



# GIEWS Country Brief Botswana

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### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Cereal production estimated at well above-average level in 2021, reducing import needs in 2021/22 marketing year
- Annual food inflation increased moderately in July 2021, reflecting high cereal prices
- Pockets of food insecurity persist in 2021/22, primarily due to effects of COVID-19 pandemic

## Cereal production forecast well above-average in 2021

Harvesting of the 2021 cereal crops, mainly sorghum and maize, was completed in June and production is estimated at 110 000 tonnes, more than double the five-year average, reflecting an expansion in the planted area and above-average yields due to conducive seasonal rainfall. The favourable rainfall also benefitted vegetation conditions in rangelands and resulted in good pasture conditions across the country, which are expected to support an upturn in livestock production in 2021.

Planting of the 2022 cereal crops is anticipated to begin in November 2021 and early weather forecasts point to a higher-than-normal likelihood of above-average rains throughout most of the cropping season. This bodes well for production prospects next year, but also increases the risk of flooding and possible damage to crops.

## Cereal imports decline in 2021/22

The country is a net importer of cereals, with more than 90 percent of the domestic requirements normally satisfied by imports.

In the 2021/22 marketing year (April/March), cereal import requirements are estimated to have decreased to a below-average level on account of the large 2021 harvest and a high level of carryover stocks. Reflecting the reduced import needs, the pace of maize imports in the 2021/22 marketing year has been slower than the previous year.

## Moderate rise in food inflation in 2021

According to the latest data by Statistics Botswana, the annual food inflation rate in July 2021 was estimated at 6.5 percent. Rises in the price of bread and cereals, which have the largest weight in the food price index, were a primary contributor to the

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Crop Calendar

(\*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

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#### Cereal Production

	2016-2020 average	2020	2021 estimate	change 2021/2020
	000 tonnes			percent
Sorghum	29	30	39	29.3
Maize	12	15	67	349.3
Millet	3	4	3	-26.5
Others	1	1	1	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>120.3</b>

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

yearly increase, while there was a small increase in the price of oils and fats.

## Pockets of food insecurity driven by effects of COVID-19 pandemic

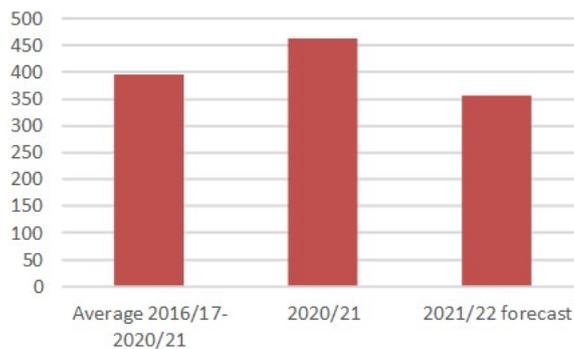
About 36 000 people are estimated to be food insecure in the April 2021-March 2022 period, marginally higher than the level in 2020/21. The small increase reflects the continued and adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on households' access to food, primarily due to the economic slowdown and a consequent increase in unemployment.

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### 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.