



GIEWS Country Brief Colombia

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Favourable growing conditions for 2021 minor season crops
- Cereal production in 2020 estimated at above-average level
- Cereal import requirements in 2020 estimated at record high
- Prices of rice lower year on year due to above-average production in 2020
- Prevalence of food insecurity among Venezuelan migrants increased in 2020

Favourable growing conditions for 2021 minor season crops

The 2021 minor season paddy and maize crops are at flowering and grain-filling stages and their harvest will start in February 2021. According to remote sensing data, crops are generally in good condition in the main producing areas following favourable rains between August and December 2020. Weather conditions are forecast to continue to be favourable in the February-April period, raising yield expectations. Planted area of the minor paddy crop is estimated below the high level of 2020, following a Government call to not expand plantings in order to avoid oversupply of the cereal, but still at an above-average level, supported by favourable weather conditions and remunerative prices of rice. The area sown with maize is estimated to reverse the declining trend of the recent three years and remains average. The Government introduced a series of measures to support smallholder farmers of maize and rice that were affected by the negative effects of the pandemic, including an agricultural credit scheme “[El Campo Avanza](#)” and the provision of [agricultural inputs at subsidized prices](#), following an increase in prices due to higher import costs in 2020.

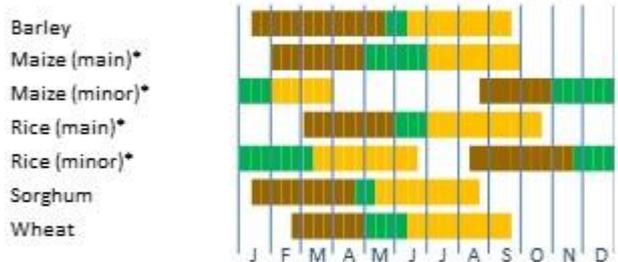
Cereal production in 2020 estimated at above-average level

Aggregate cereal production in 2020 is estimated at 4.4 million tonnes, nearly 10 percent above the previous five-year average. The good output mainly reflects a well above-average rice harvest, estimated at 2.9 million tonnes, due to an expansion in the planted area and high yields. Production of maize is estimated at 1.4 million tonnes, slightly below the five-year average, mainly due to reduced plantings and the negative

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Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Sowing
Growing
Harvesting

Source: FAO/GIEWS.

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Cereal Production

	2015-2019 average	2019	2020 estimate	change 2020/2019 percent
	000 tonnes			
Rice (paddy)	2 537	2 650	2 950	11.3
Maize	1 479	1 550	1 430	-7.7
Wheat	9	4	5	25.0
Others	23	23	22	-4.3
Total	4 048	4 227	4 407	4.2

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

impact of dry weather conditions in the northern main producing areas.

Cereal import requirements in 2020 estimated at record high

About 85 percent of the country's cereal consumption needs are covered by imports. Cereal imports in the 2020 marketing year (January/December) are estimated at a record high of 8.6 million tonnes, about 15 percent above the previous five-year average. This mainly reflects the reduced maize output in 2020 and continued robust demand for maize and wheat. The [suspension of tariffs on imports of yellow maize and sorghum](#) between April and June 2020, the COVID-19 response policy introduced to lessen import costs amid a weakening currency, supported the high levels. The Government also extended the [zero tariff regime for imports of wheat grain and products](#) by mid-2022.

Prices of rice lower year on year due to above-average production in 2020

After reaching record highs in April, prices of rice declined significantly in the second half of 2020 due to improved market availabilities from the main crop harvest. As of December 2020, prices were slightly below their year-earlier levels reflecting the bumper output harvested in 2020.

Prices of yellow maize, mostly imported, increased in the last quarter of 2020 as the depreciation of the local currency made imports costlier. By contrast, prices of domestically produced white maize decreased during the last months of 2020 due to increased supplies from the main season harvest.

Prevalence of food insecurity among Venezuelan migrants increased in 2020

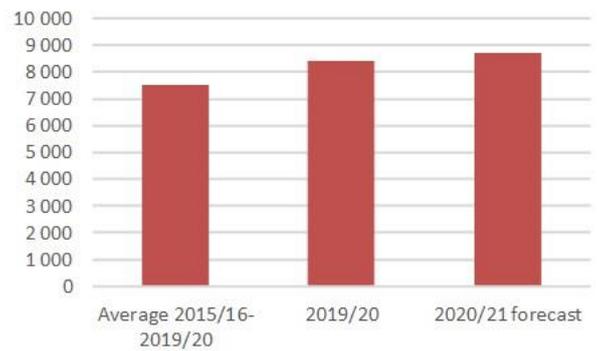
The country hosts the largest number of refugees and migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, estimated at 1.72 million people as of early January 2021. A survey conducted in July 2020 showed that the living conditions of refugees and migrants that aim at remaining in the country have deteriorated significantly compared to the pre-COVID-19 pandemic due to job and income losses following the introduction of the COVID-19 preventive measures. According to World Food Programme (WFP) estimates, the percentage of Venezuelan migrants hosted in the country that are severely and moderately food insecure increased from 55 percent in 2019 to 73 percent in September 2020. According to the Regional Refugee and Migration Response Plan 2021, the number of Venezuelans in the country is forecast to increase to 2.08 million in 2021, putting a significant strain on the limited resources of the host communities, aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Estimations of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) of the United Nations indicate that the negative effects of the pandemic on the economy are expected to result in a negative Gross Domestic Product growth of 7 percent in 2020.

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Colombia

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



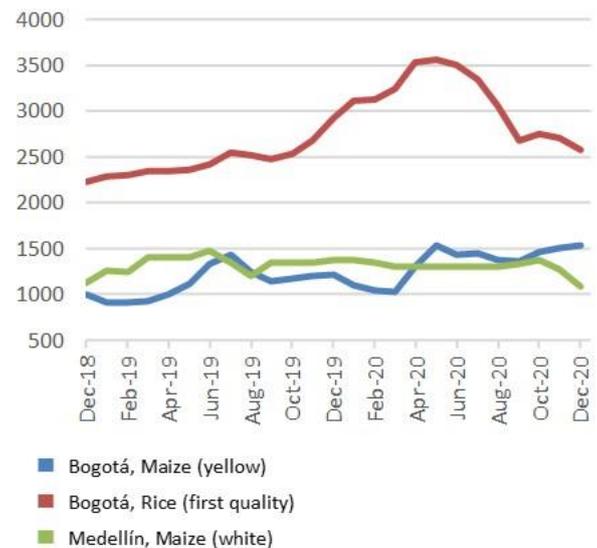
Note: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.

Colombia

Wholesale prices of rice and maize

Colombian Peso per kg



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