FAO Statistical Yearbook

2012

Europe and Central Asia Food and agriculture



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Introduction

Foreword

A wealth of statistics on food and agriculture for the region of Europe and Centra Asia are currently being provided both by FAO and other regional data suppliers. No only are the volume and the coverage of data vast, but so is the diversity. This is reflection of the fact that agriculture is now increasingly intertwined with many othe sectors including the environment, the wider economy and society.

However, a platform that brings together all of the relevant region-specific data in a coherent, systematic and easily accessible way, so that readers can absorb the depth and breadth of the role of agriculture in this region today, is missing. We hope this FAO publication – the first ever FAO Statistical Yearbook dedicated to the region of Europe and Central Asia – provides such a platform.

Achieving food security and safety, and better nutrition for all, is at the heart of FAO's mission, by making sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. We strive to cooperate with countries in raising levels of nutrition, improving agricultural productivity, improving the lives of rural populations and ensuring that agriculture can be a sustainable platform for economic growth.

In addition to its essential role in food security, sustainable agricultural development is now regarded as pivotal in strategies towards enhancing rural well-being and balancing rural-urban migrations. Furthermore, policy makers agree that agriculture will

be key to effectively addressing the many challenging environmental issues of our time, including climate change, water scarcity, atmospheric and sea pollution, as well as land degradation. Agriculture has a clear role in providing ecosystem services to protect the environment and in preserving our planet's natural resource base. As the sector is now intertwined with almost every aspect of the development agenda, a major challenge is to capture and to monitor the multiple roles of agriculture.

Providing reliable and timely information on the status of food and agricultural sectors in multiple contexts is at the core of the FAO mandate, and in particular of the FAO Statistics Division, and the statisticians who work in the various FAO regional and country offices around the globe. Concerted efforts are being made by FAO and our partners to enhance country capacities in providing more, better quality and timely statistical information in response to the continuous need to improve the quality, quantity and scope of agricultural and rural statistics, particularly in assisting policy-makers and analysts.

In response to the demand for a more comprehensive region-specific set of statistics and indicators which are amenable to an ever-widening audience, we have attempted to meet the challenge through this statistical yearbook which is a thematically-driven, statistical snapshot of the major trends and issues related to food and agriculture in Europe and Central Asia.

We hope you will find this book informative and useful

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This book has been prepared by a team led by Salar Tayyib, FAO regional statistician for Europe and Central Asia, who is based in our Regional Office in Budapest, with valuable technical and thematic contributions from Pal Boday and the dedicated Statistical Yearbook team from the FAO Statistics Division in Rome composed of Kafkas Caprazli, Amanda Gordon, Amy Heyman, Filippo Gheri and Michael Kao.