

Thursday, 24 September 2020



## 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>

# 15,904,696

Confirmed cases of  
Covid-19 in the  
Americas



## Countries



Highest number of  
cases in the  
Americas:

USA (6,921,817)  
BRA (4,591,364)  
COL (777,537)  
PER (776,546)  
MEX (705,263)

## Analysis and scenarios

The latest from the IICA Blog:

[Agricultural trade balance of Latin America and the Caribbean has grown 13% during the Covid-19 pandemic](#)

The agricultural trade balance of **Latin America and the Caribbean** (15 countries, with available data to July 2020) increased by a value of 9.72 billion dollars, **or 13 percent**, from March to July, in comparison to the equivalent period in 2019.

*\*\*\* 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. The views expressed herein are not necessarily the opinion of the Institute, but a reflection of developments worldwide.*

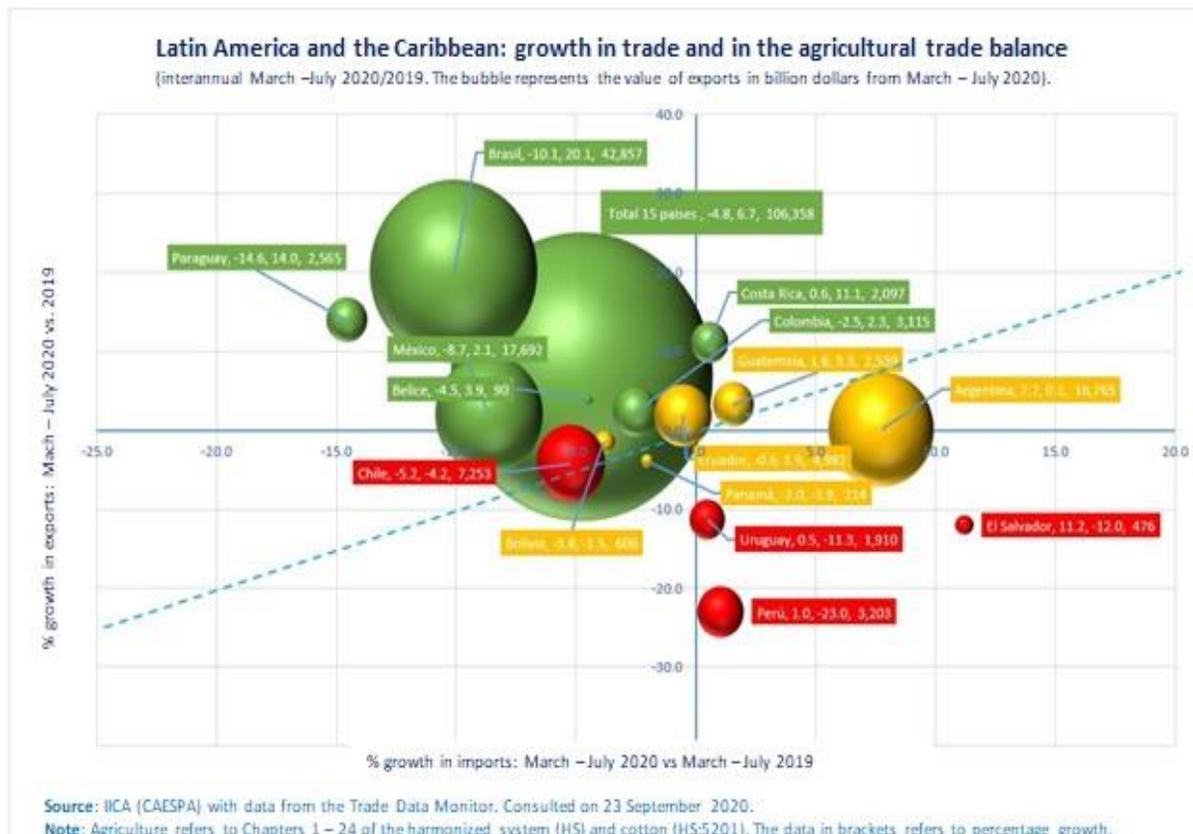
Trade performance in the 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries survey was disparate and can be grouped into three main categories:

**The first group** includes 6 countries (in green on the graph) – **Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay, Colombia, Costa Rica and Belize**, which significantly increased their agricultural trade balance during the pandemic. All of these countries experienced a greater increase in their exports relative to their increase or decrease in imports.

**The second group** includes 4 countries, which saw a moderate increase in their agricultural trade balance, namely, **Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia and Argentina**.

**The third group** of countries comprised **Chile, Peru, Uruguay and El Salvador**. These 4 countries experienced a reduction in the agricultural trade balance during the pandemic. The sharpest decline was in Peru, where there was a 61.8% fall-off in the trade balance. Peru's exports fell from 2.6 dollars for each dollar of agricultural imports in 2019 to 1.6 dollars in March – July 2020, representing a net loss of 754 million dollars. Its agricultural exports fell 23% (to 3.2 billion dollars), whereas imports grew 1 percent (close to 2 billion dollars).

Find out all the details in this week's #IICABlog post by *Joaquín Arias*, Specialist at the Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA) of IICA: <https://bit.ly/33XcNdf>



## Relevant issues for the agrifood sector

Production	
<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><b>Argentina: GDP falls 19.1% (interannual) in the 2nd quarter of 2020</b></p> <p>Argentina's GDP saw a 19.1% interannual decline during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2020, compared to the same period in 2019. In deseasonalized terms, the GDP contracted 16.2% vis-à-vis the first quarter of 2020.</p> <p>According to data from the National Statistics and Census Institute (INDEC), production in the 16 sectors of activity declined during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, with the hotel and restaurant industry being the hardest hit. On the other hand, production in the agricultural, livestock, gaming and forestry industries decreased by 10.7%, in comparison to the same period last year.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3cpBXVV">https://bit.ly/3cpBXVV</a></p>	<p><b>Brazil: coffee production expected to reach 61.6 million bags</b></p> <p>Estimates by the National Supply Company (CONAB), predict that coffee production will climb to 61.6 million bags in total (the second largest in history), which would be a 25% increase over last year. The total area under cultivation is approximately 2.2 million hectares.</p> <p>The Arabian coffee crop is particularly impressive, with production estimated at 47.4 million bags, which is a 38.1% increase over last year. Arabian coffee has benefitted from a favorable climate in the flowering and fruit-bearing stages.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/2EqwHVx">https://bit.ly/2EqwHVx</a></p>
<p><b>Colombia: economy slides 9.6% in July (interannual)</b></p> <p>Data from the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) reveals that the Colombian economy, measured using the ISE (Economic Monitoring Indicator), contracted by 9.57% in July 2020, in comparison to July 2019.</p> <p>However, there was a 2.57% increase recorded in June 2020 in the ISE's seasonally adjusted series.</p> <p>In terms of the cumulative data, the original series of the ISE revealed a 7.74% decline for the January-July 2020 period.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/360sgw4">https://bit.ly/360sgw4</a></p>	<p><b>Costa Rica: thirteen thousand migrant workers seek status regularization</b></p> <p>The Government of Costa Rica issued Decree No. 42406-MAG-MG in June, which grants an exception to workers in the agriculture, agroexport and agroindustrial sectors, who entered and remained in the country between January 2016 and January 2020, by allowing them to normalize their immigration status.</p> <p>The application period was extended for an additional month, and to date, thirteen thousand workers have applied. According to CRHoy, the process costs \$60, and once the person has been given an appointment, he/she may continue to work, without problems, until the immigration services have resolved the case.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/32WRbP7">https://bit.ly/32WRbP7</a> and <a href="https://bit.ly/2HICUTL">https://bit.ly/2HICUTL</a></p>

**Ecuador: ashfall from the Sangay Volcano has affected the banana and livestock sectors**

El Universo reports that the livestock sector has felt the impact of the volcano activity the most, with more than 330 livestock owners negatively affected by the ashfall. The phenomenon has also endangered 22,545 hectares of banana production in the Los Ríos province.

Data from MAG calculates that approximately 30,903 hectares of cultivation have been affected – 22,000 hectares in the banana industry, with the remaining 9,000 hectares made up cultivation of other crops, such as corn, soybean, cocoa and plantain.

Government measures for the affected areas include the provision of cattle feed, technical support and loans for producers. The Government has also announced the “Strategic Milk Reserve” program, which will purchase surplus milk from producers.

<https://bit.ly/3cmOQ3e> and <https://bit.ly/3kKWnLY>

**Mexico: push for increase in improved barley production**

According to the Reforma newspaper, an agreement between Heineken and the National Seed Inspection and Certification Service (SNICS) will seek to foster the production of improved barley, with a view to guaranteeing seed quality and crop yield.

The SNICS would like farmers who are growing and selling to breweries to use certified seeds on 50 percent of the land area cultivated with this grain.

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

## Trade

\*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.

### WTO: Fall-off in merchandise trade is greater than in the 2008 crisis

In the second **quarter** of 2020, Europe experienced the steepest declines in trade, at 21%, followed by North America (20%), with Asia experiencing a 7% decline. Exports from South and Central America declined by more than 13%, whereas the nominal value of the dollar also fell, by 21%.

A WTO report has indicated that although trade in agricultural goods has been resilient during the pandemic, several countries in the Committee on Agriculture have urged that the free flow of trade must be facilitated, in order to guarantee food security during the pandemic, particularly in net food importing regions, such as the Caribbean. IICA participated as an observer organization in the WTO meeting of the Committee on Agriculture on 22 and 23 September, which devoted a special section to review Covid-19 measures.

<https://bit.ly/3iX4tkd>

### Mexican avocado: proving resilient to the pandemic

Mexico is one of several countries to have increased fruit sales during the pandemic, having seen a 20% increase in exports. IICA data reveals that avocado was the star product during the first quarter, enjoying a 23.5% increase, followed by dates (7%) and pineapple (2%).

The United States is the leading market for avocados, importing from Michoacán, which has increased its production by 7%.

Peru and Costa Rica are the main exporters, after Mexico. However, the exports of the former declined by almost 3%; whereas the latter increased its exports by more than 7%.

<https://bit.ly/2FKJH9p>

### Chile and Brazil: trade agreements for diversification and economic recovery

The Agreement between both countries includes a series of provisions to regulate the trade of merchandise, including agricultural goods. The main agricultural products exported to Brazil from Chile, up to July of this year, include alcoholic beverages and vinegar; fruits; vegetables; plants and tubers. Trade in tubers increased by more than 130%, whereas fruit sales fell by approximately 16%. Brazil supplies meat, edible meat offal from the food industries and cocoa, primarily.

<https://bit.ly/2RPrLwA>

### Chile and the European Union to facilitate trade with sanitary e-certification

Both countries have connected their systems, as part of efforts by the Ministries of Agriculture. In the first phase, the system will be available for all phytosanitary export certificates issued with European Union countries as their final destination, except for the Netherlands. This successful initiative is being finalized in the context of a pandemic, in which market diversification is essential, and at the same time as environmental discussions surrounding the Mercosur-EU Agreement. The European Union is the country's third largest destination market, after the United States and China, and accounts for 14% of its total exports.

<https://bit.ly/360doOa>

## From IICA. Interview.

### **Gamified bioeconomy course to teach users about climate change, environmental sustainability, modern agriculture and green business**

A new entertainment product has been created to promote and teach users about the bioeconomy, as a sustainable model for current and future production systems. The aim of the game is to provide an interactive and entertaining experience, while transferring knowledge and technology to youth and to future agricultural entrepreneurs. Shauna Brandon, Rural Development Specialist at IICA Jamaica, tells us more about the project.

**1. What is the name of the game and what does it involve?** It is called *Bio-economy World* and it creates a fantasy world consisting of towns, cities and islands in the Caribbean, which are inhabited by characters who use bioeconomy practices to develop environmentally sustainable, efficient, innovative, productive and profitable businesses. The learner/ player will learn about various bioeconomy concepts, through tasks carried out by Lateisha Learner, a 16-year-old youngster from a rural Caribbean community. The farm where Lateisha has grown up has started to suffer the effects of climate change and she is concerned about its future. Lateisha is determined to find a way to protect her family's livelihood. So, she sets out on a mission in search of knowledge and an adventure to save the family farm. Users learn about the bioeconomy through Lateisha's interaction with the characters in the game, and they earn points and prizes when they find out more information; explore the world of the game and take on and face challenges and quizzes .



Shauna Brandon, Rural Development Specialist, IICA

**2. Who is behind the project?** The IICA Jamaica Delegation, in collaboration with the Institute's Bioeconomy and Production Development Program. The game was developed by SchoolToonz, a Caribbean multimedia company.

**3. What bioeconomy-related concepts or issues can be learned through this game?**

The game teaches biological principles, while promoting a better understanding of climate change, environmental sustainability and the opportunities available in modern agriculture and green businesses. A great deal of the content was taken from IICA's online course: Bioeconomy: Potential and Challenges for its Use in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to introducing the bioeconomy concept in Level 1, learners/ players navigate through four other levels, where they can learn about waste reduction; recycling; re-use/ creation of new products, using natural resources and replacing fossil fuel-based products; maximizing the efficiency of agricultural processes in a sustainable manner; biodiversity and ecosystem services. The user will be shown examples of products and services that can be developed, using different plants, animals and the ecosystems in which they live.

**4. Where can the game be downloaded?** The game can be downloaded free of cost at: <https://welcome.biolearning.online/>. In a few days, we will host a full launch of the product at <https://www.iica.int/en/countries/jamaica> and we intend to promote it throughout the Caribbean.