

Reference Date: 15-March-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Severe winter is expected to affect winter wheat and spring potato harvests in 2011 and increase the food deficit further
- Rise in international prices of cereals, especially maize, is said to have reduced the country's ability to import needed quantities
- Chronic food insecurity continues throughout the country

Severe winter is expected to reduce 2011 winter harvest

A WFP/FAO Mission was in the country in February/March to re-assess the food security situation in view of the potential losses to winter wheat and spring potatoes due to severe cold weather. The mission is completed its field work covering more provinces and counties than before and is expected to produce a report shortly. The food security has become a serious concern given the lack of sufficient commercial imports in the face of high international export prices of cereals and also due to reduced flows of food aid.

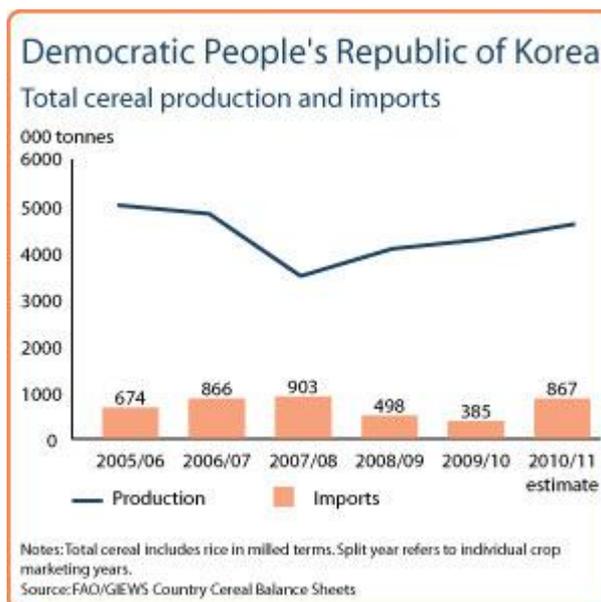
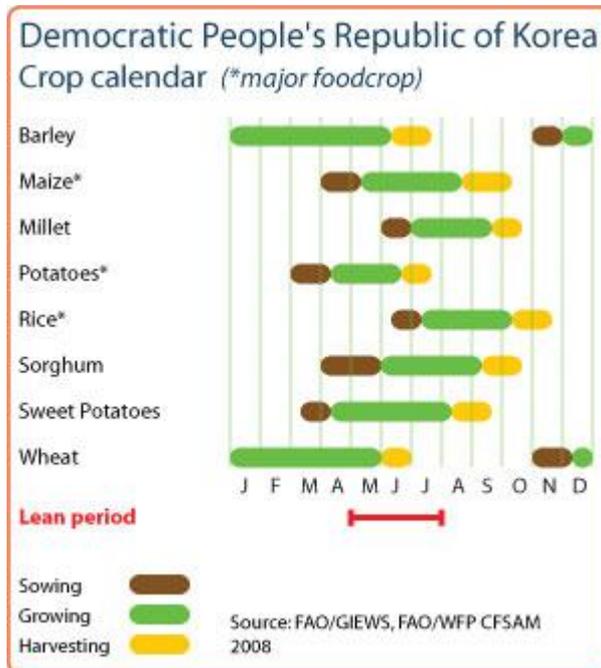
A joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) that visited DPRK in September-October 2010 had estimated the 2010/11 marketing year (November/October) total food supply of a 5.33 million tonnes of staple food production including paddy rice, other cereals, potatoes in cereal equivalent and soybeans. This is about 3 percent higher than in 2009/10. When paddy is converted to milled rice, the above total production comes to 4.48 million tonnes. On the basis of this supply the country faces a cereal import requirement for the current marketing year of an estimated 867 000 tonnes. The Government had plans to import commercially only about 325 000 tonnes, leaving 542 000 tonnes as an uncovered food deficit. The production and food estimates are likely to be slightly revised in view of the bad prospects for the 2011 wheat and potato crops which were only forecast at the time of the Mission.

Cereal import requirements remain high

Despite the relatively good harvest, based on the Mission's estimate of total utilization needs of 5.35 million tonnes of cereal equivalent (rice in milled terms), there is an import requirement of 867 000 tonnes for the 2010/11 marketing year (November/October).

Food insecurity in the DPRK could be worsening

Given that the overall food production situation in 2010/11 is not expected to improve significantly, the CFSAM Mission recommended the provision of international food assistance to about 5 million most vulnerable people (including groups with special needs such as children, pregnant and lactating women and the elderly with no support and PDS dependent populations in high malnutrition and mountainous regions), amounting to 305 000 tonnes of cereals. The country continues to suffer from chronic food insecurity, high malnutrition rates and economic problems, and has great difficulties meeting the needs of its population. The



Government has indicated that its ability to import food is even more constrained given the recent increases in international prices of cereals, especially maize.

The **Overview Funding Document** requires in total **USD 82.4 million** for 2011 to respond to key humanitarian priorities, including USD 7 million for agriculture and food security projects.