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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Favourable rains in the major producing areas resulted in good crop production.
- However, millet production declined by about 8 percent due to localized dry spells in the extreme north
- As a result, maize and sorghum prices are decreasing, while millet prices have remained at high levels

Adequate rains in major producing areas resulted in a good cereal production at national level

Harvesting of the 2011 cereal crops was completed in November/December 2011 in the main producing parts of the country. Favourable rains benefited crop development in the major producing states of north central (including Gombe, Plateau, Kaduna, Niger and Nassarawa States). However, the northern parts of Sokoto, Kebbi and Katsina states in the north-west and Yobe and Borno states in the north-east along the borders with Niger and Chad, witnessed a dry spell during July / August, which forced farmers to re-plant to replace wilted crops and reduced yields by up to 20-30 percent.

As a result, the joint field evaluation survey conducted by the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services (NAERLS) and the National Programme for Agricultural and Food Security in September 2011 estimated an 8 percent decline in millet production compared to 2010. By contrast, good maize and sorghum crops, similar to the previous year's good output, were gathered.

The aggregate cereal production in 2011 was estimated by a joint CILSS/FAO mission that visited the country last October, at about 26.5 million tonnes, similar to previous year but 5. percent above average. Production of yam and cassava, the most important staple crops in the south, is estimated at 37 and 52 million tons respectively, also similar to 2010 output levels.

Prices of maize and sorghum started declining while millet prices remained high

In the Dawanau international market in Kano, the biggest in western Africa, prices of maize and sorghum were firm or increasing in recent months, reflecting increased demand from neighbouring countries where this year's harvests were sharply reduced. In November they declined respectively by 5 and 20 percent, as a result of the increased supplies from the newly harvested crops. By contrast, in Dandume market, located in the northern Katsina state, prices of millet increased unseasonably by 19 percent from October to November, and are 24 percent higher than in November 2010, due to the reduced millet harvest

