



GIEWS Country Brief The Republic of Panama

Reference Date: 29-September-2023

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Harvesting of 2023 minor season paddy and maize crops ongoing
- Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2023/24 marketing year

Harvesting of 2023 minor season paddy and maize crops ongoing

Harvesting of the 2023 minor season paddy started in September with some delay, as below-average rainfall amounts in the April to May planting period resulted in the belated start of the cropping season. Remote sensing imagery in August indicated stressed conditions in parts of main producing western and eastern areas (VHI map), reflecting below-average rainfall amounts between April and July and above-average temperatures that intensified evapotranspiration. Planting of the 2023 main season paddy crop, to be harvested from November, is nearing completion. Weather forecasts point to average precipitation amounts in the October to December period over most cropping areas, bolstering yield expectations for the main crop. In the eastern region, below-average rainfall amounts are forecast during the above-mentioned period and are likely to constrain yields.

The area planted to the 2023 paddy crop is officially targeted at 93 000 hectares, near the five-year average. The 2023 aggregate production of paddy crops, mostly rainfed, is preliminarily forecast at slightly a below-average level of 350 000 tonnes due to below-average yields of the minor crop, on account of adverse weather conditions.

Similarly, harvesting of the minor season maize crop is ongoing and rainfall deficits between May and August are likely to result in below-average crop conditions in the key producing province of Los Santos, in the southern part of the country. Favourable rainfall forecasts in the coming months are expected to replenish soil moisture deficits and improve yields of the 2023 main maize crop, to be harvested from December.

The government took a series of measures to protect agricultural livelihoods, including the provision of [low interest rate a \(1 percent\) loans](#) to small and medium-sized farmers, the implementation of projects to [strengthen resilience](#) through restoration of dams and construction of wells, and rainwater harvesting system, with a total budget of USD 10 million. To

Panama

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



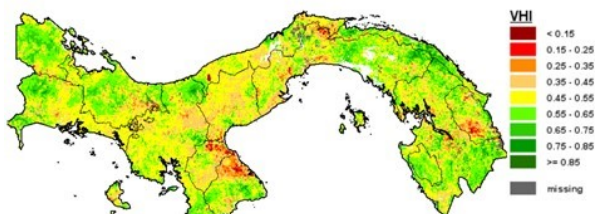
Sowing

Growing

Harvesting

Panama - Vegetation Health Index (VHI)

August 2023



Panama

Cereal Production

	2018-2022 average	2022	2023 estimate	change 2023/2022
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	364	360	350	-2.8
Maize	121	123	113	-8.1
Sorghum	5	5	5	0.0
Total	490	488	468	-4.1

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

guarantee the supply of staple food, the government [approved](#) imports of about 90 000 tonnes of paddy at a zero tariff in 2023. By end-August 2023, about 70 000 tonnes of paddy were [imported](#). In July 2023, the maximum ceilings on retail prices of 18 staple food products such as rice, vegetable oil, spaghetti, milk powder and whole chicken, were [extended](#) for additional six months.

Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2023/24 marketing year

Cereal import requirements in the 2023/24 marketing year (August/July) are forecast at an above-average level of 875 000 tonnes. This is due to the sustained demand of wheat for human consumption and maize by the feed industry, compounded by the expected decline in domestic cereal production in 2023.

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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/>.

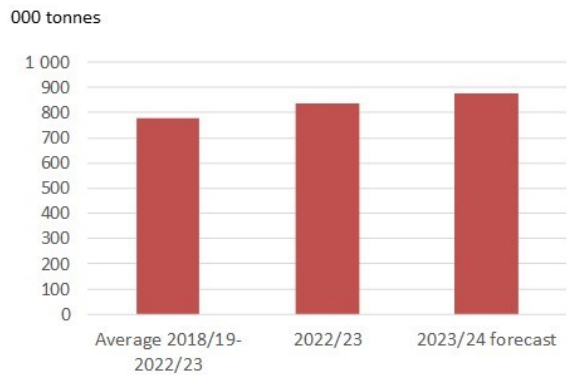
FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool <https://fpma.fao.org/>.

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

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

Panama

Cereals Imports



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



GIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 22-August-2022

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Harvesting of 2022 minor paddy crop started in August**
- **Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2022/23 marketing year**
- **Government implemented various measures to contain increases in food prices**

Harvesting of 2022 minor paddy crop started in August

The 2022 minor season paddy harvest started in August and will be completed by September. Crop conditions are generally favourable in the key producing western region (see green areas in the VHI map) due to good seasonal rains between April and July. The ongoing sowing operations of the main paddy crop will continue until end-September. Weather forecasts point to average to above-average precipitation for the September-November period, bolstering yield expectations for the main crop.

The planted area planned for the 2022 paddy crop is at an average level of 90 000 hectares. Availabilities of inputs, including seeds, fertilizers and herbicides, were reported to be sufficient to [cover](#) the total annual paddy and maize production in 2022. However, fertilizer imports in the first half of 2022 were 15 percent below the same period of the previous three years, due to high international prices of fertilizers. The 2022 aggregate production of paddy crops, mostly rainfed, is preliminarily forecast at an above-average level of 390 000 tonnes, reflecting positive yield prospects for both main and minor crops resulting from favourable weather conditions.

Similarly, harvesting of the minor season maize crop is ongoing. Crop conditions in the key producing province of Los Santos, in the southern part of the country, are below the long-term average due to below-average precipitation between June and July. Favourable rainfall forecasts in the coming months are expected to replenish soil moisture deficits and improve yields of the 2022 main maize crop, to be harvested from December.

Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2022/23 marketing year

Cereal import requirements in the 2022/23 marketing year (September/August) are forecast at an above-average level of

Panama

Crop Calendar

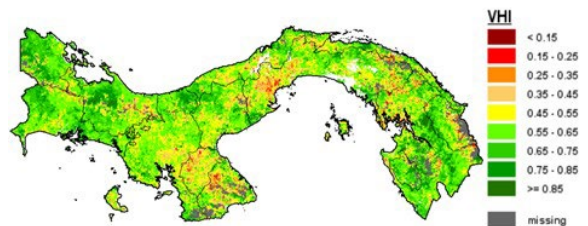
(*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Panama - Vegetation Health Index (VHI)

July 2022



Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.

Panama

Cereal Production

	2017-2021	2021	2022	change
	average			2022/2021
000 tonnes				
Rice (paddy)	355	383	390	1.8
Maize	120	122	120	-1.6
Sorghum	5	5	5	0.0
Total	480	510	515	1.0

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

835 000 tonnes. This is due to the sustained demand of wheat for human consumption and maize by the feed industry.

Government implemented various measures to contain increases in food prices

Retail prices of rice have been fixed by the Executive Decree No. 165 since mid-2014. In July 2022, the number of food items falling under the maximum price ceilings was expanded from 14 to 18 and [include](#) vegetable oil, spaghetti and elbow pasta, sliced bread and loaf called “*michita*”, lentils, milk powder, whole chicken, etc.

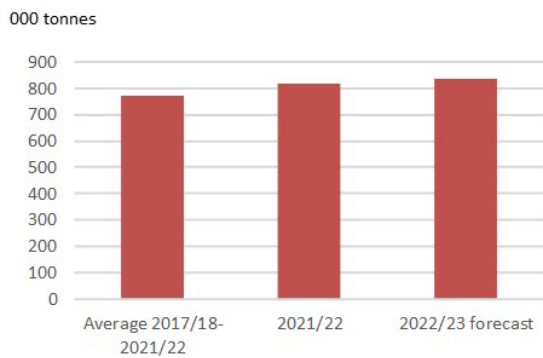
Regarding beans, after declining seasonally from November 2021 to May 2022, wholesale prices rebounded in June and were about 10 percent higher year on year. Prices of maize also remained higher than their year-earlier levels as of June 2022, reflecting elevated export prices in the United States of America, the country’s main maize supplier.

In July 2022, the government implemented a series of measures to contain price increases, amid rising inflation, with the annual inflation rate of food items estimated at [4.8 percent in July 2022](#). In addition to the expansion of the coverage of the price ceiling programme, the government announced to provide [subsidies](#) of 25 percent on 36 locally produced food products sold in the state-run Agricultural Marketing Institute (IMA) stores and markets. Furthermore, [import tariffs](#) on 12 products, including wheat flour, maize meal, soybean and palm oil, were eliminated. For some imported products, such as wheat flour, bread, maize flour and flakes, vegetable oil, the cap on the [gross profit margin of its commercialization](#) in retail market was introduced.

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Panama

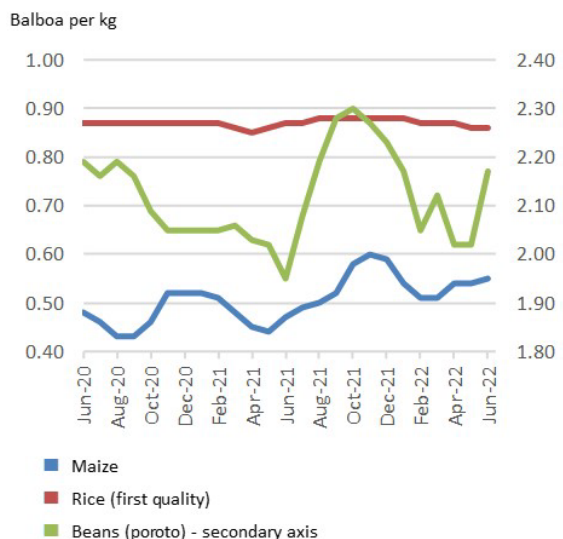
Cereals Imports



Notes: 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.

Panama

Wholesale prices in Panama City



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



GIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 25-October-2021

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Harvesting of 2021 paddy crop ongoing and production prospects favourable**
- **Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2021/22 marketing year**
- **Prices of maize and beans higher than year-earlier levels in September**

Harvesting of 2021 paddy crop ongoing and production prospects favourable

Following the minor season paddy harvest in the August to October period, harvesting of the 2021 main crop will be underway between November 2021 and January 2022. Production prospects are favourable due to above-average yields, as well-distributed rains between May and September in the key producing western region had a positive impact on the paddy crop, which is predominantly rainfed. Planted area is estimated at an above-average level following the increasing trend since 2015. According to the analysis by the Ministry of Agriculture, farmgate prices of rice have been generally increasing since 2015, suggesting improved financial gains for farmers.

The 2021 main season maize crop is currently at flowering stage and will be harvested between December 2021 and February 2022. The area sown was average due to slightly below-average rainfall levels at planting time in the main producing provinces of Los Santos and Herrera. Weather forecasts indicate a high likelihood of average precipitation amounts in southern areas in November and December 2021, with a positive impact on yields. The 2021 aggregate maize production, including the early harvested main season output, is forecast at an average level.

Cereal import requirements forecast at high levels in 2021/22 marketing year

Cereal import requirements in the 2021/22 marketing year (September/August) are forecast at the high level of 820 000 tonnes due to the sustained demand of maize by the domestic feed industry. Wheat imports are forecast to rise for the fourth consecutive year, reflecting the increasing need for wheat products in line with population growth.

Panama

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Sowing
Growing
Harvesting

Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Panama

Cereal Production

	2016-2020 average	2020	2021 forecast	change 2021/2020
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	340	365	380	4.2
Maize	122	125	122	-2.1
Sorghum	5	5	5	0.0
Total	467	494	507	2.6

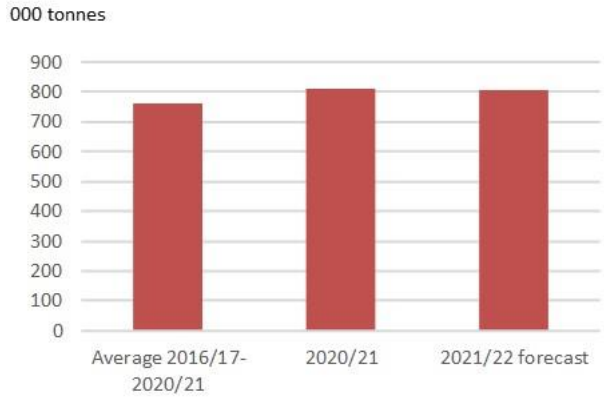
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Prices of maize and beans higher than year-earlier levels in September

Prices of rice are generally stable as the government regulates them. Rice is one of the 14 basic food items of which maximum prices are fixed since mid-2014 under the Executive Decree No. 165. Regarding beans, prices increased seasonally during the third quarter of 2021. As of September, they were 5 percent higher than a year earlier in line with trends in the international market. Prices of maize have been increasing since June 2021 and were more than 20 percent higher year on year in September due to the elevated export prices in the United States of America, the main maize supplier to the country.

Panama

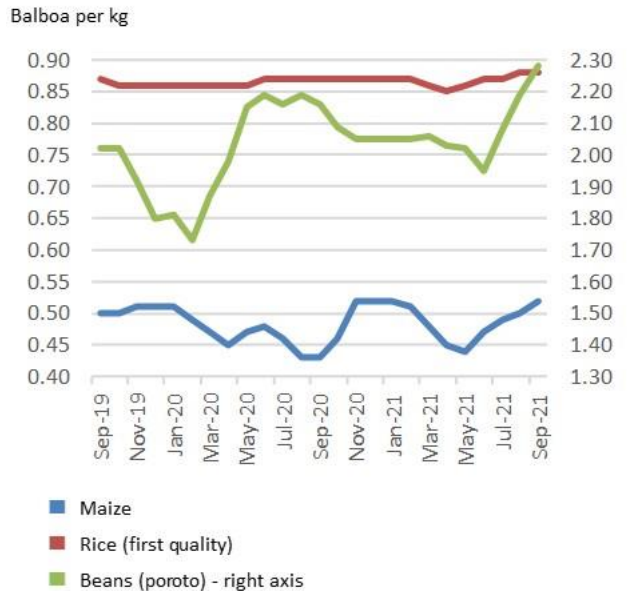
Cereals Imports



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.

Panama

Wholesale prices in Panama City



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

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GIIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 04-May-2021

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Planting of 2021 minor season paddy crop ongoing under favourable weather conditions
- Cereal production in 2020 estimated above-average level
- Cereal import requirements anticipated at high levels in 2020/21 marketing year
- Prices of beans stable in March and higher than year earlier

Planting of 2021 minor season paddy crop ongoing under favourable weather conditions

Planting of the 2021 minor season paddy crop is ongoing following a timely onset of seasonal rains in April. Plantings are forecast at an above-average level, following the increasing trend since 2015. According to the analysis by the Ministry of Agriculture, prices of rice paid to farmers have been generally increasing since 2015, suggesting improved financial gains for farmers. The weather forecasts indicate a high likelihood of average precipitation in the May-July period, providing conducive conditions for crop development and flowering.

Cereal production in 2020 estimated above-average level

The 2020 cereal output is estimated at 485 000 tonnes, about 10 percent higher than the previous five-year average level. This mainly reflects the large paddy harvests due to the above-average plantings.

Cereal import requirements anticipated at high levels in 2020/21 marketing year

Cereal import requirements in the 2020/21 marketing year (September/August) are anticipated at high levels of 820 000 tonnes due to the sustained demand of maize by the domestic feed industry. Maize imports account for about 70 percent of the total import requirements. Between July and December 2020, the Government suspended tariffs on imports of yellow maize with the aim to lower the production costs of poultry and porcine industries.

Panama

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Sowing
Growing
Harvesting

Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Panama

Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 estimate	change 2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	323	360	365	1.2
Maize	114	110	115	4.5
Sorghum	5	5	5	0.0
Total	442	475	485	2.0

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

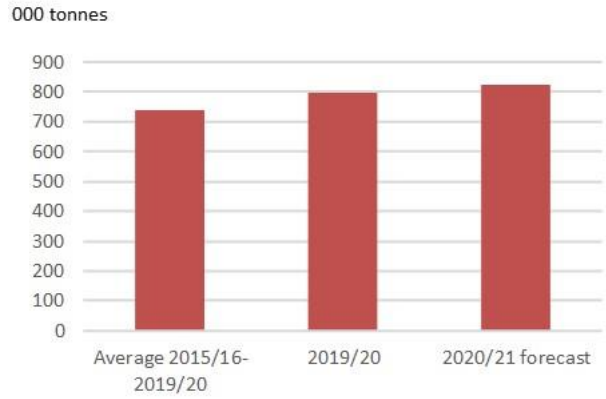
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Prices of beans stable in March and higher than year earlier

Prices of rice are generally stable as the Government regulates them. Rice is one of the 14 basic food items whose maximum prices are fixed since mid-2014 under the Executive Decree No. 165. Regarding beans, prices have been stable for the fourth consecutive month in March 2021, reflecting adequate market availabilities. However, prices were nearly 10 percent higher year on year, after the upsurge in domestic demand amidst the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Prices of maize declined in the first quarter of 2021 due to large import flows between September 2020 and February 2021.

Panama

Cereals Imports

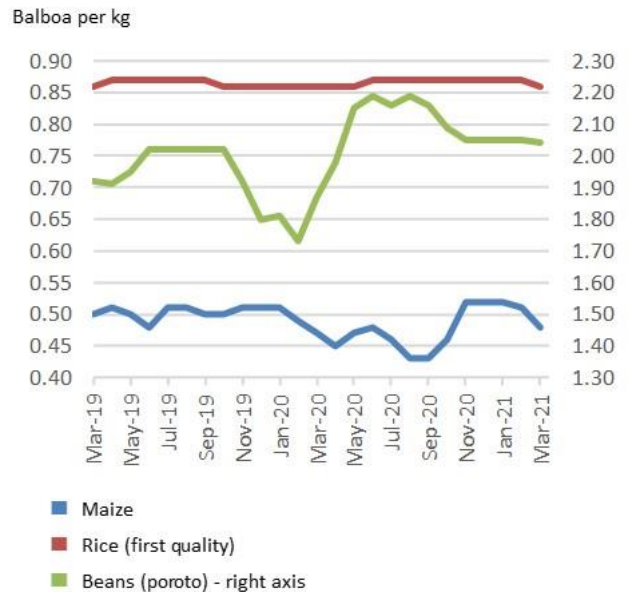


Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Panama

Wholesale prices in Panama City



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

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GIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 19-October-2020

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Paddy production in 2020 forecast at slightly above-average level
- Cereal import requirements anticipated at high levels in 2020/21 marketing year
- Prices of beans stable in September and higher year on year

Paddy production in 2020 forecast at slightly above-average level

Harvesting of the 2020 predominantly rainfed minor season paddy crop is nearing completion. Production is expected at an average level due to favourable rainfall during the second quarter of 2020 that bolstered crop yields.

Harvesting of the 2020 main season paddy crop will start in November and production prospects are favourable mainly reflecting above-average plantings, instigated by agricultural credits provided to farmers. The Government provided USD 2.5 million of zero credit loans during the July-September period in order to boost production of rice, maize and beans in the major producing provinces of Los Santos, Coclé and Chiriquí. According to satellite imagery, crop conditions are reportedly near average.

Cereal import requirements anticipated at high levels in 2020/21 marketing year

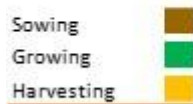
Cereal import requirements in the 2020/21 marketing year (September/August) are anticipated at an above-average level of 820 000 tonnes due to the sustained demand of maize by the domestic feed industry. Maize imports account for about 70 percent of the total import requirements. In July 2020, the Government suspended tariffs on imports of yellow maize in order to lower production costs of poultry and porcine industries.

Prices of beans stable in September and higher year on year

Prices of rice have been stable throughout the year as they are regulated by the Government. Rice is one of the 14 basic food items whose maximum prices are fixed since mid-2014 under the Executive Decree No. 165. Prices of beans have been stable since July, after the sharp increases during the March-June period due to seasonally tight supplies and the upsurge of

Panama

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Panama

Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 forecast	change 2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	311	315	320	1.6
Maize	114	110	115	4.5
Total	425	425	435	2.4

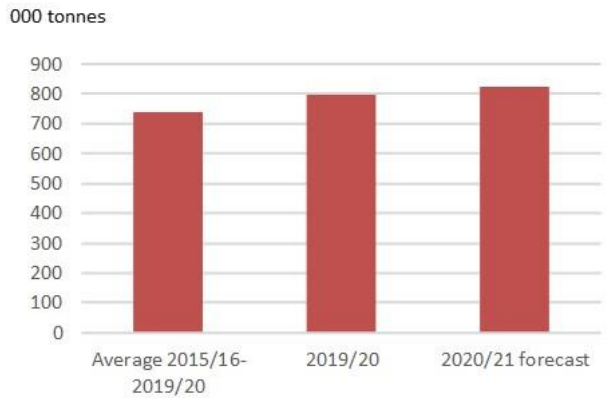
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

domestic demand amid the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of September, prices of beans were about 7 percent higher year on year. Prices of maize were also stable in September after declining in July and August due to large import flows. In September, prices of maize were more than 10 percent lower year on year reflecting abundant market availabilities.

Panama

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.

Panama

Wholesale prices in Panama City



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



GIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 25-May-2020

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Favourable production prospects for 2020 main season crops
- Cereal imports anticipated to remain high in 2019/20 marketing year
- Prices of beans increasing seasonally in April

Favourable production prospects for 2020 main season crops

Planting of the 2020 predominantly rainfed main season paddy crop is ongoing. After the drier-than-normal weather conditions in April, precipitation improved since mid-May and planted area is forecast at an average level due to the governmental subsidies paid to farmers to increase farm income. Precipitation is forecast at an average level for the June-August period across the key producing western and central areas, bolstering prospects for crop yields.

Planting of the 2020 minor season maize crop is also underway, supported by adequate precipitation in the main producing departments of Los Santos and Herrera. Plantings are forecast to increase slightly from last year's low levels, prompted by a series of measures implemented by the Government to promote maize sowings that have been declining during the past ten years. In December 2019, the milling industry agreed to purchase 78 000 tonnes of locally produced maize (about 70 percent of the annual production) from January to April 2020. The Government approved the payment of subsidies to farmers who will receive USD 3 per each 1 Spanish quintal (46 kg) harvested in 2020. In order to support vulnerable producers and boost their production, the Government also distributed rice and maize seeds and inputs (fungicides, insecticides and tools) under the *Agro Vida* programme to smallholder farmers identified as the population in poverty.

Cereal imports anticipated to remain high in 2019/20 marketing year

Cereal import requirements in the 2019/20 marketing year (September/August) are anticipated at about 760 000 tonnes, 7 percent above the previous five-year average due to a sustained demand of yellow maize by the local feed industry and of wheat for human consumption.

Panama

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Sowing
Growing
Harvesting

Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Panama

Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 forecast	change 2020/2019
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	311	315	320	1.6
Maize	114	110	115	4.5
Total	425	425	435	2.4

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

Prices of beans increasing seasonally in April

Prices of rice have been stable throughout the year as they are regulated by the Government. Rice is one of the 14 basic food items of which maximum prices are fixed since mid-2014 under the Executive Decree No. 165. Prices of red beans increased for the second consecutive month in April in line with seasonal trends. Prices of maize continued to decline in April due to weakening prices of imported grains from the United States of America and were about 10 percent lower year on year.

COVID-19 and measures adopted by the Government

As an effort to support agricultural producers and small and medium-sized enterprises that were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government [launched the Agro-Solidarity Plan](#) and allocated PAB 300 million (equivalent to USD 300 million) to the National Bank and the Agricultural Development Bank. The banks will grant loans of up to PAB 100 000 (equivalent to USD 100 000) at a zero interest rate to producers of basic grains, horticulture, roots and tuber crops as well as livestock in the 2020 and 2021 agricultural seasons. The Government also [increased social spending](#) by providing cash transfer and distributing basic food items under the Panama Solidarity Plan, which benefited 1.8 million vulnerable households [as of mid-May](#).

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Panama

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



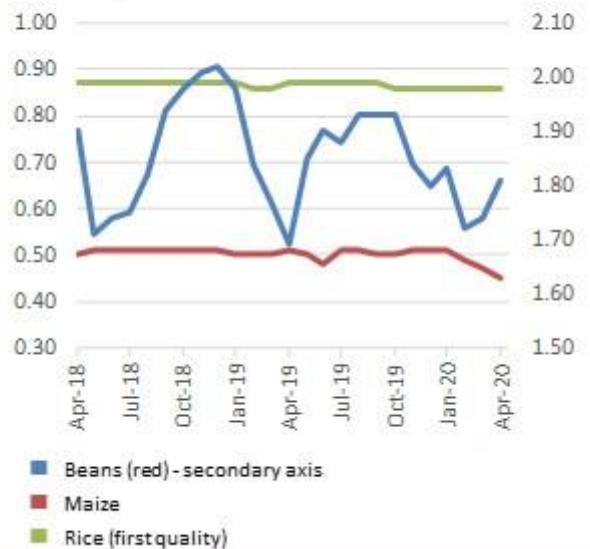
Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Panama

Wholesale prices in Panama City

Balboa per kg



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



GIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 30-January-2020

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Rice production in 2019 expected at above-average level
- Cereal imports anticipated to remain high in 2019/20 marketing year
- Prices of rice stable, while those of beans declining due to good market supplies

Rice production in 2019 expected at above-average level

Harvesting of the 2019 minor paddy crop is nearing completion under favourable conditions. The 2019 aggregate rice production, including the major crop harvested in the August-October period, is expected at 315 000 tonnes, 5 percent higher than the last five-year average, due to an increase in area planted and beneficial rainfall during both seasons. The enlarged plantings mainly reflect continued Government support, particularly official purchases of rice at guaranteed floor prices.

Harvesting of the 2019 minor season maize crop is ongoing. Aggregate production in 2019 is anticipated at a below-average level of 105 000 tonnes, following the decline in area sown as farmers shifted to more remunerable crops, such as horticulture or rice.

Cereal imports anticipated to remain high in 2019/20 marketing year

Cereal import requirements in the 2019/20 marketing year (September/August) are anticipated at about 740 000 tonnes, 6 percent above the previous five-year average due to sustained demand for yellow maize by the local feed industry and for wheat for human consumption.

Prices of rice stable, while those of beans declining due to good market supplies

Prices of rice were stable during the last quarter of 2019 and were similar to a year earlier, reflecting adequate domestic supplies. Prices of beans have been declining since October 2019, as the main season harvest increased market supplies. In December 2019, prices were lower, year on year, due to good outputs obtained in 2019.

Panama

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Sowing
Growing
Harvesting

Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Panama

Cereal Production

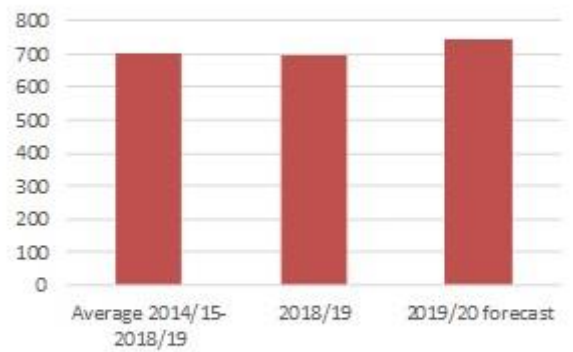
	2014-2018 average	2018	2019 estimate	change 2019/2018
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	302	336	345	2.7
Maize	120	111	105	-5.6
Sorghum	5	5	5	0.0
Total	427	452	455	0.6

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

Panama

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



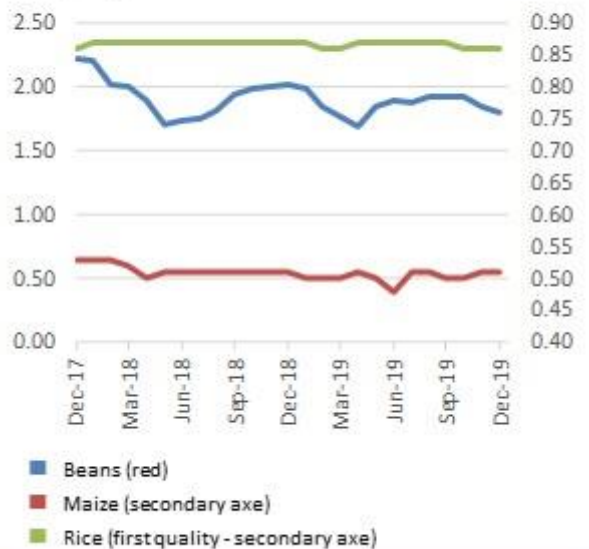
Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Panama

Wholesale prices in Panama City

Balboa per kg



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

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GIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 05-June-2019

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Dry conditions reduce production prospects for 2019 minor season crops
- Cereal imports anticipated to remain high in 2018/19 marketing year
- Prices of rice stable in April, while those of maize on the rise due to concerns over dryness

Dry conditions reduce production prospects for 2019 minor season crops

Planting operations of the 2019 minor season rice and maize crops are well advanced under dry conditions. According to remote sensing analysis (see VHI map), vegetation conditions were generally poor in the south and eastern regions. With a considerable proportion (about 80 percent) of the rice crop being rainfed, development of paddy is susceptible to water stress. Further, the subsidy mechanism (USD 7.5 for every 46 kg of paddy) for rice producers is foreseen to terminate in June 2019, which may discourage plantings of the main crop, expected to start in July.

Rice production in 2018 is estimated at an above average level of 320 000 tonnes, mostly reflecting sufficient rainfall during the critical development stage of the main season, in the October-November period.

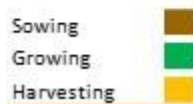
With regards to maize, dry conditions are prevailing in the key producing provinces of Los Santos and Herrera (with about 80 percent of the total annual maize output) are raising concerns over the production prospects of the current minor season output. Some farmers reported that plantings have been disrupted and crops have failed to germinate properly. The official weather forecast for the May-July period indicates a high probability of below-average precipitation in key maize producing southern regions, which could intensify soil moisture deficits for the main maize planting, expected to start in August.

Cereal imports anticipated to remain high in 2018/19 marketing year

Cereal imports in the 2018/19 marketing year (September/August) are forecast at 707 000 tonnes, 9 percent above the previous five-year average, reflecting a strong demand of yellow maize by the feed industry.

Panama

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

Panama

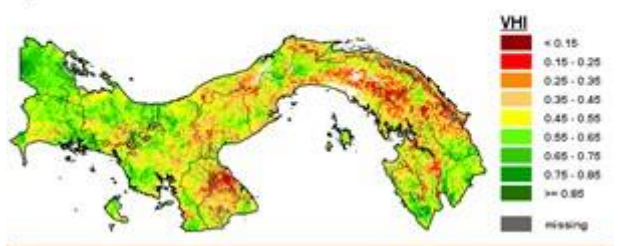
Cereal Production

	2013-2017 average	2017	2018 estimate	change 2018/2017
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	292	316	320	1.1
Maize	124	116	118	1.6
Sorghum	5	5	5	0.0
Total	421	438	443	1.3

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

Panama - Vegetation Health Index (VHI)

April 2019



Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.

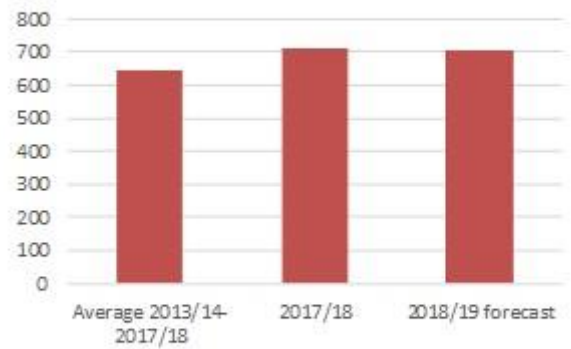
Prices of rice stable in April, while those of maize on the rise due to concerns over dryness

In April, wholesale prices of rice were similar to last year's level for the same period, reflecting adequate imports, while prices of maize increased seasonally and were higher year on year due to concerns over the 2019 output. Prices for red beans and *poroto* were below their levels from a year earlier reflecting good 2018 outputs.

Panama

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



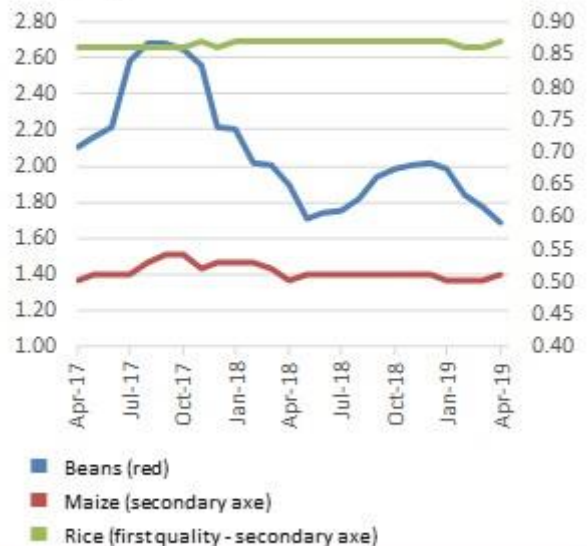
Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Panama

Wholesale prices in Panama City

Balboa per kg



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

Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of FAO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.



GIIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 29-June-2017

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Cereal production anticipated to increase in 2017
- Cereal imports forecast to decline in 2017/18 marketing year
- Cereal prices unchanged in early June

Cereal production anticipated to increase in 2017

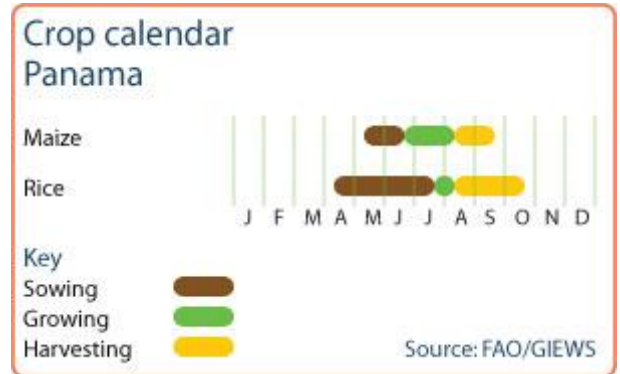
Planting operations of the 2017 rice and maize crops are well advanced. Precipitation levels during the sowing period have been favourable across most regions of the country. According to FAO, rice sowings are anticipated to increase by about 2 percent from last year's above-average level. Maize plantings are also expected to increase from last year's level. The anticipated increases in plantings for rice and maize mainly reflect the continued Government support, particularly through the provision of seeds, official purchases and a guaranteed floor price for rice. If weather conditions remain favourable throughout the cropping season, FAO forecasts an increase in cereal output of 10 percent to 445 000 tonnes, recovering from the reduced levels of 2015 and 2016.

Cereal imports forecast to decline in 2017/18 marketing year

Cereal imports in the 2017/18 marketing year (September/August) are forecast at 632 000, sharply below last year's record level. The expected decline mainly reflects the anticipated strong recovery in cereal output and carryover stocks from the previous year's high import levels. Most of the anticipated decline in imports are expected to come from lower maize purchases.

Cereal prices unchanged in early June

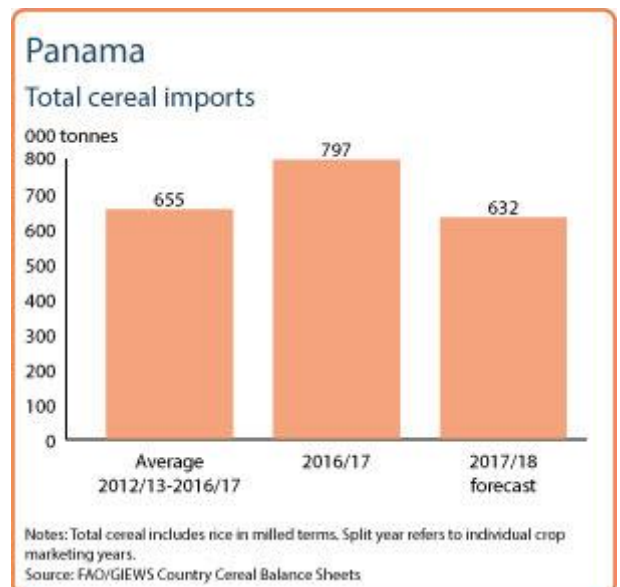
Prices for the main staples, rice and maize, were unchanged in early June and below last year's level for the same period, reflecting adequate imports. Prices for red beans, another major staple, were also stable in early June, but were significantly above their levels from a year earlier reflecting lower 2016 outputs.



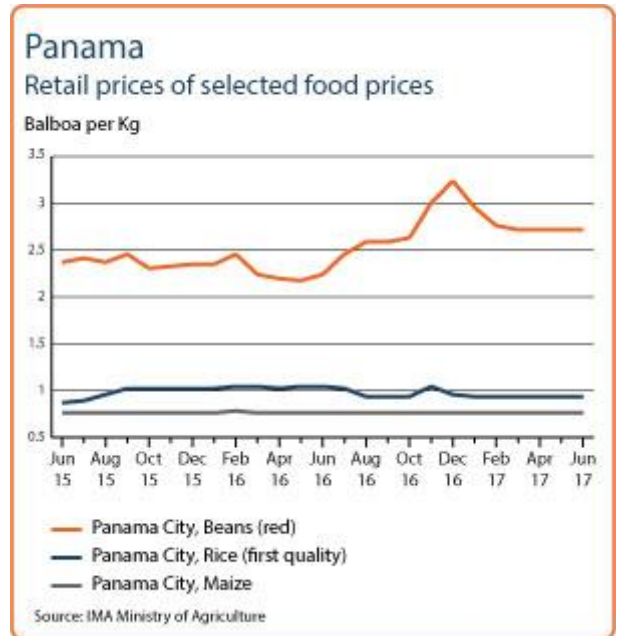
Panama Cereal production

	2012-2016 average	2016	2017 forecast	change 2017/2016
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	275	300	310	3
Maize	119	100	130	30
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	398	405	445	10

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



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GIIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 31-March-2017

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Cereal production anticipated to increase in 2017
- Cereal imports forecast to remain high in 2016/17 marketing year
- Cereal prices unchanged in March

Cereal production anticipated to increase in 2017

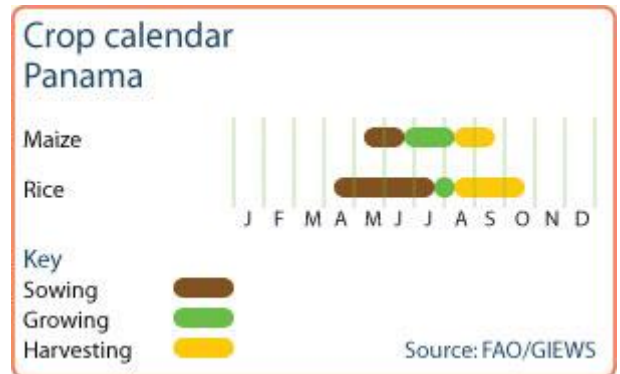
Planting of the 2017 rice crop is about to begin under normal weather conditions as rainfall levels have been about average across most regions of the country. According to FAO, rice sowings are anticipated to increase about 2 percent from last year's above-average level. Maize plantings, which will begin in May, are also anticipated to increase from last year's level. The anticipated increases in plantings, for rice and maize, mainly reflect continued Government support, particularly through the provision of seeds, official purchases and a guaranteed floor price for rice. If weather conditions remain favourable throughout the cropping season, FAO anticipates an increase in cereal output of 10 percent, recovering from the reduced levels of 2015 and 2016. However, some uncertainty about this forecast remains as the probability of an El Niño event during the June-August period, at the end of vegetative growth and the beginning of the harvest, has risen above 50 percent.

Cereal imports forecast to remain high in 2016/17 marketing year

Cereal imports in the 2016/17 marketing year (September/August) are forecast at 782 000, some 3 percent above last year's record level. The increases mainly reflects the high levels of maize imports, as 2016 maize output was lower than initially anticipated. Rice and wheat imports are anticipated to remain about average to slightly above average.

Cereal prices unchanged in March

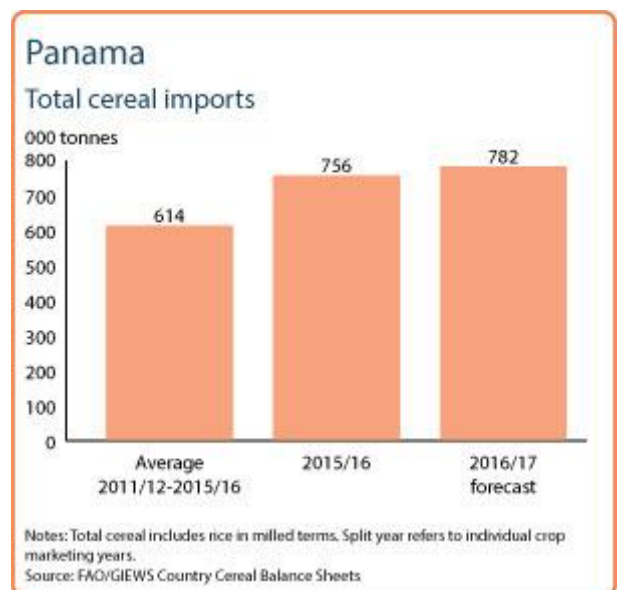
Retail prices of rice, the country's main staple, were unchanged during the first half of March from their level a month earlier. Reflecting increased Government sales and imports, prices were some 10 percent below year-earlier levels. Maize prices up to mid-March were unchanged from their levels a month and a year earlier, as high import levels continued to maintain price stability. Prices of red beans, an important staple food, decreased by some 2 percent in March.



**Panama
Cereal production**

	2012-2016 average	2016	2017 forecast	change 2017/2016
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	274	300	310	3
Maize	119	100	130	30
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	398	405	445	10

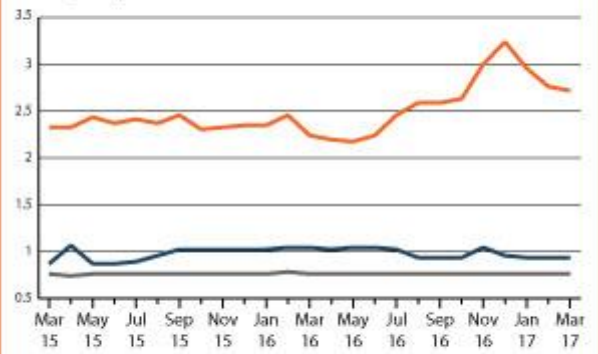
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



Panama

Retail prices of selected food prices

Balboa per Kg

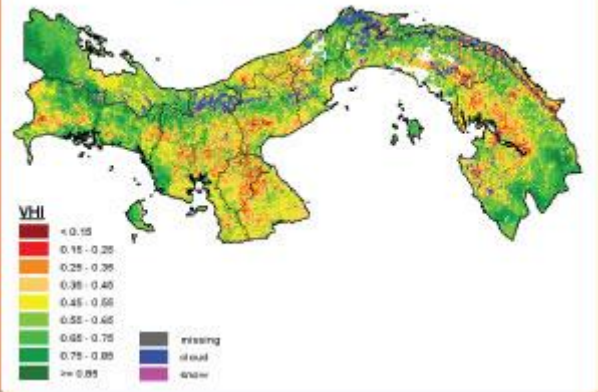


- Panama City, Beans (red)
- Panama City, Rice (first quality)
- Panama City, Maize

Source: IMA Ministry of Agriculture

Panama - Vegetation Health Index (VHI)

Dekad 2 March 2017





GIEWS Country Brief Panama

Reference Date: 02-November-2016

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Cereal production recovers in 2016
- Cereal imports forecast to remain high in 2016/17 marketing year (July/June)
- Cereal prices unchanged in October

Cereal production recovers in 2016

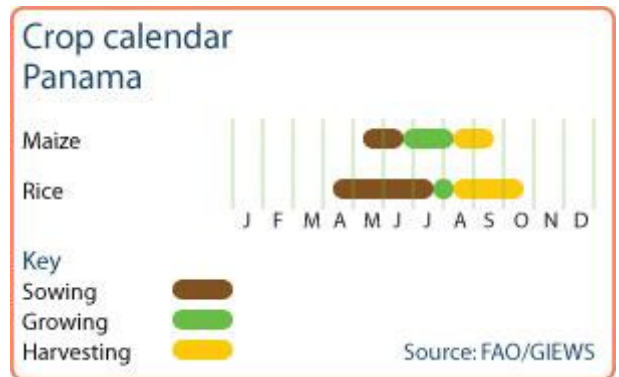
The harvest of the main cereal season crop concluded in October and early estimates point to a good outcome. Cereal production in 2016 is estimated at 425 000 tonnes or 9 percent above last year's drought-reduced level and surpassing the five-year average. The recovery in cereal output mainly reflects an increase of 26 percent in maize output, which last year was significantly affected by drought caused by the 2015 El Niño phenomenon. While maize plantings remained close to the five-year average, this year's increased precipitation benefited yields. Rice production, which accounts for more than two-thirds of cereal output, is estimated marginally higher than last year, as improved precipitations increased sowings, particularly of non-irrigated rice.

Cereal imports forecast to remain high in 2016/17 marketing year (July/June)

Cereal imports in the 2016/17 marketing year (July/June) are forecast to decline from last year's record level and reach 527 000 tonnes, but remain above the five-year average. The decline mainly reflects an anticipated reduction in maize purchases, which constitute two-thirds of the cereal imports, as a result of this year's recovery in production and ample carryover stocks from 2015. Wheat and rice imports are anticipated to remain close to last year's level.

Cereal prices unchanged in October

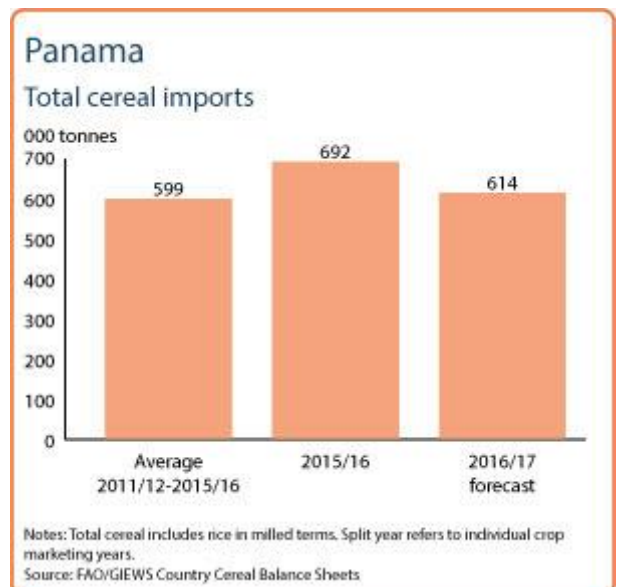
Retail prices of rice, the country's main staple, were unchanged in October, and almost 9 percent below their level a year earlier reflecting the entry into the market of supplies from the recent harvest. Maize prices in October were unchanged from the previous month and a year earlier, reflecting ample supplies from imports and the recent harvest. Prices of beans, a main staple, were also unchanged but were above year-earlier levels as the main season harvest will not start until the end of the year.



**Panama
Cereal production**

	2011-2015 average	2015	2016 forecast	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	273	282	290	3
Maize	120	103	130	26
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	398	390	425	9

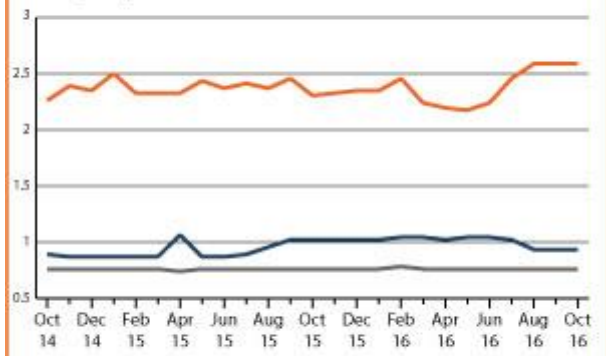
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



Panama

Retail prices of selected food prices

Balboa per Kg



— Panama City, Beans (red)
— Panama City, Rice (first quality)
— Panama City, Maize

Source: IMA Ministry of Agriculture

Reference Date: 12-March-2014

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Rice production in 2013 decreased for the second consecutive year
- Cereal imports forecast to increase in 2013/14 marketing year (July/June)
- Cereals were at high levels in February

Rice production in 2013 decreased for a second consecutive year

Harvesting of the 2013 rice crop was completed in October and production is estimated 7 percent lower than last year and well below the five year average at 230 000 tonnes. The decline is mainly a result of a decrease in plantings from the already reduced level of 2012 due to increased production costs and credit constraints. In the main producing province of Chiriquí, the reduction in this year's output also reflects lower yields following the mite outbreak, which according to official reports has affected 30 percent of the area planted to rice as the spread of the plague was facilitated by excessive humidity in the soil. In response to the situation, the Government provided subsidies to rice growers to increase their area planted for the smaller second season crop (August/January) which is currently being harvested.

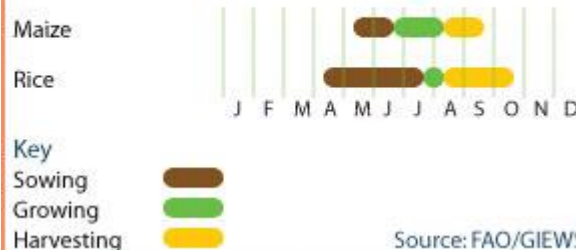
Cereal imports forecast to increase in 2013/14 marketing year (July/June)

Cereal imports in 2013/14 marketing year (July/June) are forecast to increase by 3 percent from last year's already high level and reach 610 000 tonnes. The increase reflects larger rice imports from the United States and Brazil, expected to grow by almost 9 percent and reach 98 000 tonnes, due to lower domestic availabilities. Wheat and maize imports are also anticipated slightly up from 2012 in order to satisfy human consumption and the steady demand for animal feed.

Cereal prices at high levels in February

Retail prices of rice, the country's main staple, increased slightly in February and were 9 percent higher than a year earlier, reflecting two consecutive years of reduced production. Red bean prices remained stable but 5 percent above their year-earlier levels, supported by a reduced subregional output. Maize prices were also unchanged but at the same levels of February 2013.

Crop calendar Panama



Panama

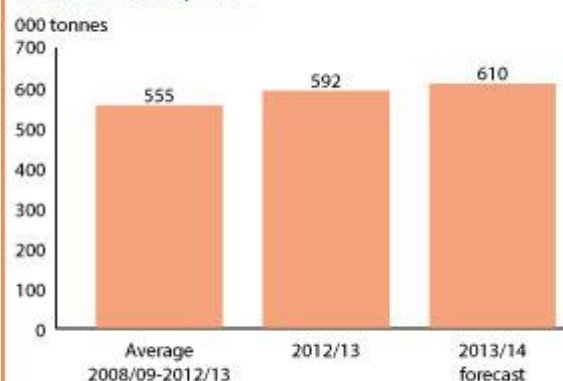
Cereal production

	2008-2012 average	2012	2013 estimate	change 2013/2012
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	285	248	230	-7
Maize	86	82	85	4
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	377	335	320	-4

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

Panama

Total cereal imports

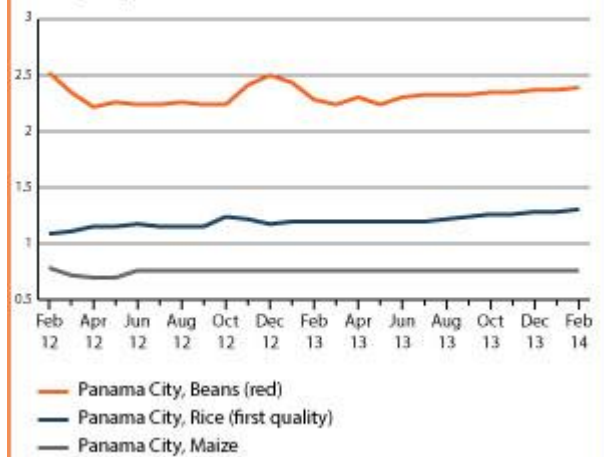


Notes: Total cereal includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Panama

Retail prices of selected food prices

Balboa per Kg



Source: IMA Ministry of Agriculture

Reference Date: 11-December-2013

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Rice production in 2013 decreased for the second consecutive year
- Cereal imports forecast to increase in 2013/14 marketing year (July/June)
- Rice prices remain at high levels in October

Rice production in 2013 decreased for a second consecutive year

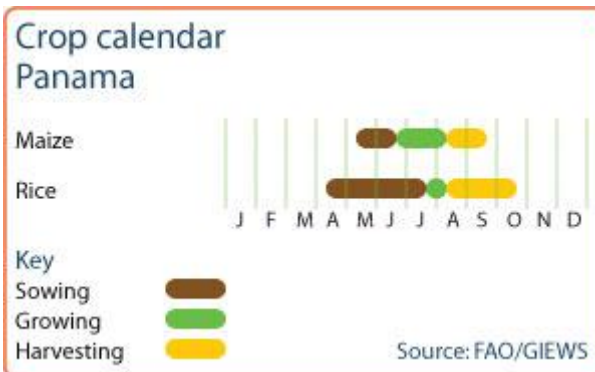
Harvesting of the 2013 rice crop was completed in October and production is estimated 7 percent lower than last year and well below the five year average at 230 000 tonnes. The decline is mainly a result of a decrease in plantings from the already reduced level of 2012 due to increased production costs and credit constraints. In the main producing province of Chiriquí, the reduction in this year's output also reflects lower yields following the mite outbreak, which according to official reports has affected 30 percent of the area planted to rice as the spread of the plague was facilitated by excessive humidity in the soil. In response to the situation, the Government provided subsidies to rice growers to increase their area planted for the smaller second season crop (August/January) which is currently is being harvested.

Cereal imports forecast to increase in 2013/14 marketing year (July/June)

Cereal imports in 2013/14 marketing year (July/June) are forecast to increase by 3 percent from last year's already high level and reach 610 000 tonnes. The increase reflects larger rice imports from the United States and Brazil, expected to grow by almost 9 percent and reach 98 000 tonnes, due lower domestic availabilities. Wheat and maize imports are also anticipated slightly up from 2012 in order to satisfy human consumption and the steady demand for animal feed.

Rice prices remain at high levels in October

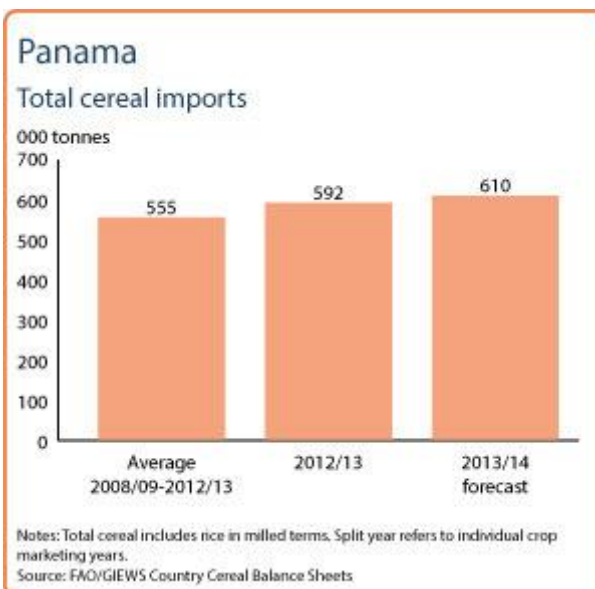
Wholesale rice prices in Panama City in October were unchanged from the previous month. However they were still 4 percent above their levels a year earlier. The high price level is mainly a result of the successive reduced outputs. By contrast bean prices were almost 14 percent below their levels of October 2012 and unchanged from the previous month.



Panama Cereal production

	2008-2012 average	2012	2013 estimate	change 2013/2012
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	285	248	230	-7
Maize	86	82	85	4
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	377	335	320	-4

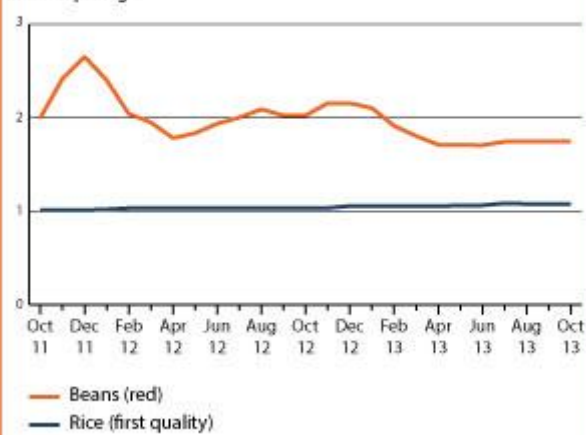
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



Panama

Selected wholesale food prices in Panama City

Balboa per Kg



Source: IMA Ministry of Agriculture

Reference Date: 02-September-2013

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- 2013 rice production forecast to decrease
- Cereal imports increased in 2012/13 (July/June)
- Rice and beans prices strengthened in July but those of beans still at low levels

2013 rice production forecast to decrease for the second consecutive year

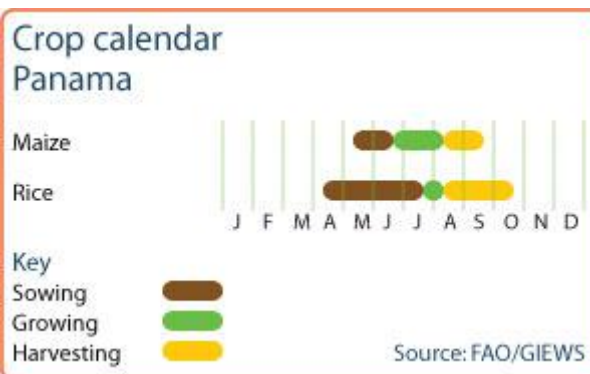
Harvesting of the 2013 rice crop is underway. Production is forecast 7 percent lower than last year and well below the five year average, mainly reflecting an estimated 8 percent reduction in area sown from the reduced level of 2012 due to higher production costs. In Chiriquí, the main producing province, the decline in area planted, is also a result of below average rainfall during the sowing period.

Cereal imports increased in 2012/13 (July/June)

Cereal imports in 2012/13 (July/June) were estimated some 4 percent higher than in the previous year. This reflects increased maize and rice imports, which more than offset a decline in wheat imports following the previous year's record imports. Wheat imports totaled 150 000 tonnes or 7 percent less than in the previous year.

Rice and beans prices strengthened in July but those of beans still at low levels

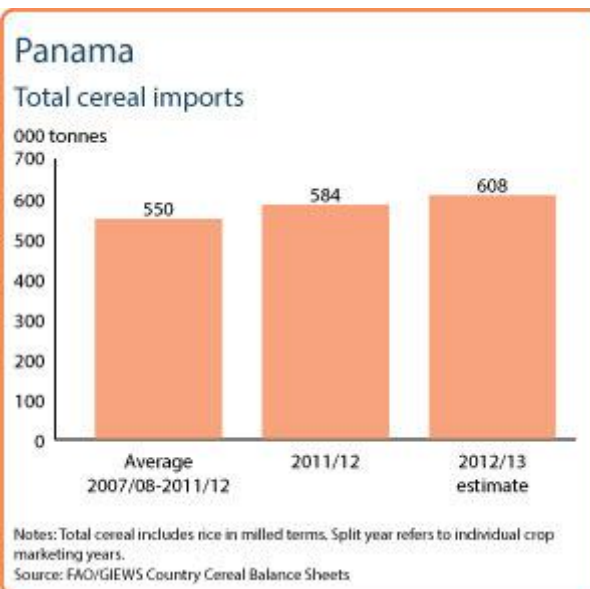
Wholesale rice prices in July increased by some 2 percent from the previous month and were overall almost 5 percent higher than at the same time a year earlier. The increase in rice prices is mainly a result of reduced market supplies and expected decline in 2013 production. Bean prices also increased slightly in July, but they remained around 12 per cent lower than a year ago.



Panama Cereal production

	2008-2012 average	2012	2013 forecast	change 2013/2012
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	285	248	230	-7
Maize	86	82	85	4
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	377	335	320	-4

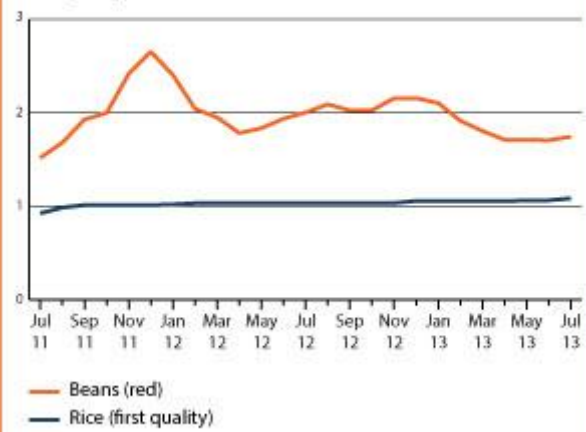
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



Panama

Selected wholesale food prices in Panama City

Balboa per Kg



Source: IMA Ministry of Agriculture

Reference Date: 31-May-2012

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Area planted with rice expected to be smaller than in 2012
- Cereal import requirements increase in 2011/12 (July/June)
- Rice prices rise

Area planted with rice expected to be smaller than in 2012

Sowing operations of the 2012 cereal crops, mainly rice, are currently under way. The area sown with rice is expected to be about 10 percent smaller than in 2011, mainly because of higher production costs. In Chiriquí, the main producer province, the reduction in area sown is also due to water problems in the Remigio Rojas irrigation system, resulting from a reduction in water flow in the Chico River.

Cereal import requirements increase in 2011/12 (July/June)

Panama imports most of the maize and wheat it consumes, and roughly a quarter of its rice consumption. Cereal import requirements are expected to rise to 592 000 tonnes in the 2011/12 (July/June) marketing year, following crop losses in 2011 as a result of excessive rainfall.

Rice prices rise while maize and bean prices fall

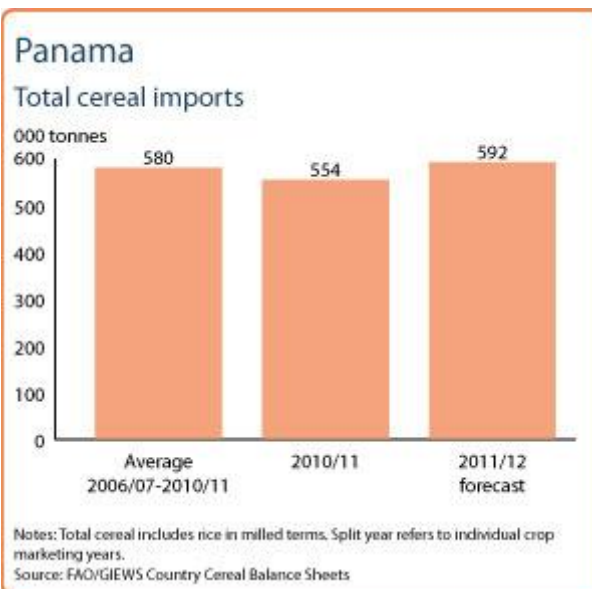
The rise in rice prices over the last two months is mainly due to a supply shortage on the market following the small harvest in 2011. In April, rice prices were 6 percent higher than twelve months earlier. By contrast, maize and bean prices have fallen since January 2012, reflecting the trend of export prices on the subregion's markets. In April, however, white maize and red bean prices were still 28 percent and 11 percent, respectively, above their levels of a year earlier.



Panama Cereal production

	2007-2011 average	2011	2012 forecast	change 2012/2011
	000 tonnes		percent	
Rice (paddy)	305	305	268	-12
Maize	87	86	82	-5
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	397	396	355	-10

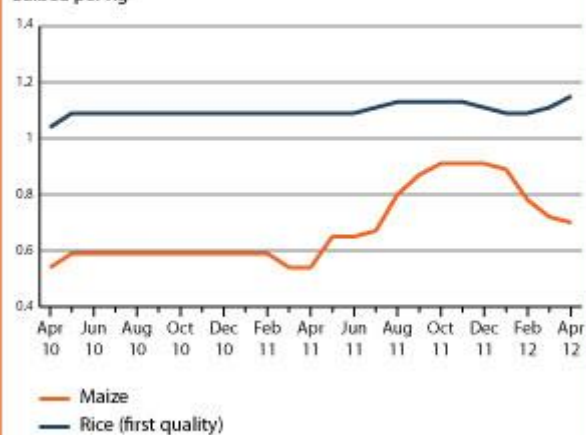
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



Panama

Selected retail cereal prices in Panama City

Balboa per Kg



Source: IMA Ministry of Agriculture

Reference Date: 28-February-2012

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Cereal harvest completed in October 2011 at average levels
- Prices of rice and maize higher than a year earlier

2011 cereal production at average levels

Farming activities will only begin in April/May with the start of the first 2012 cropping season.

The 2011 cereal harvest, mainly rice, was completed in October with roughly average volumes, although 2 percent below the 2010 level. The reduction reflects the intense cyclone and tropical storm activity that affected the Central American region in mid- 2011, and caused torrential rainfall that resulted in crop losses, mainly in the north, where the worst affected zone was Chiriquí. In the case of the main rice crop, losses from flooding and “barrenador worm” infestation amounted to over 6 000 hectares, 5 percent of the total planted area.

Unchanged cereal import requirements in 2011/12 (July/June)

Panama imports most of the maize and wheat it consumes, and roughly a quarter of its rice consumption. Cereal import requirement for 2011/12 marketing year (July/June) are forecast at 572 000 tonnes, close to their levels in 2010/11.

Cereal prices higher than a year ago

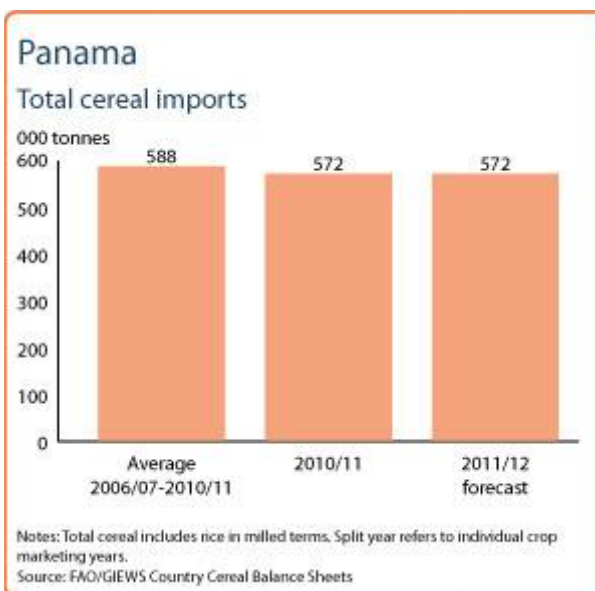
Maize prices rose in the second half of 2011 and in December they were 56 percent higher than a year earlier. By contrast, rice prices strengthened slightly in August and September as a result of crop losses. In the case of bread, another important component of the national diet, prices in December 2011 were 7 percent higher than 12 months before.



Panama Cereal production

	2006-2010 average	2010	2011 estimate	change 2011/2010
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	302	310	305	-2
Maize	74	75	74	-1
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	0	0	0	0
Total	381	390	384	-2

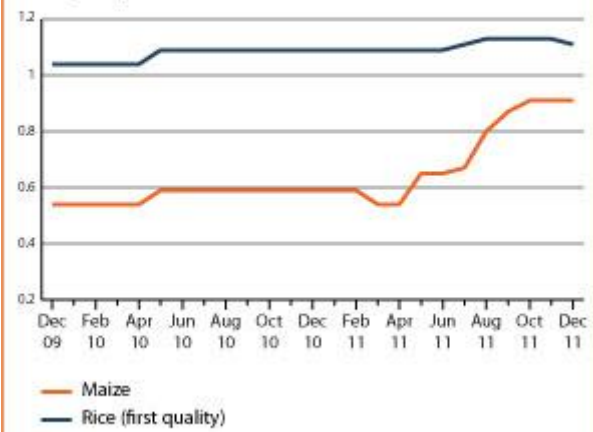
Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets



Panama

Selected retail cereal prices in Panama City

Balboa per Kg



Source: IMA Ministry of Agriculture

Reference Date: 27-May-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Sowing outlook good for 2011 cereal crops
- Prices of rice stable but prices of bread and beans increase

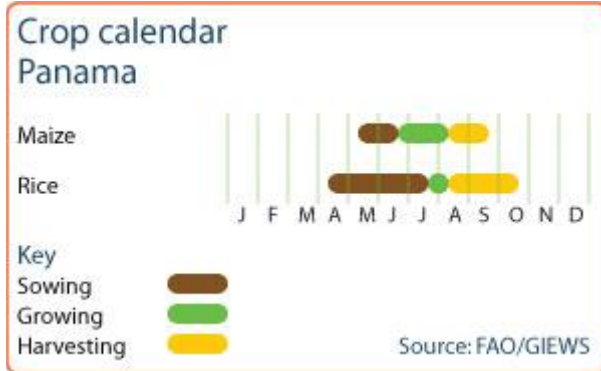
Sowing outlook good for cereal crops of the main 2011 campaign

Sowing of the main cereal crops of 2011 is in progress. In the last few months normal and abundant levels of rainfall were recorded, particularly in the northern areas of the country that maintained adequate humidity conditions in the soil and favoured sowing operations. It is expected that the area planted with rice, the main cereal, and with maize will remain at the same levels as the year before and early estimations indicate a normal yield in 2011.

Prices of bread and beans high but prices of rice stable

Prices of bread, an important product in the Panamanian diet, have escalated since September last year, mirroring the increasing trend on the international market. The country does not produce wheat and any required for consumption is imported. In April 2011, the price of bread in Panama City's market was valued at 0.99 Balboa/pound, the same record level reached in February 2009 and 18 percent higher than in 2008. Prices of red beans, which fell in recent months with the main 2010 harvest, increased by 11 percent in May compared to the month before. As a result of the reduced availability of beans in the Central American region, due to the reduced 2010 yield, it is predicted that prices will show an increasing trend in the latter half of 2011. Prices of maize, which is mainly imported, have notably increased over the last two months and in May were 25 percent higher than last year.

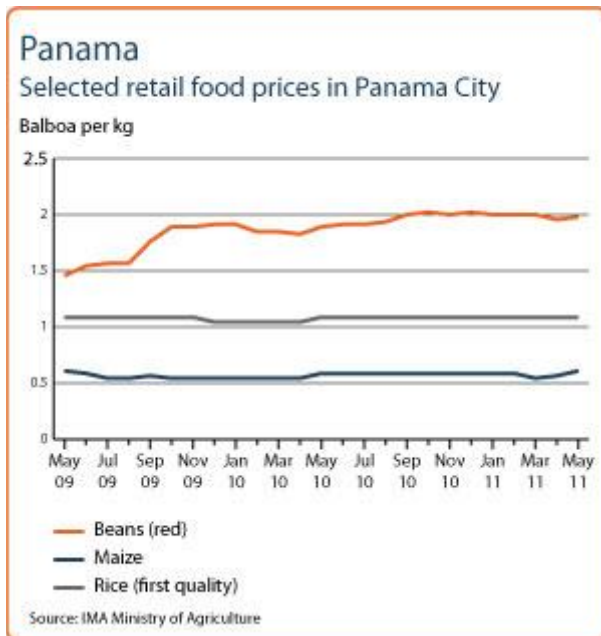
However, prices of rice remained stable in recent months due to the favourable yield and decreasing prices on the international market. The country imports around one-quarter of the rice it consumes. In May 2011, first quality rice was valued at 1.08 Balboa/kg in Panama City's retail markets, similar to its value in May 2010.



Panama Cereal production

	2006-2010 average	2010	2011 forecast	change 2011/2010
	000 tonnes		percent	
Rice (paddy)	302	310	310	0
Maize	74	75	74	-1
Sorghum	5	5	5	0
Others	5	5	5	0
Total	381	390	389	0

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



Reference Date: 11-March-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Harvest of 2010 cereal crops is estimated at average level
- Lower bean production in Central America has had a limited impact on domestic prices
- The sowing of crops in the 2011 first season, which will take place in May/June, will continue to be affected by the La Niña phenomenon

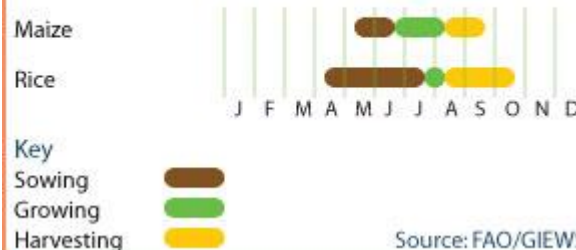
Heavy rainfall affected mainly the North of the country in 2010

The high number of tropical storms and cyclones that affected the entire Central American region in 2010 led to heavy rainfall in the country, particularly in the North, where the most affected area was Chiriquí. However, the heavy rainfall helped the rice crops, the main type of cultivation, which benefited from excessive humidity. Total production of cereals is estimated to stand at around the same positive level as last year.

Prices of basic grains remain stable

Although Panama imports the majority of its cereals and other agricultural products, the prices of these items remain relatively stable in local markets and are approximately 4 to 8 percent higher compared to last year. Prices of red beans show a slight increasing trend due to the low agricultural harvest registered in the main Central American production countries, which were severely affected by the excessive rainfall. The effects of rising prices on the international market are less notable in Panama than in other countries of the region.

Crop calendar Panama

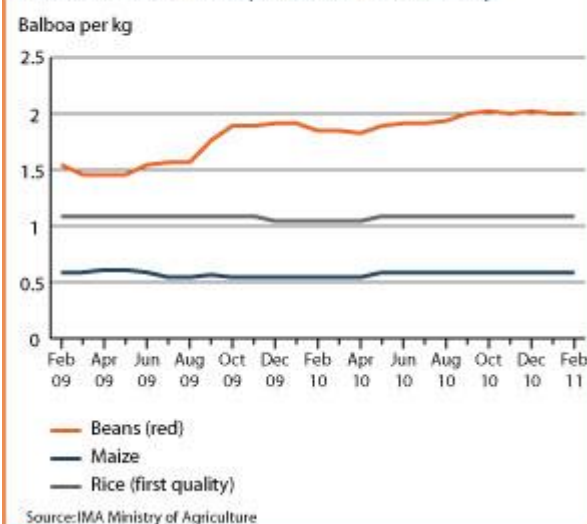


Panama Cereal production

	2005-2009 average	2009	2010 forecast	change 2010/2009
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	297	315	315	0
Maize	75	75	75	0
Sorghum	5	6	5	-17
Total	376	396	395	0

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

Panama Selected retail food prices in Panama City



Reference Date: 30-September-2010

- Good paddy production expected in 2010
- The increasing international prices may affect food prices in the country

Intense rains affected northern Panama

The excessive rainfall caused by the passage of the storm Matthew during the third week of September, exacerbated the already critical situation of the highlands of Chiriqui where, according to preliminary reports, the heavy rainfall affected yields and may reduce production, particularly of vegetables and pulses.

Harvesting of the main rice crop is underway with good output estimates

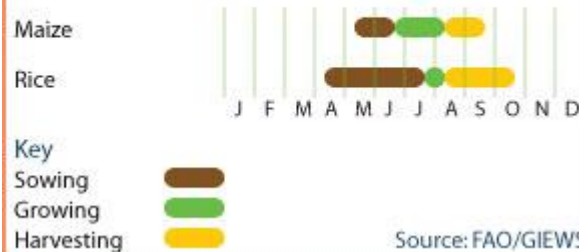
Maize harvesting is complete in the main producing provinces of Los Santos and Chiriquí while rice harvesting is still underway. Preliminary production estimates point to a slight increase in rice output compared to 2009 at 310 000 tonnes of paddy rice, marking a slight recovery from last year's contraction (+2.5 percent). The increase is mainly driven by a stronger agricultural credit growth in 2010 while rising commodities prices are likely to have an impact on future cereal planting intentions.

Import spending increased in the first months of 2010

Total cereal import requirements (mostly wheat and maize) for 2010 are expected to rise marginally to about 582 000 tonnes (+2 percent). The country is not self sufficient in cereal production and it imports, virtually all the wheat and maize consumed, commercially.

Although food commodities recorded one of the lowest inflation rate increases in the last month, being a net food importer, Panama's total import spending could be severely affected by rising international prices. The total import spending already rose by 30 percent in the first half of the year, following a contraction of 16.5 percent in the same period last year.

Crop calendar Panama



Panama Cereal production

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