

Thursday, 16 July 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>

7,212,684

Confirmed cases of
Covid-19 in the
Americas



Countries



Highest number of
cases in the
Americas:

USA (3,546,871)
BRA (1,966,748)
PER (337,751)
CHL (323,698)
MEX (317,635)

Covid-19 in the world



Source: Johns Hopkins University, available at <https://bit.ly/3dJ1CZX>. Data as at 16 July 2020 (14:00 md 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:

[Trade policy transparency and predictability for food security and agricultural trade during the pandemic](#)

As an observer organization of the **Committee on Agriculture** of the World Trade Organization (WTO), IICA participated in an **extraordinary meeting**, attended by 164 national delegations and other observer organizations, to discuss **measures imposed** on agricultural products and commodities, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

There was a clear **appeal for trade liberalization, the protection of food security, and respect for the disciplines of the WTO**. The meeting also **discussed** the countries' concerns, which focused on **market distortion, due to increased use of subsidies and domestic support**, as well as the compliance of these measures with WTO provisions, which had been instituted by the member countries themselves to protect food security and to ensure trade predictability.

Find out all the details in this week's #IICA Blog post by **Adriana Campos Azofeifa** and **Nadia Monge Hernández**, *Specialists in IICA's International Trade and Regional Integration Program*. **Adriana** has an MBA, with a specialization in Marketing and a Bachelor's degree in International Relations, specializing in International Trade. **Nadia** has a Bachelor's degree in International Relations, focusing on trade, ecotourism and international cooperation management. <https://bit.ly/2C9hN5a>

[The Covid-19 crisis and the importance of a territorial approach](#)

A territorial focus enables societies to **revalue rural spaces, and in particular, family farming**, recognizing the outstanding contribution of this sector to food production and the revitalization of rural economies, demystifying the notion that rural areas are “backward” or the “residual of urban”, and the concept that family farmers are “archaic” and linked to the notion of “poverty”.

Yet, **adopting a territorial focus in public policies** will not produce immediate effects nor will it be able to reverse current trends triggered by the impact of COVID-19. Internalizing this approach **will require political and institutional arrangements**, significant **changes in government culture and in society, in general**, coupled with decisive political will. Indeed, a much more complex and systemic approach will be needed to guide the implementation of State policies.

Find out all the details in this week's #IICA Blog post by **João Torrens**, *International Technical Specialist in IICA's Territorial Development and Family Farming Program, Ecuador Office*. <https://bit.ly/2Wqxtl1>

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>Argentina: Agricultural Chambers and the Argentine Industrial Union push for economic reactivation plan</p> <p>According to a report by La Nación, the virtual meeting focused on the issue of exports and employment. Both sectors are seeking to engage in discussions with the government.</p> <p>The chambers are proposing to establish a national export committee with various areas of the government. They are also planning to develop sectorial proposals, in particular, a law aiming at agroindustrial export development with fiscal and financial stability for a 10 to 15-year period. This will be complemented by a national plan investment promotion plan.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2WqBFYh</p>	<p>Colombia: partnership between Government and the Livestock Federation will support female livestock farmers</p> <p>The partnership is intended to assist 190,000 female livestock farmers, by offering funding programs with subsidized interest rates; technical support for the development of production projects; ongoing training; the fostering of associations and trade-related advisory services.</p> <p>In addition to promoting entrepreneurship and improving the economic conditions of beneficiaries, it will devise concrete actions to prevent and address violence against women involved in the livestock industry.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/3fB9c9J</p>
<p>Costa Rica: companies that hire undocumented workers will be fined</p> <p>The reform of Executive Decree No. 42406-MAG-MGP establishes that agricultural, agroexporter or agroindustrial companies that hire foreigners who are undocumented or who are not in the process of regularizing their status will be fined.</p> <p>The sanctions established in the reform will take effect on 23 September, one day after the deadline for those foreign workers, who can provide proof of their time in the country and can fulfill the other requirements, to submit an application to access the exception regime. This will allow them to work in the country (the process will cost US\$60).</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2ZBfe4B</p>	<p>Mexico: agreement between the Secretary of Agriculture, INIFAP and MASECA will support corn cultivation</p> <p>The three-year joint work agreement between the Secretary of Agriculture (SADER), the National Institute for Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research (INIFAP) and the MASECA Group will aim to boost the sustainable production of white corn and the productivity of Mexican peasants and farmers, while reducing imports of this commodity.</p> <p>Under the agreement, a study will evaluate 164 different types of hybrid white corn seeds, which will be cultivated on a 256-hectare expanse, to identify which are the most suitable for the region.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2CiKhJE</p>

Peru: Government allocates S/ 10.4 million to MINAGRI to organize mobile markets

By way of Emergency Decree No. 084-2020—which was published this Thursday in the Official Gazette, El Peruano—the Government is authorizing the transfer of S/ 10.4 million to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MINAGRI) for the purpose of organizing mobile markets to support small and medium-scale farmers.

The funds will also cover costs to transport goods (freight) to produce markets and wholesale markets.

<https://bit.ly/2WpAulu> and <https://bit.ly/32oObvd>

Dominican Republic: government launches international Plant Variety Registration system

The purpose of the system is to improve plant and seed phytosanitary systems, as well as varieties and typologies of plants developed in different production areas in the Dominican Republic.

The system—the first of its kind in the Caribbean—will be implemented through the Office of Plant Variety Registration and Protection of Breeders' Rights (OREVADO) of the Ministry of Agriculture, to boost the country's capacity to process plant varieties that yield greater benefits, contribute to mitigating the impact of climate change, and result in more resistant crops and greater food productivity.

<https://bit.ly/32rBekm>

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.

El Salvador: locust plague has affected corn, sugar cane, beans, sorghum and pastureland

The country's Ministry of Agriculture has confirmed that the plague of locusts has affected basic crops, such as corn, sugar cane, beans, sorghum and pastureland. Undoubtedly, the plague is spreading throughout the Central American region and is endangering farmers as well as the agricultural trade that depends on that production. The plague recently entered countries such as Argentina and it has still not been eradicated.

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

Guatemala: digital platform launched to support businesses

The Ministry of the Economy (MINECO), the Guatemalan Export Association (AGEXPORT), the Guatemalan Chamber of Commerce (CCG) and the National Association of Municipalities have established a digital platform to assist entrepreneurs to reactivate different types of businesses and to advise them about new ways of reaching clients. The initiative has developed five guides on remaining active in business; managing orders and deliveries efficiently; organizing finances; applying anti-Covid hygiene measures in business; and taking advantage of forms of payment. <https://bit.ly/30fDN69>

Argentina: export taxes on grains to remain steady

Despite the severe contraction in the economy, as a result of the pandemic, the country has indicated that it has no intention of increasing taxes on grain exports. Currently, soybean, soybean oil and soy flour are subject to a 33% tariff and there is a 12% tariff on shipments of corn and wheat.

<https://bit.ly/3jb30Yc>

Mexico and Ghana seek to strengthen international cooperation systems

Mexico and Ghana have been engaged in political dialogue, with a view to advancing joint efforts in areas such as agriculture and trade. Amidst the pandemic, efforts to strengthen international cooperation systems and to explore potential trade relationships with African countries will be extremely important for these countries.

<https://bit.ly/3fD7fcN>

Colombia expands export portfolio

Green Superfood of Colombia was successful in exporting a new category of product to the U.S. market—Tahiti Lime juice—and also managed to position this product in Walmart stores. This is a clear example of how producers can expand their portfolio of products and find new trade opportunities, even amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

<https://bit.ly/2B6dg2F>

Chile: fresh fruit exports fall

Chilean fresh and processed fruit exports declined 14% in value between January and June of this year. A total of 1.71 million tons of fresh fruit was exported, valuing USD 3.251 billion FOB, which represents a 7% interannual reduction in volume.

<https://bit.ly/30mbAKW>

Supply

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

Latin American agricultural exports climbed 8.5%, even as total external sales fell 30%

Fourteen Latin American and Caribbean countries* saw an 8.5% interannual increase in the dollar value of agricultural exports in April, even amidst a sharp 29.9% decline in total external sales. Preliminary data for May is in keeping with this trend, suggesting that agricultural production and trade will be one of the engines that will drive the region's economic recovery.

The data was analyzed by Joaquín Arias, a Specialist from the Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA) of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). The countries that were included in the analysis were Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. <https://bit.ly/2DPs6M6>

IICA recognizes leading artists from the Americas for using art to demonstrate the value of agriculture and rurality

Brazil's Gilberto Gil, Panama's Erika Ender, Argentina's Teresa Parodi, as well as the Ecuadorian group Jayac and Mistah Dale of Barbados were all awarded the certificate of Artists and Friends of IICA, for their role in a campaign by the international organization to pay tribute to those who are guaranteeing our food supply amidst the pandemic.

The artists attended the virtual ceremony, on behalf of the rest of the 110 musicians from 22 countries who, through their art, participated in IICA's *Popular Music Tribute to those who Work Day to Day to Put Food on our Tables*. President of Costa Rica, Carlos Alvarado, participated in the ceremony, sending a message that stressed the role of agriculture and the political and social attention that it has attracted.

<https://bit.ly/32FkRAx>

Argentinian meat exports strengthened against the backdrop of weakened domestic consumption

So far this year, average meat consumption in Argentina is approximately 49.3 kilos, which is 3.5% less than the same period last year. In May, while exports of bone-in beef cuts climbed to 84,500 tons, the available supply for the domestic market fell to 175,000 tons, which is equivalent to 45.4 kilos per capita annually – the lowest level ever recorded for this month. <https://bit.ly/2ZziH3r>

Changes in the Mexican retail sector

The new normal is redefining the retail sector and according to Dunnhumby, a data science company for the retail industry, there are clear changes taking place in this sector that will become more pronounced over the next few months.

Consumers will seek to make the most of the supplies that they buy, such as food, and to reduce waste, and will also frequent local stores, as it has been proven that customers prefer to remain close to home to make purchases. <https://bit.ly/2Wt300N>

Fertilizer application equipment developed to support agriculture during the pandemic

The installation of automatic systems and fertilizer injection systems in Costa Rica will enable users to save water and material. The low-cost equipment will allow farmers to introduce precision fertigation – a technology that facilitates efficient resource management, by producing more with fewer inputs.

<https://bit.ly/32I6UYy>