



GIEWS Country Brief Pakistan

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Favourable prospects for 2017 wheat crop production
- Above-average production for 2016 summer cereal crops estimated
- Rice exports expected to increase in 2016
- Prices of wheat and wheat flour strengthened in recent months
- Localized food insecurity persists

Favourable prospects for 2017 wheat crop production

Planting of the 2017, mostly irrigated, “rabi” (winter) wheat crop is currently underway and will continue until mid-December. Near-average irrigation water supplies in the main wheat-growing areas of Punjab and Sindh provinces are benefitting plantings and early crop development in these areas. However, below-normal rains hindered planting operations in the minor rainfed-producing “barani areas”, located in the northern parts of Punjab Province.

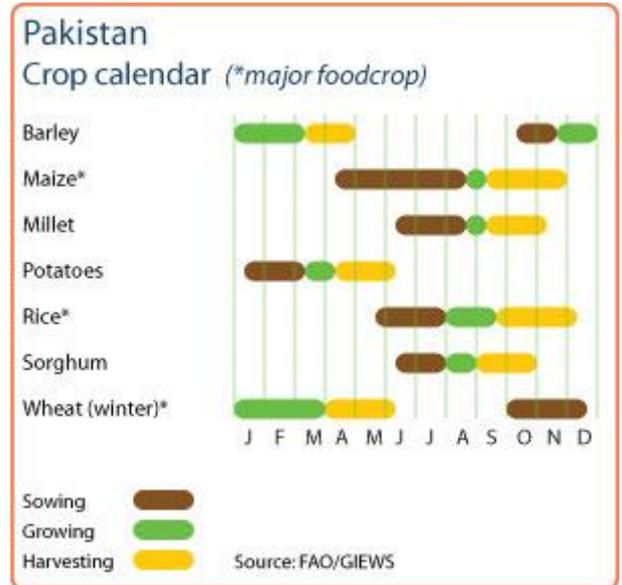
Current official forecasts put the 2017 wheat output at a record level of 26 million tonnes, 2 percent up from the 2016 bumper output. This forecast rests on expectations that adequate water availability in the main reservoirs will boost plantings, while the good supply of quality seeds, fertilizers and herbicides will increase average yields.

Above-average 2016 summer cereal crops estimated

Harvesting of the 2016 summer (monsoon) season maize and rice crops is almost complete. FAO estimates the 2016 paddy and maize outputs at 10.3 million tonnes and 5.2 million tonnes, respectively, slightly above the previous year’s production. This result follows generally favourable weather conditions during the cropping season, coupled with an adequate water supply for irrigation and good access to fertilizers and other basic inputs.

Rice exports to increase in 2016

FAO forecasts rice exports in 2016 at 4.4 million tonnes, representing a 7 percent increase from the 2015 level, thanks to competitively priced non-basmati supplies.



Pakistan
Cereal production

	2011-2015 average	2015	2016 forecast	change 2016/2015
	000 tonnes			percent
Wheat	24 793	25 086	25 482	2
Rice (paddy)	9 687	10 211	10 300	1
Maize	4 688	5 000	5 200	4
Others	582	615	615	0
Total	39 750	40 912	41 597	2

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

Wheat exports in the 2016/17 marketing year (May/April) are forecast to increase from the previous year's low level to 800 000 tonnes, in line with the 2016 overall good output and large carryover stocks.

Prices of wheat and wheat flour strengthened in recent months

Prices of wheat and wheat flour, the country's main staples, have strengthened in recent months, following seasonal patterns, but remained below their year-earlier levels owing to good availabilities following a bumper 2016 crop.

Food security conditions overall stable but concerns remain in Tharparkar District and northern Pakistan

Overall, the food supply situation is stable following two consecutive years of good harvests and large carryover stocks of the main staples. However, food security concerns remain in some areas, particularly in Tharparkar District and northern Pakistan.

In Tharparkar District (southeastern Sindh Province) and the surrounding areas of Sindh Province, a below-average drought-affected cereal production for the third consecutive year, coupled with losses of small animals, especially sheep and goats, has aggravated food insecurity and caused acute malnutrition.

Food insecurity has been exacerbated by the lingering negative impact of the 2015 floods; the provinces of Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were most affected. Official assessments reported the loss of lives and severe damage to housing, infrastructure and agriculture. Households in northern parts of the country have also not fully recovered from the impact of the earthquake in October 2015.

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, located in northern Pakistan, are still affected by the return process after the large scale displacement (312 000 families or around 1.9 million people) due to insurgency in FATA. According to OCHA estimates, as of October 2016, over 1.3 million refugees remained displaced in northern Pakistan. These populations rely mainly on humanitarian assistance, including food aid, healthcare and other necessities.

