



GIEWS Country Brief Bangladesh

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Favourable prospects for 2018 *boro* rice output
- Paddy production in 2017 estimated marginally below-average
- Cereal imports in 2017/18 marketing year forecast to remain high
- Prices of rice and wheat higher year-on-year

Favourable production prospects for 2018 *boro* rice

Planting of the irrigated *boro* rice crop is ongoing and will be completed in February. Favourable weather conditions and adequate input and water supply have supported planting operations. In addition, plantings have also been boosted by attractive paddy prices. Assuming normal weather conditions over the coming months, prospects for the 2018 *boro* rice are positive.

Similarly, prospects are favourable for the 2018 winter wheat crop, which will be harvested from March.

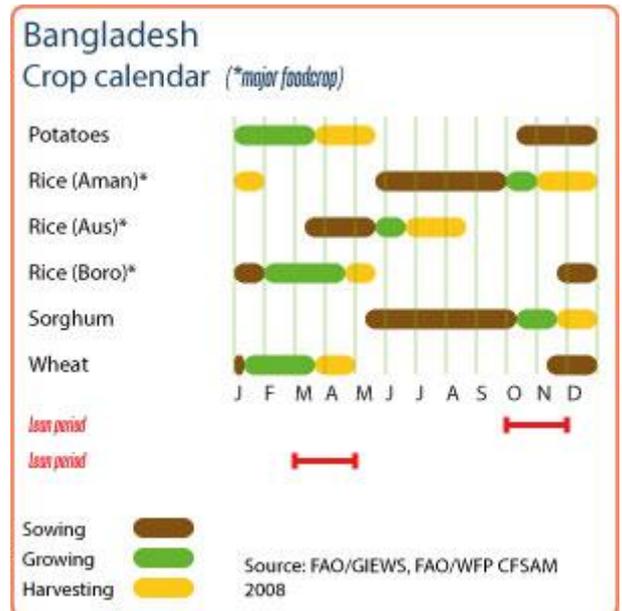
Paddy production in 2017 estimated marginally below-average

FAO's latest estimate puts the 2017 aggregate paddy production at 50.8 million tonnes, slightly below the five-year average. This is the result of the crop losses incurred to the three episodes of severe flash floods between April and August 2017, which affected northern districts, in particular.

Maize output in 2017 is estimated at 3 million tonnes, 6 percent above the high level reached in 2016, supported by an increase in plantings and yields. Similarly, the 2017 minor winter wheat crop is estimated at 1.4 million tonnes, showing a 6 percent increase year-on-year.

Cereal imports in 2017/18 marketing year forecast to remain at high level

Cereal imports in the current 2017/18 marketing year (July/June) are forecast at 8.3 million tonnes, 6 percent below last year's record level and 60 percent above the five-year average. The decrease reflects the expectations of lower rice imports in calendar year 2018, forecast at 1.5 million tonnes, 40 percent below last year's exceptionally high level, based on preliminary prospects of an output recovery in 2018.



Bangladesh
Cereal production

	2012-2016 average	2016	2017 estimate	change 2017/2016
	000 tonnes			percent
Rice (paddy)	51 653	52 096	50 800	-2
Maize	2 495	2 817	3 000	6
Wheat	1 241	1 350	1 430	6
Others	77	77	77	0
Total	55 465	56 340	55 307	-2

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

Wheat imports in the 2017/18 marketing year (July/June) are forecast at 6 million tonnes, up 5 percent from last year's high level owing to increased domestic demand for high-quality wheat for milling. Maize imports are anticipated to remain close to last year's average level of 400 000 tonnes.

Rice and wheat prices at higher year-on-year

After some declines in October and November 2017, prices of rice in Dhaka increased since December 2017 and were more than 20 percent higher than a year earlier, mostly as a result of the production losses caused by the floods in 2017.

Prices of mostly imported wheat and wheat flour have increased strongly in recent months. In January 2018, they were well above their year-earlier levels mostly supported by increased domestic consumption as a substitute for rice. Expectations of a reduced 2018 wheat harvest, due to a contraction in plantings, also added to the upward pressure.

Large number of people in northern parts affected by severe floods in 2017

Recurrent floods in 2017 affected at least 8 million people, mainly concentrated in the northern parts of the country. Severe damage to housing and infrastructure, including roads and bridges as well as losses of stored food and livestock, were reported. In addition, higher year-on-year prices for rice, the country's main staple, continue to negatively affect access to food of the most vulnerable households.

Since the resurgence of violence in August 2017 in Rakhine State of Myanmar, an estimated 688 000 people have fled to Bangladesh. According to UN/OCHA, as of mid-January 2018, more than 970 000 refugees were hosted in Bangladesh. Most of these people rely on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs.

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