

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>

6,920,251

Confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the Americas



Countries



Highest number of cases in the Americas:

- USA (3,397,069)
- BRA (1,884,967)
- PER (330,123)
- CHL (319,493)
- MEX (304,435)

Covid-19 in the world



Source: Johns Hopkins University, available at <https://bit.ly/3dJ1CZX>. Data as at 14 July 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:

[Technological innovation as a catalyst for the recovery of agrifood companies post COVID-19](#)

With respect to food quality, there is no doubt that, throughout the health crisis, consumers have taken refuge in the purchase of "**safe**" **food products**, purchasing fewer fresh products in bulk and more packaged products. Consumer demands with respect to food safety are expected to continue rising. The purchase of locally sourced food products has also increased during the crisis.

To maintain its market competitiveness and overcome the economic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, agrifood companies will need to **adapt** their daily operations to the new reality, while guaranteeing the **safety of workers and their products**. Moreover, they will need to **anticipate** changes expected in the medium term with respect to marketing and consumption trends, based on the **grim economic outlook**.

Find out all the details in this week's blog post by agricultural engineer *Nathalie Chavier*, Technical Specialist for the Agrifood Sector at the Andalucía Technological Corporation (CTA), who holds a master's degree in Food Technology and Control. Nathalie has more than 15 years of experience in the agrifood sector, having dedicated 12 of those years specifically to the field of R+D+I. <https://bit.ly/32iM240>

[Rural women within the context of COVID-19](#)

We have warned of the fact that **women, and particularly rural women, are not involved in decision making**, despite the fact that they are the ones who are knowledgeable about the needs and realities of their communities. Women are included in collateral agendas but are **left out of structural aspects**. Their **agendas are not taken into account** because women are the ones who must bring those agendas to discussion tables.

Investments in agricultural programs must acknowledge the importance of **agriculture, self-sufficiency, food security and women's participation** in value chains. Furthermore, investment decisions must begin to address commitments towards rural women, to ensure that they are involved in **climate change** issues and **environmental protection** efforts.

Find out all the details in this week's blog post by *Alejandra Mora*, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS). <https://bit.ly/38TvssX>

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>Brazil: Gross value of agricultural production for 2020 estimated at R\$716.6 billion</p> <p>Based on data from June 2020, the Gross Value of Agricultural Production has been estimated at R\$ 716.6 billion, an increase of 8.8% compared to 2019.</p> <p>The value of crops and livestock grew by 11.6% and 3.4%, respectively. The increase in the value of crops is primarily due to greater rice, soybean, corn, coffee and orange yields. On the other hand, livestock has benefited from favorable conditions in the international market. https://bit.ly/3eowDBz</p>	<p>Central America: OIRSA raises locust alarm for Central America</p> <p>The International Regional Organization of Agricultural Health (OIRSA) issued an alert regarding the threat of Central American locust swarms due to current environmental conditions and the biological cycle of the species. The organization called for “increasing phytosanitary surveillance to detect hotspots and implement controls in a timely manner”.</p> <p>In Guatemala, efforts are being undertaken to control locust swarms in Petén (https://bit.ly/32IJJgD). In Panama, the Ministry of Agricultural Development issued a warning about this issue and has begun actively providing technical personnel with training in this topic (https://bit.ly/2CvFpR8). In El Salvador, the president requested the support of the Armed Forces, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture to control the pest, should it emerge (https://bit.ly/3j6X3f0). Press release by OIRSA: https://bit.ly/3en9lfy</p>
<p>Colombia: Ministry of Agriculture allocates 3.25 billion pesos to cotton farming</p> <p>Cotton farming will soon begin on the Atlantic coast. The Ministry is seeking to foster cotton production and commercialization by allocating 3.25 billion pesos to the activity. The Ministry is also assessing the possibility of providing an incentive for cotton storage, and will establish a technical/scientific committee responsible for improving seed quality and reducing production costs for cotton farmers. https://bit.ly/32iyTrG</p>	<p>Guatemala: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food issues alert regarding possible drought</p> <p>Faced with the possibility of drought in the month of July, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food has recommended a series of actions that farmers can implement to deal with the lack of water and protect their crops.</p> <p>According to a report by the Directorate of Geographic, Strategic and Risk Management Information (DIGEGR), the drought could affect agricultural yields, especially in the case of basic grains, and would impact subsistence farmers in particular. https://bit.ly/3092261 and https://bit.ly/2ZrpJXZ</p>

Peru: agriculture sector grew by 2% between January and May

According to data by MINAGRI, the agriculture sector grew by 2.4% between January and May compared to the same period in 2019, despite the impact of the pandemic.

In May 2020, the sector experienced a 1.6% growth.

The agriculture sector's 2.4% growth between January and May was due to increased production of paprika, wild rice, blueberries and starchy maize, among other products. The livestock sector, in turn, grew by 1.3% due to increased production of chicken, cow's milk, chicken eggs and pork.

<https://bit.ly/2DEjp77>

Uruguay: farming area will expand by 12% during the winter

According to data collected by the Directorate of Agricultural Statistics of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries via its Winter 2020 Agricultural Survey, the farming area for winter crops will expand by 12.3% compared to the previous season, when it reached 474 thousand hectares.

The farming area in which wheat will be planted is expected to reach 217 thousand hectares (5.4% less than the previous season), and 183 thousand hectares in the case of barley (a 21% growth compared to the previous year).

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

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.

Brazil: agricultural exports increase by 24.5% and exceed USD 10 billion

In June 2020, Brazil's exports of agricultural products exceeded USD 10 billion and grew by 24.5% compared to the same month in 2019 (USD 8.17 billion).

Soybean and sugar drove the growth in agricultural exports, accounting for 56.8% of total exports in 2020 (compared to a 44.4% share in 2019). China was the fastest growing destination market for agricultural exports; Brazilian soybeans represented 70% of purchases.

t.ly/Vk3W

Brazil increases its banana exports to the Southern Region

Despite a 7% contraction in shipments to the European market during the first half of the year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, bananas from Brazil have found a new market in Latin America.

During the first half of 2020, the value of banana shipments to Mercosur countries increased by 31% compared to the same period last year. Argentina (whose consumption of this product increased by 56% on an interannual basis) and Uruguay were the main destination markets. Production issues in Bolivia and Paraguay, which are Brazil's direct competitors in the region, benefited the country. However, exports from Brazil to the Mercosur region are expected to fall during the second half of the year due to climate conditions that will affect production. t.ly/aKDo

Exports from Canada to the United States fall, while agricultural exports gain traction in some provinces

British Columbia is one of the provinces that has been hit the hardest by the pandemic. Its forestry and aluminum exports in particular have been greatly affected.

Furthermore, according to data by the government of British Columbia, agricultural exports have increased in the case of several products, including fresh and dried fruit (26%); vegetables (33%); bread, bakery products and processed cereals (17%); as well as meat and meat products (57%). Vegetable fat exports to the United States, in turn, fell by around 85%. In May 2020, the United States and Mexico were Canada's main trade partners, although sales to those countries decreased by 1% and 2%, respectively, compared to the same month in 2019.

t.ly/ssAX and t.ly/pflq

Peru: despite the Covid-19 crisis, blueberry exports grow at record levels

Despite the pandemic, which has led to a significant drop in total and agricultural exports from Peru, some products have taken a firm grip on a few international markets. During the first five months of 2020, blueberry sales abroad consolidated Peru's standing as the primary exporter of this product, ahead of Chile.

In Peru, blueberry production grew by 17%, particularly in Lambayeque, Ancash and Piura. The fastest growing destination markets for the product are Middle Eastern countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Bahrain. Singapore and Germany also increased their consumption.

t.ly/6epm t.ly/X2b6

European Union reduces fresh tomato exports due to Covid-19

The European Commission is predicting that EU exports will decrease by 7% while imports will increase by 3% compared to 2019.

The Commission estimates that production of fresh tomato will fall by 2% in 2020, following a 7% decrease in Spain's production, which has shifted its focus towards more profitable greenhouse vegetables. On the contrary, Poland's production is expected to rise due to the country's recent investments in greenhouses.

The EU's fresh tomato exports fell by 20% between January and April due to logistical issues and higher transportation costs as a result of COVID-19. These exports are expected to shrink by 7% this year (which is 13% less than the average over the past five years). On the other hand, the EU's fresh tomato imports are expected to continue rising in 2020, by 3% compared to 2019 and 11% compared to the average over the past five years.

t.ly/hOeb

Latin America: Agricultural exports grow despite an overall drop in other exports

The countries that recorded the greatest increase in agricultural exports in April were Brazil (28.9%), Costa Rica (8.2%), Argentina (4.95%), Bolivia (4.9%) and Guatemala (4.7%). On the other hand, agricultural exports from Peru and Uruguay decreased significantly, by 41.7% and 16.8%, respectively.

According to preliminary data for the seven countries, the month of May followed the same trend as the previous month, with agricultural exports rising by 11.1% and exports of total goods decreasing by 15.7%.

The data form part of a study of 14 countries carried out by the Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA) based on the indicators of the Trade Data Monitor.

The products whose exports increased the most in April were soybean, sugar, beef and pork in Mercosur countries, which benefited from increased demand from the Chinese market. Beef products, in turn, are currently facing certain trade barriers, given that certain companies in the region have closed and export companies are being asked to provide written confirmation that they meet the protocols established by WHO. t.ly/pouM

Supply

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

High-level agricultural authorities in the Americas commit to taking specific actions to guarantee food and nutritional security in response to the pandemic

The Ministers and Secretaries of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Food and Rural Development of the Americas reaffirmed their willingness to implement measures at the national, regional and hemispheric levels to guarantee food and nutritional security in the hemisphere, which has been put at risk by the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic crisis that is expected to follow.

The region's high-level agricultural authorities participated in a virtual meeting hosted by the Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development of Mexico, Víctor Villalobos, with support from the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). <https://bit.ly/2WiEURv>

Development Banking System and IICA implement project to boost the productivity and sustainability of cocoa farms in Costa Rica

Costa Rica's Development Banking System (SBD) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) are implementing a project to collect detailed information on cocoa farms through the use of drones. The information collected will provide input for the development of plans to increase farmers' profitability and improve their quality of life.

The goal is to improve decision making by farmers and teach them how to better capitalize on their farms. One way is to transform cocoa farms into more sustainable agroforestry systems that incorporate the farming of other crops; this would provide farmers with sufficient income year-round, as well as protect and increase biodiversity. <https://bit.ly/2Wh4ING>

Trade, fiscal and monetary policies will be crucial to overcome the COVID-19 crisis: WTO

During the United Nations High-level Political Forum, the Secretariat of the World Trade Organization (WTO) noted that trade, fiscal and monetary policies are crucial to enable the world to recover from the crisis generated by COVID-19. The pandemic has generated unprecedented circumstances that require an unprecedented level of international cooperation.

<https://bit.ly/38ZKspg>

Restaurants and hotels: future reopening will involve the disinfection of suitcases, quick tests and the use of terraces

The hotel and restaurant sectors are paying close attention to the decisions made by countries such as Italy, Spain and France. Europe's experience raising quarantine measures will inform decision making by these sectors once they decide to reopen their establishments.

<https://bit.ly/3epO3Ot>

International prices for dairy products inspire optimism in Uruguay

After a long period at mediocre levels, international prices for dairy products in New Zealand -the world's leading dairy exporter- rose significantly: by 8% on average and by 14% in the case of powdered whole milk, Uruguay's main export product, which is now valued at U\$S 3,200 per ton. This is expected to translate into better prices for Uruguay's export product, which has been declining.

<https://bit.ly/3087Z33>