



Republic of Liberia Ministry of Agriculture

COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY RESPONSE SITUATION REPORT #7

Reporting Period:
May 31- June 6, 2020

Release Date:
June 7, 2020

Highlights

- His Excellency, President George Manneh Weah, Sr. has extended the COVID-19 partial lockdown for additional two weeks with time adjustments. Instead of the previous time from dusk to dawn, it is now from 21:00 to 06:00. The Liberian Leader says the country's 60-day State of Emergency declared April 8, as a measure to contain the spread of COVID-19, and enacted into law on April 21 will not be renewed.
- The President also set June 21st as the date for the reopening of the country's main international airport along with hotels and amusement centers. Terminal level students in secondary schools are to resume classes later this month to prepare for the West African regional examinations for Anglophone countries of which Liberia is a member. These will be done strictly in observance of COVID-19 prevention protocols.
- From May 31st, 71 new cases of COVID-19 infections were announced. One case was reported in food producing Liberia's main central regional county of Bong, but the patient later died. Bong is now the 11th county reporting COVID-19 infections.
- Seed rice, agro inputs (tools, fertilizers and pesticides) are still impediments for rice and other crop farmers in rural Liberia and basic food prices remain stable.

Cases Updates as at June 6

385

Confirmed Cases

135

Active Cases

194

Recoveries

30

Deaths

Situation Overview

- The atmosphere in the country continues to be peaceful as businesses are gradually opening up, signaling the resumption of economic activities that were restricted as part of the measures to control the spread of COVID-19 infections.
- Cases have increased in food basket, cocoa and coffee-rich Lofa County from four to seven, while fishery and cassava belt coastal county of Grand Bassa County in southern Liberia has jumped up from four to seven confirmed cases.
- The cost of transportation for rural farmers to bring their food crops to Monrovia has dropped by LD\$ 400. This, in effect, has reduced the retail prices of food crops. The decline is due to Government of Liberia's plea to commercial drivers through their umbrella organization, and relaxed restrictions at various highways'

- checkpoints.



Food Security

- Fifty-eight tonnes of processed rice seeds will be given out to 1,500 farmers in three of Liberia's fifteen counties: Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties through voucher issuance system by a certified agro inputs dealer. Minister of Agriculture, Jeanine Milly Cooper, launched this program on Thursday in the central region town of Melekie in Bong County, some 154 km north of the Liberian Capital Monrovia.
- This is a United States Agency for Development's (USAID) funded Seeds Voucher Fair under the program Feed the Future Liberia Agribusiness Development Activity (LADA) which Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA) is implementing in collaboration with the MoA. It is also in support of the GOL's COVID-19 Food Security Plan.
- MoA's County Coordinators still report stable prices in food crops with no increase at various locations across the country.
- According to ZOA in its weekly food prices monitoring, locally grown *"beans seem to be reducing in price as only two locations reported over 100LD compared to eight last weeks. Again, the trade routes need to be investigated more, the prices get steadily more expensive towards Monrovia from both the directions of the central corridor and the road to Sierra Leone. Both Greenville and rural Rivercess are the locations which still report prices over 100LD, and both are very isolated and further south east in the country than Monrovia"*

RESPONSE:

- **Based on reports from farmers of stockpiles of seed rice that have no buyers, the MoA has instructed the Regional Agriculture Coordinator for Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties and District Agriculture Coordinators to start the collection of data on farmers' seed rice stockpiles in all districts. This will facilitate the purchase of seed rice from known producers in line with the COVID-19 Emergency Food Security Plan.**
- ***AfricaRice*, a project under the MoA and based in CARI, is making significant progress in its integrated rice and fish farming project that is funded by the European Union and jointly implemented with World Fish, CARI and the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Agency. The first integrated plot is nearing completion and several hectares producing foundation rice seeds are at tiller stage. These foundation rice seeds are all high-yielding and early maturing varieties.**



Agribusiness

- The Government of Liberia (GOL) MoA and the World Bank's funded Smallholder Agriculture Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P) launched a request for proposals for a US\$ 10,000 matching grant for each of the would-be selected small and medium enterprise agribusinesses to mitigate the COVID 19 shocks on their businesses.
- This is part of the recent GOL-MoA's COVID-19 Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihood Plan which the World Bank, a major donor in the Liberian agriculture sector, endorsed.

- It will provide matching grants to more than 40 formalized medium and small medium enterprises doing agribusinesses, input service providers and agro-dealers, aggregators at an amount up to \$10,000 on a 60:40% matching grant basis; and about 60 informal agribusinesses, input service providers and agro-dealers, aggregators at a maximum of \$1,000. The selected ones would go through a two-day training on small business management by a certified business development service provider.



Coordination

- MoA is now housing the National Food Assistance Agency (NFAA) at one of its buildings in northwestern Monrovia's suburbs of Gardnersville. NFAA was initially hosted at the Ministry of Public Works. The Minister of Agriculture chairs the NFAA's nine-member Board. His Excellency, President Weah operationalized NFAA with an Executive Order in April after years of dormancy since its formation in 1970.
- Moreover, MoA through the Smallholder Agricultural Productivity Enhancement and Commercialization (SAPEC) empowered the Central Agriculture Research Institute (CARI) with two brand new Toyota Hilux pickups to help ease mobility challenges the institution faces.
- CARI situated in the central Liberian town of Suakoko in Bong County about 180 km (111.8 miles) north of Monrovia, was a top of the line research center in Africa for many years. SAPEC is a multi-donor project with majority funding from the African Development Bank, which comes to an end in June this year after it started in 2013. Negotiations are ongoing for the extension of the project for additional nine months.



Funding

- The Rome-based, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), announces initial seed funding for the Government of Liberia in the amount of US\$488,983 which may be increased as the institution's continuous efforts to help Liberia respond to the COVID-19 crisis and rebuild programs in the post COVID-19 period. This Rural Communities Stimulus Package targets support to support small-scale producers and poor rural households.
- Already negotiations are ongoing with IFAD to support the Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihood Plan as its contribution of around US\$ 7 million. IFAD has been one of the three donors to Liberia's agriculture projects.



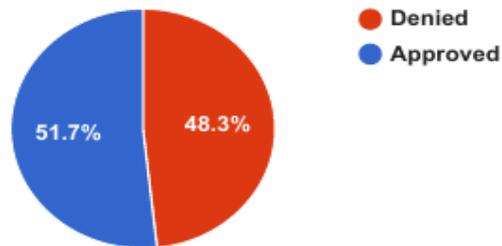
Farming Support Services

- Excitingly, the Movement and Control Services (MOCO) system is up and running and the report for May is now out. Farmers and transporters are unsurprisingly the principle users of the system, with Montserrado being the main origin and destination of the movement of goods. Rural to urban food supply systems benefit the most from the MOCO passes and the statistics for May are hereunder.

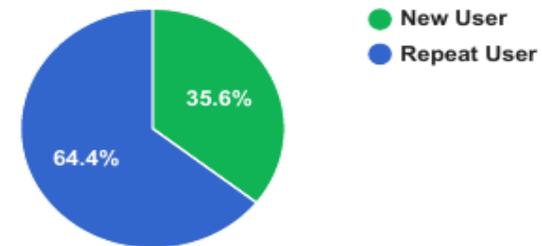
The MoA through its Movement Control Services (MOCO) that handles passes for farmers and agro processors and workers, has established two hotlines and an email account. The hotline numbers are 0880910592 and 077746264. The email is: moco@moa.gov.lr.

If not, dial *747*104# on your Lonestar Cell MTN number to access passes.

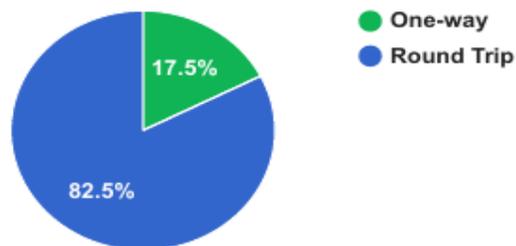
Approved vs. Denied Permits



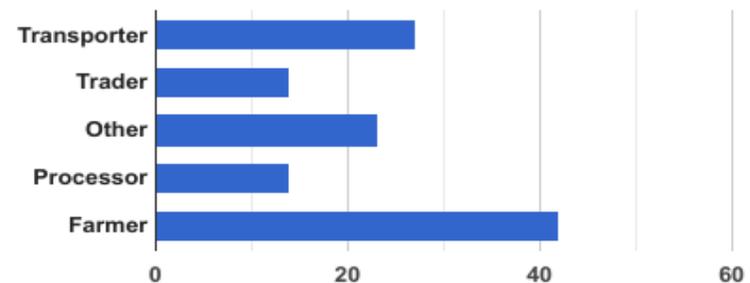
New Users vs. Returning Users



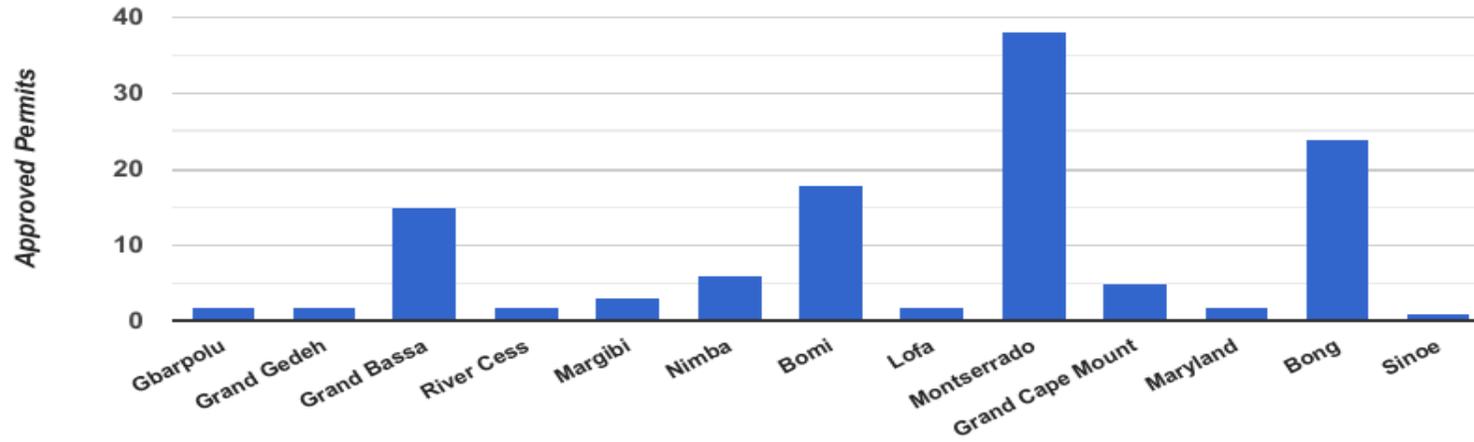
One-Way vs. Round-Trip



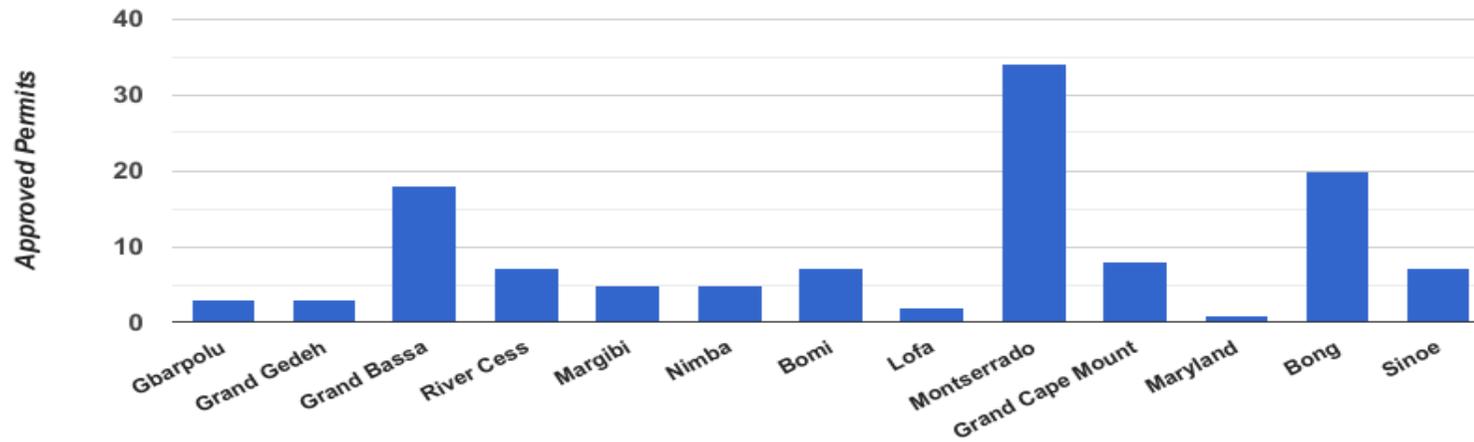
User Occupation



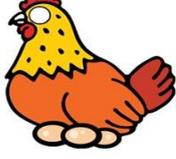
Transport Origin



Transport Destination



A SNAPSHOT OF LIBERIAN FARMS & AGRIBUSINESSES DOING HOME DELIVERIES

					
Sumo Farms 0777959359 0555372955	✓	✓		✓	
Passion Farms 0777718016 0776732612	✓	✓	✓	✓	
FEED Organics 0880555551	✓	✓			
Matameth Farms 0770033000 0775517097	✓	✓		✓	
Liberia Agriculture Inc. 0777959230	✓	✓			
Evergreen Natural Juices 0776057946 0770601030					✓

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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**

For further inquiries, please contact:

Ansu Sekou Konneh, akonneh@moa.gov.lr

Lonnie Herring, lherring@moa.gov.lr