September grain exports of as much as 3.7 million tonnes after a record 4.6 million tonnes in August. A week ago IKAR said that to be competitive with French and US origins in Egypt's tenders, Russian FOB Black Sea prices for wheat would have to decline to \$230-231 per tonne. There is a tendency for a further price decline in Russia's domestic market, IKAR said on Monday, adding that state interventions, the buying of grain on the market to replenish stocks, are unlikely to be large, because domestic prices are still high.

Russia's state grain interventions are due to start on September 30 and are expected to be focused first of all on Crimea region, which the Kremlin annexed from Ukraine in early 2014 and which is unable to export most of its crop due to legal issues. In the domestic sunflower seed market, SovEcon said prices rose 75 roubles to 11,875 roubles (\$300) as prospects for the crop had been worsening, while FOB Black Sea prices for crude sunflower oil rose by \$10 to \$770 a tonne.

Russia has already harvested 4.5 million tonnes of the oil seeds from 40 percent of the planned area, up from 2.1 million tonnes a year ago. However, yields are down at 1.62 tonnes per hectare compared with 2.04 a year ago. SovEcon has previously expected the 2014 sunflower seed crop at 8.8 million tonnes. IKAR's white sugar price index for Russia's south was down \$4 at \$621 per tonne compared with a week earlier.

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Canadian wheat quality a 'major concern', says CWB

26 September 2014

Agrimoney

The quality fears already surrounding European, Ukraine and some US wheat mounted over Canada's crop as grain marketing giant CWB warned of a "major concern" over the grain being harvested.

CWB - the former grain export monopoly for Canada's Prairies, the main producing region – highlighted "poor weather conditions" for the wheat harvesting, a vulnerable period for crops, when rains or frost can damage kernels and lower milling specifications.

"During the month of September crops have been impacted by excess moisture and an early frost across the Prairies, as well as an untimely snowfall in parts of Alberta," the group said.

Quality was a "major concern in western Canada", responsible for roughly 90% of Canadian output, and a bigger worry than in the northern US, where wheat industry officials have also warned of quality setbacks thanks to poor weather.

In North Dakota, the top US spring wheat state, "a similar weather pattern has occurred", CWB said. "However, the [North Dakota] spring wheat crop is grading slightly better" than the crop in Canada, for which spring wheat represents the vast majority of wheat production.

The comments tally with reports from farm officials in Manitoba this week noting concerns in eastern and central areas of the province, at a time when "many crops are being harvested at tough or damp moisture levels".

"Quality has declined, with downgrading factors including sprouting, mildew, fusarium-damaged kernels and ergot," provincial officials said.

In Saskatchewan, the top producing province, officials said overnight that "quality remains a concern for many producers as moisture, disease and frost have damaged crops.

"Strong winds and waterfowl also caused some damage this week."

CWB highlighted in particular the threat from the poor weather to durum, the wheat used to make pasta, with only 40% of the crop harvested and quality a "serious concern" in western Canada.

In contrast to the tumbling prices of wheat futures, the group raised by Can\$12 a tonne, to up to Can\$395 a tonne, from last month its estimates for farmers' returns from selling higher-graded durum through its pools.

For lower-grade durum, the price forecast was cut by Can\$11 a tonne to as low as Can\$330 a tonne.

For common wheat, the price estimate for highest-spec supplies was lowered by Can\$9.00 to Can\$274.00 a tonne, with that for lower grades cut by Can\$14.00 a tonne to as low as Can\$219.00 a tonne.

"Compared to the last pool return outlook release in August, wheat and durum spreads have widened significantly between grades," CWB said.

The comments echo broad expectations of premiums for high-grade supplies proving particularly strong this season, after rain-damaged crops in the European Union, the top wheat producer, and Ukraine.

"It has almost got to the stage where milling wheat and feed wheat are trading independently of each other," traders at a major European commodities house said.

In the EU, concern has surrounded in particular the crop in France, the bloc's top wheat producer and exporter, where the compromised quality of domestic supplies has forced millers to turn abroad, including to Canada, for purchases.

The UK also looked to Canada, a key exporter of harder wheats, for extra imports after a rain-damaged harvest in 2012, and an unusually small crop last year.

Maize-soybean diet would slash land use

26 September 2014

Environmental Research Web

Until now, fossil fuels and fertilizers have enabled food production to keep pace with the growth in population and consumption. But the technology has come at a cost. Today one-third of the world's greenhouse-gas emissions come from agriculture, while huge areas of river, lake and coastline are turning into oxygen-deprived "dead zones", due to agricultural fertilizer run-off. One solution, which has been much talked about, is to reduce meat consumption. New research shows that careful choice of the crops we grow could make a huge difference too.

Currently wheat is the grain that dominates the global food system. But what would happen if everybody switched to corn bread? To explore how much impact crop choice has on the sustainability of the global food system, Esteban Jobbágy from the Universidad Nacional de San Luis – CONICET in Argentina and Osvaldo Sala from Arizona State University, US, modelled the nutrient withdrawal and fertilizer additions for a range of different diets.

The pair's calculations reveal that maize is one of the most efficient crops to grow, requiring two-thirds of the nitrogen and half of the phosphorus needed to obtain the same output from wheat. Meanwhile, soybeans offer the most phosphorus-efficient source of protein. But switching from a diet of beef burgers in baps to soy in corn-tortilla wraps isn't necessarily the way forward.

"Moving from junk animal to junk vegetable food is a possible future that would save resources without improving our health," says Jobbágy. To provide a healthy diet, nutritional losses must be minimized during processing of the maize, and the grain should be well complemented with fresh fruit and vegetables.

But if calories currently obtained from wheat were replaced with a diet of maize and soybean (to make up for the lower protein content of maize compared with wheat), then the savings are staggering. Although maize production would have to be doubled, and soybean production would have to increase by one-quarter, Jobbágy and Sala found that the world could grow all the food it needs using just two-thirds of the area assigned to wheat today. What's more, the no-wheat diet would save around one-third of the nitrogen and phosphorus currently taken up by wheat. Ironically the switch in diet could also increase fertilizer use.

"Under current conditions we tend to over-fertilize expensive items, so it seems that if our diets incorporate a larger fraction of expensive items like fruits and vegetables (they are expensive in terms of the income they generate per unit of area and harvested mass), we will need more fertilizer and pollute more," explains Jobbágy, whose findings are published in *Environmental Research Letters* (ERL).

Based on their global analysis, Jobbágy and Sala explored four dietary scenarios, all of which would meet current nutritional needs. The first two diets were vegetarian, one based on maize and soybean, the other on wheat and rice. The remaining two diets obtained most of their protein from meat; the first was centred on maize, soybean and poultry, and the other on beef, pork, rice and wheat.

The maize-soybean diet used 30%, 26% and 36% less land, soil nitrogen and soil phosphorus than the current food system, the results show. These savings shrank to 7%, 16% and 21% for the wheat-rice option. The poultry-maize diet showed a path that maintained the carnivore option with no need for additional land, soil nutrients or fertilizer, relative to the current scenario. Conversely, the beef-rice alternative required close to 50% more land and soil nitrogen and twice as much soil phosphorus than the current diet.

"These scenarios offer dietary 'endpoints' that illustrate alternative trajectories that the global food-production system could embark [on] in response to social, economic and cultural changes," says Jobbágy. "Current global dietary shifts seem to be leaning towards the 'poultry-maize' scenario, yet elements of the 'maize-soybean' alternative are emerging as well. We seem to be drifting away from the other two scenarios. Balancing these trends will be critical to halt agricultural expansion and warrant a sustainable nutrient supply as the overall food demand continuous to grow."

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Brazil unveils unusual corn stockpiling scheme

25 September 2014

Brazil Business Today

Brazil's government took the unusual step of unveiling a corn stockpiling programme, on top of a wheat purchasing scheme, in what was viewed as an effort to "appease" growers being hurt by lower prices.

Neri Geller, the Brazilian agriculture minister, said that the government would, in a rare step, buy 1m-1.5m tonnes of corn for public inventories, on top of a purchase of 400,000-600,000 tonnes of wheat, which had previously been signalled.

The announcement, which comes less than two weeks before Brazilian elections, is highly unusual, although likely to be welcomed by farmers, who have seen corn prices fall below values guaranteed by the government.

Indeed, the scheme "looks like an effort to appease corn farmers, after the government appeased wheat farmers" by announcing earlier its wheat purchase plan, said Michael Cordonnier, the influential crop scout, and South American agricultural expert.

Typically, Brazil's government supports farmers through a so-called "premium equalizer paid to the producer", or Pepro, programme, which compensates growers if crop values fall below set minimums.

This is undertaken through a programme of so-called "auctions", giving farmers a window for claims.

However, after the government earlier this week reallocated to supporting cotton a large chunk of the R\$500m set aside for corn, doubts grew over the ability of the state to meet anything like Pepro demand.

"They only had enough money left for one more auction," Dr Cordonnier told Agrimoney.com.

"What they have announced today just looks like a roundabout way of supporting the price, in a different way to the auctions."

Mr Geller also unveiled an estimate of 90m-96m tonnes for Brazilian soybean output for 2014-15, a range which covers most private forecasts.

Separately, Abiove, the Brazilian vegetable oils industry group, pegged the next crop at 91m tonnes, above 2013-14 output it pegged at 86.3m tonnes, a downgrade of 200,000 tonnes from last month's figure.

Brazil's soybean exports will hit 48m tonnes in 2014-15, it said, a little above the forecast from the US Department of Agriculture, whose data set world benchmarks, of 46.7m tonnes, off production of 94.0m tonnes.

However, the prospect of a large soybean harvest appears set to add only more pressure to prices which are already, according to Brazil-based agricultural consultant Kory Melby, at the equivalent of \$7.00 a bushel in some areas.

"The one thing I do know with certainty, that if Brazil produces 95m+ tonnes of soybeans this year, they will wish on their tombstones that they never did," Mr Melby said.

"Farmers are fearful for their futures.

"If only Brazil could have stood pat instead of expanding. I hope China is hungry."

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Scottish farmers plant more barley to meet growing demand for whisky

24 September 2014

ABC

Scotland's second largest export behind oil-and-gas is whisky, but to make enough whisky to account for all the 'wee drams' enjoyed around the world, barley is an essential ingredient.

The whisky industry in Scotland is worth £4 billion per year, with around 40 bottles shipped overseas each second according to the Scottish Whisky Association.

The last decade has seen demand for whisky expand although more recently that demand has levelled off.

The increase in sales over the last 10 years has translated to changes in Scottish paddocks with farmers dedicating more land to growing barley.

Demand for the crop is so high that it has even been sourced from England.

In Scotland about 500,000 hectares of cereal crops are grown with more than half of that land dedicated to growing spring barley.

The region produces about 1.7 million tonnes of barley a year, compared to Australia's average annual production of around seven million tonnes.

Aberdeenshire farmer Richard Stephen, from Scotland's north east, says barley yields can be up around nine tonnes per hectare.

"Getting a good period of weather to get the crop in and out is the biggest problem," he said.

"We don't tend to get drought or floods or anything like that."

"There's been more spring barley coming back in, because the whisky trade has expanded massively with Chinese and Indian exports.

"We're producing a lot more spring malting barley than we used to."

Mr Steven says malt barley prices are variable but a lot of contract barley has sold at £170 per tonne for malt.

Minimum till has become standard practice in Australia with less farmers ploughing paddocks to sow crops.

However in the United Kingdom ploughing is still common practice when growing grain.

Perthshire farmer Adrian Ivory says minimum till hasn't caught on.

"We have found that with minimum till there's a lot of problems with bullet weeds. Our average field size on this farm is 38 acres, so that is important."

Generally the limiting factor to growing grain in Scotland is the wet, cold conditions.

However this season warm conditions reduced yields at Mr Ivory's farm.

"This year we had a really hot July, which actually had a really negative effect on wheat yield.

"The wheat crops were looking fantastic but they just died on their feet.

"My wife went out and bought the kids a swimming pool, but to tell you how long the heat lasted, it got used twice and has now been drained."

Mr Ivory says the winter was mild compared to normal conditions where they would have a week of minus 10 degree conditions.

"This year we had one frost. The crops got a lot of disease, because there was no frost or snow to kill it off.

"Where we sit, it's north of Moscow. It can get cold here."

Unlike in Australia, farmers in the United Kingdom receive subsidies for the land they farm and the products they grow.

"Subsidies make up about 15 per cent of our income. We'd like to see them gone, but if they're gone from us, they have to go from the whole of Europe."

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Australian wheat exports feeling pressure

24 September 2014

Sunday Morning Herald

Fears about tensions in Ukraine have been well allayed, with booming wheat production from the Black Sea region and elsewhere in Europe weighing on Australia's sixth biggest export.

The price of wheat has crashed 31 per cent since May to a four-year low. It was hit hard last week losing about 4 per cent over Thursday and Friday, following weaker-than-expected US export numbers.

ANZ analyst Paul Deane said the US sold 315 thousand tonnes of grain in last week, less than half of the previous week's sales number.

He said sugar, which has fallen about 25 per cent since mid-year, almost mirrored the decline in wheat, plunging 1.8 per cent on Thursday, as markets continue to be sensitive to excess global supply.

Rabobank grains analyst Graydon Chong said the American market, which in turn was weighing on Australian prices, was coming under pressure from increased supplies in Europe and the Black Sea region.

"A lot of that supply into ... the North African, Middle Eastern markets come out of Europe. The last Egyptian tender was won by French wheat, significantly below the market," Mr Chong said.

"We've obviously had Black Sea markets working into that region as well. They have got big suppliers coming on board which aren't from the US and as a result we've seen the US market trend lower to try to find some traction or find some demand."

This was not being helped by near perfect conditions fuelling record harvests in America and elsewhere in northern hemisphere.

It was initially feared the poor weather in the US and the Ukraine-Russian tensions, which erupted in February, would curb production but those concerns failed to eventuate.

"Ukraine really didn't have a big impact on commodity markets. It might have held up things a little bit but we have still seen the market being able to trend lower throughout the crisis that we've seen over there," Mr Chong said.

"The flow of grain certainly wasn't majorly disrupted by the issues that we had in that region.

Mr Chong said the latest official figures from the US had estimated that world wheat production has surge by 8 million tonnes, and demand was struggling to keep up.

"Global consumption was up by about 3.2 million tonnes, most of that being in China. I guess that, all in all, paints a pretty bearish story for wheat."

He expected prices to remain soft until the start of next year, saying "by which time we will see more some demand come back into the markets and the big crops that we have seen this year might not be as big next year".

Wheat is not the only crop that has been hammered. The price of corn has fallen about 28 per cent in the past

six weeks, while canola has dropped 19.3 per cent since late June.

Soybeans meanwhile have slipped 39 per cent.

Mr Chong attributed the falls in those prices to oversupply.

"I think we're projected for our second highest canola production here in Australia, which has kept a little bit of pressure on domestic prices.

"But we have also seen large crops out of Canada and the [European Union] as well. That's why we have seen prices come off so far this year for Australian prices.

"At the same time it's being pressured by the outside oilseeds complex. The fact that soybeans are so bearish is impacting canola prices as well."

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Argentina farmers start planting corn

18 September 2014

The Progressive Farmer

Rains have been ample across many parts of the Argentine grain belt over the last few weeks, allowing farmers to start planting corn in central and southern Santa Fe province, according to the Rosario Cereals Exchange.

The precipitation has caused flooding in some areas but has created perfect conditions for corn planting in many other parts of Buenos Aires and Santa Fe provinces.

Don't expect planting percentages to explode over the next few weeks though. That's because Argentine farmers are planting more and more of their crop late, in November and December, so that the corn isn't in the reproducing stages when the notorious January dry spells hit. This strategy saved Argentina from potential disaster last year.

Last week, the Buenos Aires Cereals Exchange forecast that corn output would drop 23% this season. Farmers will abandon the cereal because of low prices and economic turmoil, the exchange explained in a report.

With prices so low, farmers will switch land to soybeans, which is substantially cheaper to produce. Keeping costs down is very important in an economy where inflation rages at more than 30% per year.

The exchange forecasts output will fall to 20 million metric tons (mmt) from 25.2 mmt last year, while planted area is seen falling 16% to 7.4 million acres, from 8.8 million acres the year before.

Corn is costlier than soybeans, and also subject to export restrictions. The government has yet to announce how much corn it will license for export in the coming season. This lack of clarity on export potential is just another reason for farmers not to plant corn. Argentina is the world's No. 4 corn exporter.

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France wins Egypt wheat order with 'bargain' price

18 September 2014

Black Sea Grain

France won its biggest wheat order from top importer Gasc in 20 months thanks to a drop in prices far below levels offered from rival shippers, amid concerns over the strain caused to the country's logistics by a poor-quality harvest.

Gasc, the grain authority for Egypt, the top wheat importing country, purchased 180,000 tonnes of French wheat at tender, a volume it last bought from the European Union's top producer and exporter of the grain in

January 2013.

The French grain, purchased at an average of some \$229 a tonne excluding shipping, far undercut offers from rival origins, including Russia, whose exports have started 2014-15 at a record pace, backed by a strong harvest.

Indeed, analysis group SovEcon, which on Monday raised by 2m tonnes to 60m tonnes its forecast for the Russian wheat harvest, on Tuesday raised by 500,000 tonnes to 22.5m tonnes its estimate for 2014-15 exports, up from 18.3m tonnes last season.

However, the Russian wheat offered was some \$9 a tonne, or more, more expensive, even including the extra \$6-7 a tonne needed to ship from France to Egypt than from the Black Sea.

The winning French bids were also more than \$10 a tonne cheaper than the cargo Gasc purchased from the country two weeks ago.

"It looks like France has come in with some more of their bargain basement offers," a European trader said, attributing the price to "desperation" to clear space in the country's logistics network, which is unused to dealing with the range of qualities posed by a rain-hit harvest.

Traders at a major European commodities house have warned that the "variable quality of French wheat is causing all sorts of storage problems as they try to find room to segregate export milling, local milling and feed grades".

Late rains, in encouraging kernel sprouting, reduce crops' milling qualities, although the problem is not universal in France.

The French storage issue came to a head last week when Senalia, one of the two destinations for producers wishing to deliver wheat against Matif futures, revealed it was closing to fresh receivals.

The group, which can store up to 250,000 tonnes of grain, at the port of Rouen, blamed its decision on the poor outlook for exports, and the extent of crop it already had in store.

"For such an operation to stop taking deliveries in what should be the busiest part of the season is worrying to say the least," the European commodities house said.

French wheat imports outside the EU will fall to a seven-year low, FranceAgriMer said last week, in what is being seen as a sign of low volumes able to meet high specifications demanded by major North African importers, although shipments within the bloc will grow.

The French wheat offered to Gasc undercut cargos of US soft red winter wheat too which, even excluding shipping, were priced at \$231.40 a tonne at the cheapest.

The comparison did little to help prices of soft red winter wheat, the type traded in Chicago, which lost early gains to stand down 0.7% at \$4.97 ½ a bushel in Chicago for December delivery.

Paris wheat, meanwhile, was 0.5% higher at E162.25 a tonne – despite some appreciation in the euro against the dollar.

A stronger euro undermines prices of euro-denominated assets by making them less affordable to buyers in other currencies.

SovEcon said on Monday that Russian prices of wheat with 12.5% protein were stable last week at \$248 a tonne.

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Cargill sues Syngenta over corn seed trait sent to China

12 September 2014

Bloomberg

Cargill Inc., the grain exporter that's the largest closely held company in the U.S., sued seed maker Syngenta AG (SYNN) over claims it illegally marketed its Agrisure Viptera corn seed before gaining Chinese import approval.

Cargill's grain export facilities in Louisiana loaded the ships that were destined for and rejected by China and its corn has contaminated other shipments, leading to \$90 million in damages, according to a complaint filed today in state court in St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana.

"Syngenta has not practiced responsible stewardship," Mark Stonacek, president for Cargill's supply chain operations for North America, said in a statement. "Syngenta also put the ability of U.S. agriculture to serve global markets at risk."

China rejected U.S. corn imports since last year over the presence of an unapproved trait in Syngenta's seeds known as MIR 162, "virtually halting U.S. corn trade with China," Cargill said. U.S. exporters and farmers have lost as much as \$2.9 billion because of the uncertain trade environment, Cargill said in its complaint.

Cargill, based in Minneapolis, was forced to cancel contracts with Chinese companies and to redirect shipments to other markets, including Taiwan, Japan and Egypt, the company said in the complaint.

The trait was approved by the U.S. in 2010, Basel, Switzerland-based Syngenta said in a statement responding to the lawsuit.

"Syngenta believes that the lawsuit is without merit and strongly upholds the right of growers to have access to approved new technologies that can increase both their productivity and their profitability," the company said.

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Russia may exchange grain worth \$500 mln for Iranian oil

9 September 2014

Reuters

Russia is looking to supply grain worth up to \$500 million per year to Iran in exchange for oil, Russia's state grain trader said, in a further reduction to the value of a long-negotiated barter deal between the two countries.

Russia and Iran have been discussing an "oil-for-goods deal" since early 2014 as a way to get around Western sanctions imposed on both countries - on Moscow over the Ukraine crisis and Tehran over its nuclear programme.

Andrey Gormakh, first deputy chief executive of Russia's state-controlled grain trader, United Grain Company (UGC), was quoted by RIA news agency as saying the company was ready to supply between 1 million and 2 million tonnes of grain to Iran per year in return for oil.

That would be worth up to \$500 million, according to Reuters calculations based on current Russian wheat prices.

"This question is being discussed at the working meeting, but we've not been informed of the solution to the financial question," RIA quoted Gormakh as saying on the sidelines of a Russian-Iranian business forum in Tehran.

The European Union and the United States have imposed sanctions on Russian officials, banks and businessmen over Moscow's support for pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine.

Washington has also warned Russia against the oil-for-goods swap with Iran and said that kind of deal would

affect talks on Iran nuclear programme.

In January, sources told Reuters Iran and Russia were negotiating a swap worth \$1.5 billion a month, but as talks progressed, the figures of potential oil sales edged lower and were quoted at a 10th of the original plan by sources of business daily Kommersant in August.

Despite the possible political fallout, grain supplies are likely to be a win-win deal for Moscow and Tehran as Russia is set to harvest its largest wheat crop in six years, while Iran faces a poorer-than-expected domestic harvest.

Iran bought around 200,000 tonnes of wheat, traders said on Monday, as the Islamic Republic stepped up its import activity. In recent years, it has imported around 5 million tonnes of the essential staple, but sources estimate the current requirement at up to 6 million tonnes.

Gormakh estimated Iran's grain import needs at between 5 and 7 million tonnes per year.

He also said shipping Russian grain supplies to Iran's southern ports, if agreed, was likely to be expensive, while Iran's northern ports would not be able to accept large vessels from Russia.

Russia, one of the world's largest wheat exporters, has already harvested 50 million tonnes from 64 percent of the planned area. Its wheat exports for the 2014/15 marketing year which started on July 1 are seen at 22 million tonnes by Russia's Grain Union.

Kazakhstan, Central Asia's largest grain producer, also hopes to increase grain supplies to Iran fivefold to 2.5 million tonnes per year, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said in Astana on Tuesday.

He said the possibility of increasing supplies would come after the launch of the Iranian section of a railroad between Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran in November.

Kazakhstan has been exporting the bulk of its grain - mainly wheat and wheat flour - by rail. Nazarbayev did not say when 2.5 million tonnes of grain could be supplied to Iran.

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Reports

Brief on Russia's restrictions on food imports

September 2014

FAO

On 7 August 2014 Russia announced a ban on food imports from Western countries which, in an earlier move, had imposed sanctions on Russian business interests in connection with the crisis in eastern Ukraine. The prohibition was effective immediately, and will stay in place for one year, blocking all imports of affected products from the European Union, United States, Canada, Australia and Norway

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Global Food Price Monitor

September 2014

FAO

This short report describes current food prices at world, regional and country level with focusing on developing countries.

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Report on biofuel production and forecasts

September 2014

IEA

In 2013, new renewable power capacity expanded at its fastest pace to date. Globally, renewable generation was estimated on par with that from natural gas.

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U.S. Crop Price Update

September 2014

University of Missouri

This report provides a new snapshot of the five-year outlook for crop prices based on information available in mid-September 2014.

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Web-based resource

Food Price Monitoring and Analysis

September 2014

FAO

This web site contains latest information and analysis on domestic prices of basic foods mainly in developing countries, complementing FAO analysis on international markets. It provides early warning on high food prices at country level that may negatively affect food security.

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