

Thursday, 6 August 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>

# 10,189,415

Confirmed cases of  
Covid-19 in the  
Americas



## Countries



Highest number of  
cases in the  
Americas:

USA (4,864,151)  
BRA (2,859,073)  
MEX (456,100)  
PER (447,624)  
CHL (366,671)

## Covid-19 in the world



Source: Johns Hopkins University, available at <https://bit.ly/3dJ1CZX>. Data as at 6 August 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:

### [The Covid-19 pandemic could give rise to a new agricultural institutional structure](#)

Institutional structures in Member States have tended to focus mainly on the primary sector. However, the pandemic has made the **importance of linkages**, global value chains and clusters more evident, leading us to believe that new institutional structures should be based on this interaction—from production to consumption—to ensure the sustainability and dynamism that will be required.

In an economic and social environment in which the **main disruptions** are as a result of innovation, information and communication technologies, knowledge management, climate variability, the effects of climate change and rapidly changing trade dynamics, **new institutional systems will have three options: to disappear, adapt or change.**

**Find out all the details this week** in a post by *Santiago Vélez León*, IICA Representative in Bolivia, who holds a PhD in Strategic Planning and Leadership and a Master in Agribusiness Management. He is also an Agricultural Engineer. <https://bit.ly/31nSJ2R>

### [Harnessing digital tools for climate and agriculture](#)

Overall, and in addition to evident physical and human capital constraints—such as poor connectivity or farmers' low literacy levels—**there are cultural and methodological gaps that constrain the spread of DT** (digital tools) in agriculture and that require a more comprehensive approach.

Even if infrastructural and educational barriers are overcome—which has been happening progressively—there are **deeper concerns** that could hinder **farmer's acceptance of DT**. A more open discussion and systematic reporting on available digital tools—about what works and does not work—**will contribute to consolidating a collective learning curve that will benefit all.**

**Find out all the details this week** in a post by *Nicolas Hernandez-Aguilera*, Postdoctoral Research Scientist at the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) of the University of Colombia. J. Nicolas' current research focuses on understanding the mechanisms by which farmers can adapt to the increasing risks of climate variability. In particular, he is working to understand innovative ways to encourage and increase the generation, translation and use of climate information by small farmers, which will prove useful for co-designing improved financial instruments. <https://bit.ly/31pR9NY>

# 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: locust invasion sparks concern</b></p> <p>The arrival of the locust plague in Santiago de Estero is a source of concern, given that the cloud is approximately 20 kilometers wide.</p> <p>Current climate conditions have made it impossible to combat the problem. The Télam news agency reports that the swarm has reached the districts of Belgrano and General Taboada, which together have 180 thousand hectares of wheat cultivation.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3kmWNsy">https://bit.ly/3kmWNsy</a></p>	<p><b>Bolivia: economy slides 7.93% in May</b></p> <p>According to data published by the National Statistical Institute (INE), economic activity in May—measured according to the Global Economic Activity Index (IGAE)—was 7.9% lower than in the previous month and 16.7% lower than May 2019. Sectors experiencing the greatest contraction were transportation and storage, trade and construction.</p> <p>INE has advised that the moderate decline in the IGAE in May, was due to the dynamism of the food industry, in line with the boost in the agriculture sector, communication services and public administration that were able to offset the decline in other activity. INE also reported that there was a 0.6% increase in the GDP during the first quarter of 2020.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3ki74GA">https://bit.ly/3ki74GA</a> and <a href="https://bit.ly/2Prmfz8">https://bit.ly/2Prmfz8</a></p>
<p><b>Brazil: the agriculture sector adds 36,800 new jobs in June</b></p> <p>The Ministry of the Economy has advised that the agriculture sector, which includes agriculture, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, filled 36,800 vacant positions, while employment in other sectors of the economy trended downward.</p> <p>Accumulated figures for the agriculture sector for the January to June period, reveal that given that 437,999 people were hired and 375,366 were dismissed, there was an overall addition of 62,633 jobs in the formal sector.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3fzalZg">https://bit.ly/3fzalZg</a></p>	<p><b>Colombia: coffee harvest generates 165,000 jobs</b></p> <p>It is estimated that for the second (and largest) coffee harvest in the year—that will take place when the pandemic is at its peak in Colombia—the sector will require 165,000 coffee pickers to harvest an estimated 7.5 million bags.</p> <p>The newspaper, Portafolio, has indicated that due to the high demand for labor and the proactive approach of the coffee trade, the sector is the only one to have developed its own biosecurity protocol, with the support of the Ministry of Health, which it has widely disseminated among producers, as well as farm administrators, foremen, coffee dryers, field managers and food supervisors.</p> <p><a href="https://bit.ly/3a2Wcb5">https://bit.ly/3a2Wcb5</a> <a href="https://bit.ly/3hRYIUe">https://bit.ly/3hRYIUe</a> and <a href="https://wapo.st/30aTVae">https://wapo.st/30aTVae</a></p>

**Honduras: national rice production will supply 31% of domestic demand**

According to a report by La Tribuna, rice production will reach record levels this year, despite the pandemic. Producers estimate a 1.4 million quintal crop for 2020, sufficient to satisfy 31% of the domestic demand for rice (4.5 million quintals). The remaining 69% will be imported, under an import quota with CAFTA.

One of the factors that contributed to these positive results was favorable winter conditions in various areas where the grain is produced.

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

**Panama: economy took a 40.9% nosedive in May**

Data from the National Statistics and Census Institute (INEC), indicates that there was a 40.9% interannual decline in economic activity up to May, measured in accordance with the Monthly Economic Activity Index (IMAE). The accumulated index between January and May was 13.9% lower than the same period in 2019.

Some of the sectors that performed well in May were banana production and cattle rearing.

<https://bit.ly/3fxFz8f> and <https://bit.ly/31xvmUG>

## 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.

### Mexico: pork production has proven resilient in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic

Pork exporters have found new market opportunities in China and have continued to meet the rigorous requirements of the Japanese and South Korean markets. However, Mexican beef and pork imports have not been as strong as in years past and have decreased, due to the contraction of Mexico's economy and the unfavorable exchange rate.

In 2020, retail meat consumption is driven by the demand for healthier, smaller and more affordable portions and choices such as pork and chicken, given the loss of employment and decline in income.

<https://bit.ly/2Ps77Bu>

### Asia, Africa and the Middle East are the markets that will fuel Argentina's post-Covid-19 recovery

Argentina's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has outlined various proposals to emerge from the crisis in the document, "Perspectivas económicas mundiales, Economías emergentes y en desarrollo" (Global Economic Perspectives, Emerging and Developing Economies), in support of the post-Covid-19 agricultural export plan.

The aim of the economic recovery period will be to attract more foreign investment and to maximize the strengthening of agricultural exports. The document provides data projections up to 2024, pinpointing potential markets such as India, China, Pakistan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Chile, Nigeria, the United Arab Emirates, Thailand and Turkey, in light of the expected economic growth of these countries.

<https://bit.ly/33vbbct>

### United States: fruit imports dip even as vegetable imports rise

USDA data reveals that fruit imports dipped 2%, while vegetable imports grew 10%. There was a consistent decline in imports of fresh fruits, such as avocados, berries and bananas, with grape imports fluctuating. Apples were also down, but mandarins and oranges were up 19%.

On the other hand, the overall vegetable category was up approximately 10%, led by a 38% increase in imports of fresh potatoes, followed by frozen and prepared vegetables.

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

### China grants permits for Chilean citrus exports

Data from Chile's Ministry of Agriculture has revealed that close to 45 establishments and their associated orchards have been issued permits to export to China, which will enable Chile to expand its export diversification strategy.

The project to expand the citrus market into the Asian country began two years ago and the Chinese phytosanitary authorities recently issued the permits, which will facilitate not only market diversification and expansion, but also economic recovery. Therefore, companies will continue to join forces to comply with these regulations, as well as with all Covid-19-related measures.

<https://bit.ly/31q4B4m>

## Supply

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

### Successful innovation attempt by a Venezuelan farmer to improve rice resilience

On the vast plains of Venezuela, a rice farmer successfully attempted an innovative system that yielded greater resilience and sustainability in his crops. The best news is that he did it using fewer resources.

In 2017, Miguel Agüero became a pioneer in implementing in Venezuela the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) on a half-acre plot on his farm, No. 234 of the Río Guárico Irrigation System (SRRG), in the town of Calabozo.

SRI is an agroecological and climate smart system that was introduced in the 1980s in Madagascar, which enhances productivity in rice cultivation and reduces the amount of inputs such as water, seeds and fertilizers, through changes in the management of plants, soil, water and nutrients. <https://bit.ly/3ieItAD>

### PROCAGICA supports rural women with cocoa processing and income diversification in El Salvador

The Central American Integrated Coffee Rust Management Program (PROCAGICA) continues to strengthen the capacities of farmers who have diversified systems of coffee along with other crops, including cocoa production.

The initiative has provided technical support and training in processing to cocoa farmers, many of whom had the crop planted on their farms but, due to a lack of knowledge about manufacturing techniques, were not adding value, which limited them to very basic marketing, explained Norma Arias, technical specialist at PROCAGICA.

<https://bit.ly/3fy7ftN>

### Impetus to producers will benefit food security and contribute to poverty eradication

Investment in public goods for the **agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture sectors in Mexico**, geared toward innovation, research, technological development and health, as well as the establishment of market linkages for small-scale producers—which make up the great majority—will increase the self-sufficiency and food security of the country. <https://bit.ly/3fwN9A5>

### Argentina's meat and wine exports increased 55% and 46% respectively

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the Nation informed that the country set a new record for pork exports in June, having sold 4,454 tons (product weight), valuing 6.7 million dollars. At the same time, wine exports continued to trend upward, increasing by 46.3% between January and July of this year, compared to the equivalent period in 2019. <https://bit.ly/33BZZe2>

### Uruguay sets a record for meat exports in July

Speaking to Rurales El País, Rafael Tardáguila, remarked that in a year in which meat production has been in freefall, Uruguay's beef exports in July were "surprising in terms of the volumes sold". The Director of the agromarket consultancy, Tardáguila Agromercados, explained that volumes amounted to 25,500 tons and that "never before had this amount of meat been exported during the seventh month of the year". However, these figures are slightly lower than sales in June.

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