

Reference Date: 11-February-2014

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Average production prospects for 2014 rice crop
- Sharp drop in 2013 rice production compared to the above average harvest of the previous year
- Rice prices strengthen in January 2014 and remain above levels of 2013
- Lower domestic supplies, higher rice prices and climatic shocks combined to deteriorate food security conditions

Harvesting of the minor first season rice crop completed

While harvesting of the main rice crop is expected to commence in April, the minor first season rice crop was harvested in December and January in northern parts. Rains during the 2013/14 cropping season (October-June) have been generally satisfactory, with some deficits recorded in the south-west in December. However, abundant rains in January revived cumulative rainfall levels, limiting the potential negative impact on crop productivity. Given the current conditions, an average rice crop in 2014 is foreseen.

The joint government-FAO campaign against the Malagasy migratory locusts began in November 2013, with the first phase expected to run until August this year. Approximately 20 million hectares have been surveyed and more than 68 000 hectares treated or protected with pesticides and insect growth regulators. The implementation of anti-locust campaign is expected to significantly limit the impact of locusts on rice production.

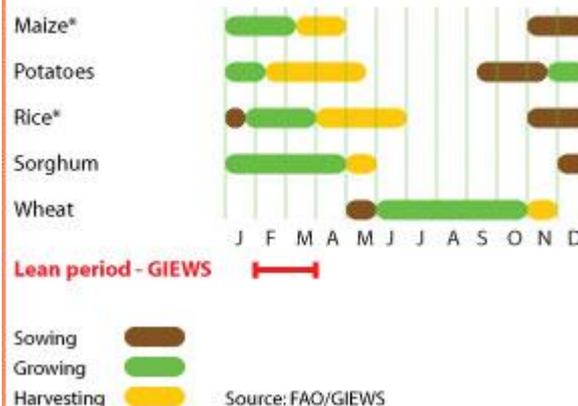
Significant reduction in 2013 rice production

A joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM), conducted in July, estimated the 2013 national rice output at 3.6 million tonnes (2.4 million tonnes in milled terms). At this level, the rice harvest is estimated to have declined by 21 and 18 percent compared to the above average harvest of 2012 and the previous five-year average, respectively. Similarly, production of maize and cassava decreased by 14 percent compared to the outputs of 2012. Erratic weather conditions and a reduction in plantings were the main cause of the lower cereal output.

Rice prices strengthen in 2013, reflecting tighter supplies

Overall, rice prices were above their year earlier levels at the start of 2014, reflecting the lower 2013 domestic harvest and consequently tighter national supplies. At Ariary 1 387 per kg, the national average price of local rice increased by 12 percent in January 2014 from their year earlier levels. At the regional level, some decreases were observed, instigated by new supplies from the first season's harvest; however, heavy rains also disrupted the drying of paddy crops and access to some markets, causing price increases. Imported rice prices, although they posted a 7 percent annual gain in January, have not increased as quickly as local varieties, benefiting from stable or declining international prices.

Madagascar Crop calendar (*major foodcrop)

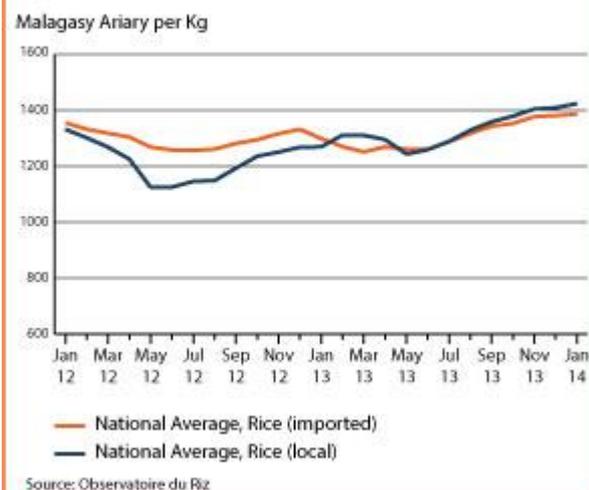


Madagascar Cereal production

	2008-2012 average	2012	2013 estimate	change 2013/2012
	000 tonnes		percent	
Rice (paddy)	4 409	4 551	3 611	-21
Maize	409	400	455	14
Wheat	10	10	10	0
Others	1	1	1	0
Total	4 829	4 962	4 077	-18

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

Madagascar Retail prices of rice



Food security conditions deteriorate in 2013/14

The reduced domestic rice harvest, rising food prices, the impact of the cyclones and the locust plague resulted in increased food insecurity in 2013/14. Based on the results from the CFSAM, approximately 28 percent of rural households suffer from food insecurity, translating into about four million people in the 20 surveyed regions (excluding Diana and Sava). Severe food insecurity is quite significant in the southern regions (Androy, Atsimo Atsinanana and Atsimo Andrefana), in the regions of the southern plateau (including Hirambe) and in the food basket region of Alaotra Mangoro.