

Reference Date: 19-January-2012

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Generally favourable rains at the start of the 2011/12 cropping season in late 2011
- Last year, large decline in cereal production was observed following floods and a dry spell
- More than 240 thousand persons are food insecure

Good rains in northern areas of the country favour the current cropping season

Land preparation and planting activities for the 2011/12 agricultural season commenced in November/December 2011 and benefited from good rains at the end of the year. However, localised heavy downpours in parts of the north, particularly in Caprivi region, which is prone to flooding, may have hampered agriculture activities in affected areas. Weather forecasts point to an increased probability of above normal to normal rains in the next months over most of the country.

The government has continued its investment in the agriculture sector for the 2011/12 agricultural season through increasing its support towards an expansion of the irrigation system to boost production and lower reliance on imports.

In 2011, large production losses were registered in northern regions

Flooding and prolonged water logging in Kunene, Caprivi, Kavango, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshikoto and Oshana regions resulted in significant production declines in some constituencies. The flooding followed an extended period of above average rains between January and April 2011. The north central regions of Oshana and Omusati were worst affected by the flood waters, recording a 63 and 55 percent cereal production losses respectively, compared to the previous year. In addition, the torrential rains led to losses of livestock, particularly goats.

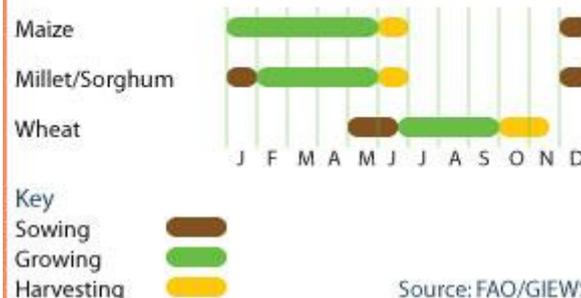
In aggregate, cereal production in 2010/11 is estimated at 117 000 tonnes, 25 percent below the previous year's good harvest.

Higher estimates of cereal import requirements in current marketing year

In response to the lower production levels in 2011, the cereal import requirement in the 2011/12 marketing year (May/April) is estimated at 195 000 tonnes, about 27 percent higher than last year. Actual imports of maize during the period between May and December 2011 however, amounted to 24 600 tonnes, compared to 34 100 tonnes over the same period in 2010, indicating a relative decline in the rate of imports. By contrast, wheat imports reached 19 300 tonnes, up by about 50 percent compared with 2010.

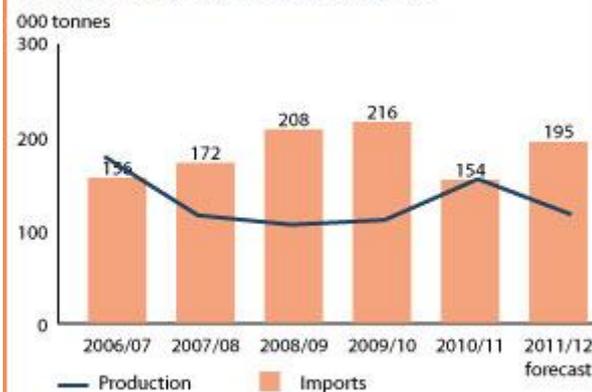
Production short-falls result in larger food insecure population

Namibia Crop calendar



Namibia

Total cereal production and imports



Namibia

Cereal production

	2006-2010 average	2010	2011 forecast	change 2011/2010
	000 tonnes		percent	
Millet	59	72	41	-43
Maize	55	58	54	-7
Wheat	13	16	16	0
Others	65	81	47	-42
Total	133	155	117	-25

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

The significant production short-fall recorded in the northern regions raised the level of food insecurity of the affected households. In total, more than 243 000 persons were estimated to be food insecure as a result of flooding, loss of crops and livestock, more than double the level recorded in the previous 2010/11 marketing year.