



GIEWS Country Brief Namibia

Reference Date: 20-September-2017

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Cereal production recovers strongly in 2017 to above-average level, mostly reflecting improved weather conditions
- Maize meal prices decline to lower year-on-year levels, mainly reflecting reduced import costs and improved supply situation
- Food security conditions improve in 2017/18

Cereal production recovers in 2017

Cereal production is forecast at 140 000 tonnes in 2017, 84 percent above the drought-reduced 2016 output and approximately 40 percent higher than the previous five-year average. Most of the year-on-year production gain is accounted for by increases in maize and millet production, while smaller increases have been estimated for sorghum and forecast for winter wheat to be harvested from October. On a geographic basis, large yearly production increases were estimated in the northcentral regions of Oshana and Oshikoto.

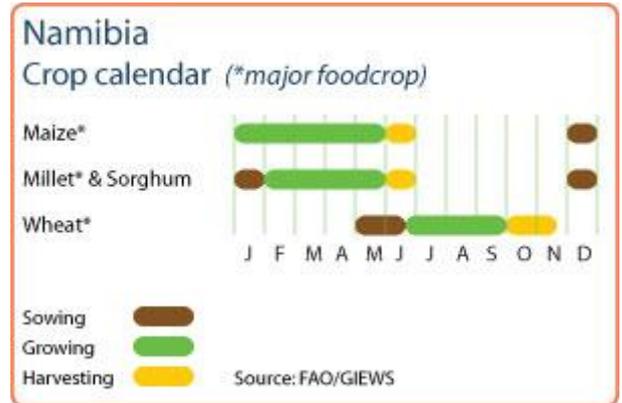
The improved output mostly resulted from beneficial seasonal rains, which, despite a delayed start, particularly favoured dry-land maize producers. In addition, good availability and access to agricultural inputs enabled farmers to fully capture the benefits of the good weather conditions, further supporting the year-on-year production gain.

Outbreaks of Fall Armyworm (an invasive species to the region) were reported in several northern regions, mainly affecting the maize crop. However, the impact on production is reported to be limited.

Land preparation for the 2018 cereal crops will begin in the next months, with plantings expected to commence in November/December. Regional weather forecasts for the 2017/18 rainy season (October-March) indicate an increased chance of below-average rains in the last quarter of 2017, but higher probability of above-average rains from the start of 2018.

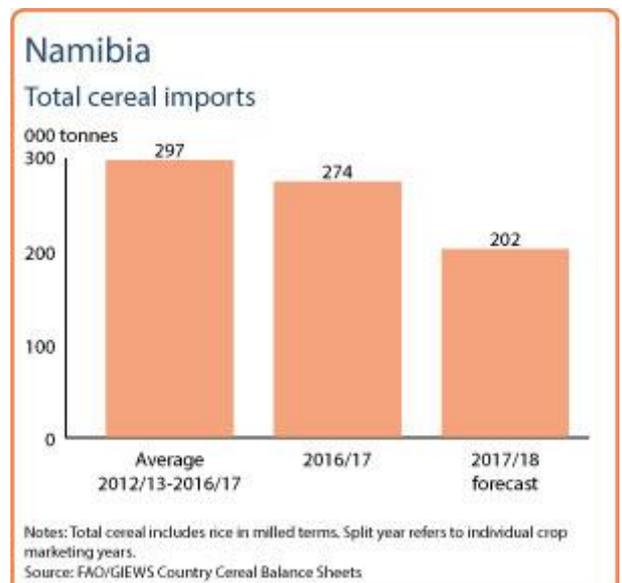
Larger domestic output results in cut to 2017/18 import forecast

The maize import requirements in the 2017/18 marketing year (May/April) are forecast at just over 200 000 tonnes, significantly down on last year and previous five-year average. The import forecast is mostly comprised of maize, with an expected volume



	2012-2016 average	2016	2017 forecast	change 2017/2016
	000 tonnes			percent
Maize	55	44	68	55
Millet	30	19	58	205
Wheat	13	11	11	0
Others	3	2	3	50
Total	102	76	140	84

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



of 125 000 tonnes to be imported in 2017/18, principally from South Africa. Approximately 30 000 tonnes of maize have already been imported from South Africa between May and August, representing nearly 25 percent of the expected import quantity.

Prices of maize meal generally below year-earlier levels

In general, maize meal prices have fallen since the beginning of 2017, pressured downward by lower grain prices in South Africa, which have reduced import costs, and a larger domestic harvest. As of July, prices of maize meal were close to or below their year-earlier levels except in the northern town of Katima, where prices were up 15 percent on an annual basis. The higher levels in Katima are attributed to increased transportation costs, particularly following the rise in fuel prices earlier in the year.

Food security improved in 2017/18

The estimated number of food insecure people has decreased from about 595 000 in 2016/17 to just over 214 000 people in 2017/18, mainly on account of the improved agricultural production in 2017. Most of food insecure people are concentrated in western and southern regions, which experienced poor rains during the season that negatively affected livestock and crop production.

