Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
Myanmar

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Mixed start of 2021 monsoon season**
- **Rice exports in 2021 forecast to contract**
- **Persistent conflicts severely affect large numbers of people**

Mixed start of 2021 monsoon season

Planting of the predominantly rainfed main season paddy crop, which accounts for more than 80 percent of the annual production, is nearing completion. Since its start in May, the monsoon season has been characterized by average to above-average precipitation amounts in the northern and southern main producing areas, benefitting planting activities and germination of crops. By contrast, in central rice producing areas, including Magwe, Mandalay and Sagaing regions and Shan State, well below-average rainfall amounts may have delayed planting operations and affected early crop development. Moisture deficits resulted in below-average vegetation conditions in June, raising concerns regarding crop yields. Farmers are reportedly planting more drought-resistant crops, such as oil seeds, in the areas affected by scarce precipitation. A further factor that has weighed on the production outlook this year is the political instability, which began on 1 February with the change of regime. The instability has caused disruptions to key supply chains and critical support services, including the banking system, and these impacts could curb production. The performance of the monsoon rains until the end of the season in October will be crucial for the final outcome.

Planting of the 2021 main maize crop started in June and is expected to finalize in August. Some delays have been reported in the central producing areas due to below-average rainfall amounts. Strong demand by the domestic feed industry and export markets, including China (mainland) and Thailand, are expected to encourage farmers to maintain an area planted that is above the five-year average.

Rice exports in 2021 forecast to contract

Rice exports in calendar 2021 are forecast at 2 million tonnes, 11 percent below the 2020 level, reflecting reduced exportable availabilities due to the below-average output in 2020 and the disruption of international export services since 1 February 2021.

Myanmar

Crop Calendar *(*major foodcrop)*

Source: FAO/GIEWS, FAO/WFP CFSAM 2009.

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Cereal Production

	2016-2020 average	2020	2021 forecast	change 2021/2020
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	26 087	25 100	24 910	-0.8
Maize	2 022	2 400	2 300	-4.2
Sorghum	253	260	250	-3.8
Others	372	363	353	-2.8
Total	28 735	28 123	27 813	-1.1

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

The country also exports small quantities of maize. In the 2021/22 marketing year (July/June), maize exports are forecast to be close to the five-year average, reflecting the steady demand from China (mainland) and Thailand.

Persistent conflicts severely affect large numbers of people

Following the military take-over on 1 February 2021, increased tension and unrest are affecting the country. The current uncertain political conditions may further compromise the fragile situation of the vulnerable households already affected by COVID-19 pandemic disruptions. Armed conflict between the military and non-State armed groups led to population displacements, disrupted agricultural activities and limited access for humanitarian support especially in Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, Kayin, Kayah and Shan states. According to the latest data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in June 2021, an estimated 177 500 people had been forced to flee their homes in southern parts of the country due to conflicts since February. Most of the internally displaced people are suffer high levels of food insecurity as the conflict is hampering the delivery of adequate humanitarian assistance and impending the restoration of local livelihoods. Income losses due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have already had a severe and adverse impact on the food security situation of the vulnerable households. In addition, the monsoon season, with recurrent heavy downpours or flooding, adds another layer of risk.

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