

Food Security Monitor for the Americas

Full Report on the Agrifood Sector in the Americas during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Previous editions available at: <https://iica.int/en/monitor>

1,832,589

Confirmed cases of
Covid-19 in the
Americas



Countries



Highest number of
cases in the
Americas:

USA (1,366,350)
BRA (173,141)
CAN (72,363)
PER (72,059)
ECU (36,327)

Covid-19 in the world



Source: Johns Hopkins University, available at <https://bit.ly/3dJ1CZX>. Data as at 12 May 2020 (14:00 CST).

*** This monitor is a dynamic, constantly updated tool created by IICA to analyze and forecast the impact of the world health crisis on food security in the Americas.*

Analysis and scenarios

The latest from the IICA Blog:

[Challenges and opportunities for the bioeconomy in light of Covid-19: first meeting of experts](#)

Experts agree that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on agricultural activity in the countries of the region will not be homogeneous. It will depend on the characteristics of each country and its agro-industrial system. Similarly, the **impacts are expected to vary between the links** of the various production chains, with food production being one of the **least affected** agroindustrial activities.

Worker isolation and movement restrictions will have an immediate **impact** on the regular operation of certain agro-industrial chains and their distribution channels. The effect will be even **greater in the case of chains related to perishable products** (short chains), which are closely tied to **family farming**. At the same time, speculation in regard to food markets has led to **panic buying**, which, in addition to a reduced supply, is causing **shortages** of some essential products. This situation is further aggravated by a **loss of family income** as economic activity has ceased, increasing the **risk** of greater **insecurity, crime** and **social conflicts** on farms and in rural areas.

More on this topic in this week's blog post, which summarizes the opinions shared by a group of experts from Latin America, who were brought together by IICA. <https://bit.ly/35UcYH0>

[Impact of the coronavirus on Argentina's agriculture sector](#)

The health measures that have been implemented have succeeded in flattening the curve of infections and deaths. Infections primarily occur in large urban areas. **So far, agricultural activities have seen little impact.** The agriculture, dairy and livestock sectors, as well as the corresponding industries, have reported few infections. These activities have faced different **complications, primarily related to the movement of trucks and the application of health protocols**, which has delayed work and increased costs.

Aligning decisions made by the national government and by local jurisdictions has also generated difficulties, which are gradually being resolved. However, despite these difficulties, **production and commercial activities have continued to operate. Soybean and corn farming are in full swing**; yields of 50 million tons are expected for each grain. Wheat will have to be sown in the coming months, and estimates are encouraging. The Buenos Aires Grain Exchange predicts a 1.5% increase in the farming area.

More on this topic in this week's blog post by *Edith Obschatko*, Specialist in International Policies and Negotiations at the IICA Delegation in Argentina. <https://bit.ly/2LtnHT>

Relevant issues for the agrifood sector

<h2>Production</h2> <p>* Measures related to the agrifood production sector, and information on impact channels and areas affected in the countries of the Americas (products grown or harvested during this time of year).</p>	
<p>Argentina: USDA lowers estimate for soybean harvest to 51 million tons</p> <p>The USDA estimates a production of 51 million tons of soybean for the year 2019-20 (1 million tons less than what was previously estimated), while the 2020-21 production is expected to reach 53.5 million tons.</p> <p>For the 2020-21 harvest, the USDA estimates a 21-million-ton yield for wheat and 50 million tons for corn. https://reut.rs/3bsDl8m</p>	<p>Brazil: Conab lowers soybean production estimates</p> <p>Conab estimates that soybean production in 2019-20 will reach 120.3 million tons. However, despite a lowered estimate, soybean production is expected to be 4.6% greater than that of the previous season, despite the negative repercussions of the drought in Rio Grande do Sul.</p> <p>On the other hand, exports will remain strong; Conab estimates sales of 75 to 77 million tons. Brazil is the world's top soybean exporter. https://reut.rs/2AeGZph</p>
<p>Chile: drought expected to reduce fruit production by 6%</p> <p>According to a study by the National Farmers' Association, fruit production during the 2019-2020 season is expected to be 6% lower than what was initially projected (representing a reduction of 66 thousand tons) as a result of the drought that has been affecting the country. According to the study, another factor that will impact growth is decreased investment in infrastructure.</p> <p>Plums and blueberries will be the most heavily impacted crops. https://bit.ly/2Wr6GLX</p>	<p>Colombia: government will deliver 4000 land titles to farmers</p> <p>This week, the government began delivering 4061 land titles in 17 departments across the country.</p> <p>Ninety-two percent of these titles correspond to formalization processes for small rural private properties, 6% to the allocation of vacant lots in targeted areas, and 2% to properties formalized for the benefit of families that voluntarily decided to eradicate illicit crops as part of the National Government's strategy "<i>Formalizar para sustituir</i>" ("Formalize to replace"). https://bit.ly/2yQjD9d</p>
<p>Ecuador: fisheries and agriculture sectors are being gradually reactivated</p> <p>The government has announced the reactivation of various sectors, including fisheries and agriculture, in several provinces throughout the country, under</p>	<p>Panama: rice producers demand subsidy payment</p> <p>Producers are asking the government to pay a \$20 million subsidy, equivalent to \$7.5 for every hundredweight of premium rice sold in the national market.</p>

<p>health protocols established by the Emergency Operations Committee.</p> <p>Projects that provide home delivery of agricultural products are being promoted. The Santa Rosa artisanal fishing port, where most of the fish for domestic consumption and export is commercialized, has reopened only partially, to better monitor safety measures. https://bit.ly/2WrvidT</p>	<p>According to producers, the money owed since last year is needed to pay credit funds. https://bit.ly/2AnRJlr</p>
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<h2>Trade</h2> <p>*Trade-related measures taken by the countries, description of the impact on products usually exported during this time of year, problems in trade logistics and global supply chains.</p>	
<p>Argentina: collapse in canal complicates exports from Paraná</p> <p>In addition to a historic decrease in the Paraná river's water level, one of the canal's walls has collapsed. This has further complicated the movement of agro-industrial products from the Rosario docks and the San Martín terminals, which are the exit routes for most of the country's agricultural and agro-industrial exports. https://bit.ly/2SZPsmT</p>	<p>Argentina: fruit exports increase by 14% during first quarter</p> <p>Fresh fruit exports totaled 278,099 tons, which is 13.9% higher than the same period last year.</p> <p>Between January and April 2020, 182,609 tons of pears were exported, representing an 8.5% growth. Apple sales increased by 31.6%, reaching 38,111 tons. Furthermore, 30,082 tons of lemon were exported, representing an improvement of 64.8%. https://bit.ly/2WNqOqQ</p>
<p>El Salvador: government imports 190 tons of powdered milk from Mexico</p> <p>In addition to this shipment, 33,000 tons of corn have been imported from Mexico as part of the government's food security plan to face potential shortages as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Representatives of producers' chambers believe these measures have a negative impact on local production.</p> <p>In the coming days, the government will deliver one million food packages for vulnerable families to mayor's offices. https://bit.ly/2zB3sMQ</p>	<p>Honduras: customs operations resume at Aduana Integral El Florido</p> <p>On Tuesday, the Customs Administration Office of Honduras reopened the El Florido customs office, which was closed after a COVID-19 patient was identified and a joint protocol between Honduras and Guatemala was activated.</p> <p>Regular opening hours have been maintained and security measures have been bolstered to prevent an outbreak. https://bit.ly/2WIGNWQ</p>

<p>Jamaica: coffee exporters seek help to mitigate COVID-19 fallout</p> <p>The Jamaica Coffee Exporters Association (JCEA) is lobbying for government support of \$2 per pound or \$170 million to enable the sale of coffee to the local market, replacing imports, given the fall in demand due to the pandemic.</p> <p>According to the JCEA, local sales have dropped by 90%, as most hotels have closed and restaurant activity has decreased. Furthermore, there are no new export orders.</p> <p>Japan is the primary destination of Jamaica’s coffee exports, followed by the United States. https://bit.ly/2WOI5zQ</p>	<p>Mexico: agrifood exports grow by 7.87% during the first quarter</p> <p>According to SADER, agrifood exports reached 10.39 billion dollars during the first quarter of 2020 compared to the same period last year. Vegetables are leading sales, accounting for 27% of total agrifood exports.</p> <p>On the other hand, exports of agro-industrial products have increased by 5.38%, generating sales of 4.92 billion dollars. https://bit.ly/2yHEQCp</p>
<p>Paraguay: exports as at April fall by 18%</p> <p>According to a report on foreign trade published by the Central Bank of Paraguay, exports have dropped by 18%, reaching US\$ 3.57 billion as at April 2020, compared to 4.36 billion last year. https://bit.ly/2Ws5sjN</p>	<p>World: China to exempt 79 U.S. goods from higher tariffs</p> <p>In a second round of tariff exemptions published by China, the country has announced a new list of 79 products, including minerals used to develop high-tech products.</p> <p>These exemptions will come into effect on May 19, for a period of one year. https://bit.ly/2y0JA5E</p>
<p>Trade measures in the context of the pandemic (WTO and ITC)</p> <p>Below is a list of trade measures related to agrifood products notified during the past week (7 May to 12 May):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippines: Department of Agriculture Bureau of Animal Industry - Verification of International Health Certificate (HC)/International Veterinary Health Certificate (IVHC/IVC) During Enhanced Community Quarantine Period. The country will accept the electronic copy (SPS). <p>WTO: https://bit.ly/3dOh5YJ ITC: https://bit.ly/2YdwEnB</p>	

Supply

*Measures taken by Ministries of Agriculture in different countries regarding food security.

IICA develops virtual platform to manage participatory processes in agriculture

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) developed an open-access virtual platform that facilitates the design, execution and monitoring of all kinds of participatory processes, especially those related to agriculture and inclusion in rural areas throughout the Americas.

The tool, which is available at <http://gestionparticipativa.pe.iica.int>, allows for easily, quickly and effectively securing the remote participation of multiple stakeholders and citizens in collective processes. <https://bit.ly/3fM1Qk3>

Food bank is launched to deliver fresh produce

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) have jointly begun to develop a food bank to increase food security among vulnerable populations in Costa Rica.

The leaders of both institutions visited the plots of land that will supply the food bank, where farming models with high productivity standards are being applied.

The project seeks to supply residents of the Costa Rican districts of Turrialba and Vázquez de Coronado with a wide array of fresh food, such as cassava and plantains, given the harsh economic situation they are facing as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

<https://bit.ly/3dA50FC>

Brazil creates virtual fair to support farmers

Brazil recently launched the Virtual Family Farming Fair (Fevaf), with a view to facilitating the flow of production, minimizing the impact of the new coronavirus pandemic, and strengthening linkages between entrepreneurs and consumers of family farming products.

The fair is available at <https://bit.ly/2XtLndL>. The virtual platform was designed and developed by the technical department (GET) and the information technology department (GTI) of Emater / RS-Ascar, together with the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock and Rural Development (Seapdr). <https://bit.ly/3csGYMS>

Big food brands, some out-of-favor for years, see jump in the U.S.

Oreos, Campbell Soup and Doritos sales have surged as homebound consumers fill their pantries. <https://wapo.st/2Lmgd0B>

A total of 130 coffee samples seek to become the best in the country

Around 130 coffee samples are competing in the *Taza de Excelencia* competition, to be selected as the best coffee in El Salvador. Yesterday, the international program began the national pre-selection of coffee tasters.

As a result of the COVID-19 health crisis, the competition has modified its methodology and granted extensions of the deadlines for the various phases.

<https://bit.ly/3csbkih>