

Reference Date: 18-April-2011

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Good prospects for the 2011 harvest in spite of the post-flood problems and slight reduction in the area planted to winter wheat
- Food prices stabilizing after having increased in the past few months
- Food security has improved but problem continues for some of the flood-affected people

Early prospects for 2011 winter wheat harvest are good

In Punjab, where more than 75 percent of the country's wheat is produced, a slight reduction in the area planted is reported. However, in Sindh province wheat plantings have been reportedly increased, mainly due to the cultivation along the Indus river banks covered with the fertile silt deposits following the huge flash floods during last summer. Production losses due to the damaged irrigation infrastructure are expected to be compensated by the improved fertilizer and good quality seed supplies during this season. Although the official target is set at a record high level of 25 million tonnes, FAO's early forecast for 2011 wheat production is about 24 million tonnes, slightly above last year's good harvest and close to the record crop in 2009.

In 2010 severe floods caused by heavy monsoon rains damaged some 2.4 million hectares of standing crops. For the rice crop, the area totally or partially damaged was estimated at 872 900 hectares or about one-third of last year's plantings. The 2010 paddy production is preliminary estimated at 6.3 million tonnes, representing a drop of 38 percent from the previous year.

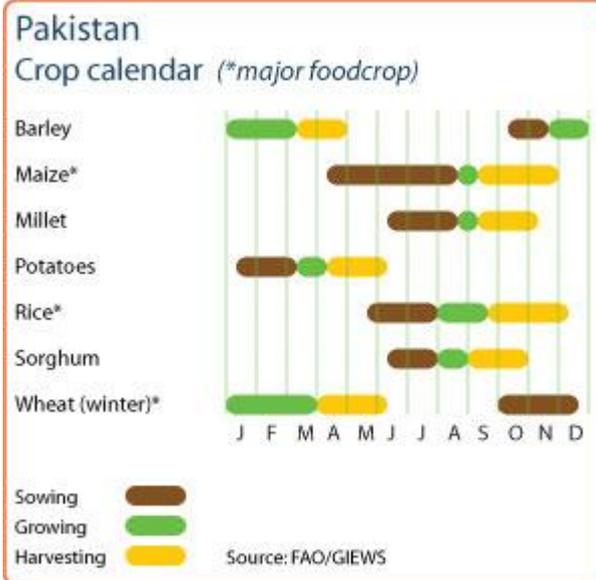
Reportedly Pakistan has accumulated significant levels of stocks of wheat and has authorized exports in marketing year 2010/11 (May/April) to clear silos and make room for the grain coming from the upcoming harvest in May-June. By early March, exports of 1 million tonnes have been recorded. The country would benefit from high international wheat prices.

Food prices stabilizing after increase in the past few months

Prices of wheat and wheat flour started to decline at the beginning of April in view of the good prospects of 2011 wheat harvest. In March they were already stable and close to their levels of a year earlier. Prices have generally remained strong due to the resumption of wheat exports after a three-year export ban. Retail rice prices in Karachi have stabilized after a steady increase over the past few months.

Food security has improved but remains a problem for some of the flood-affected population

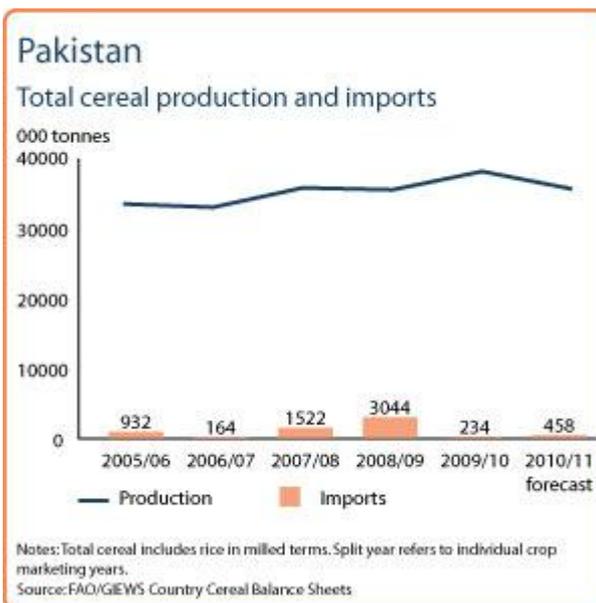
The overall food supply situation in Pakistan has been satisfactory following consecutive years of good harvest. However, the flood emergency affected some 18 million people. The revised estimate of relief and early recovery interventions over a 12-month period



Pakistan Cereal production

	2005-2009 average	2009	2010 estimate	change 2010/2009
	000 tonnes			percent
Wheat	22235	24033	23311	-3
Rice (paddy)	9110	10319	8300	-20
Maize	3331	3262	3590	10
Others	528	529	436	-18
Total	35204	38142	35637	-7

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



(Aug.2010 to Jul.2011) for agriculture sector is USD 170.6 million of which only USD 97.40 million has been received/committed so far. The impact of higher rice prices on overall food consumption of the vulnerable population is still expected to be significant.

