

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>

2,976,058

Confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the Americas



Countries



Highest number of cases in the Americas:

- USA (1,828,736)
- BRA (526,447)
- PER (170,039)
- CHL (108,686)
- CAN (93,890)

Covid-19 in the world



Source: Johns Hopkins University, available at <https://bit.ly/3dJ1CZX>. Data as at 02 June 2020 (16:00 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:

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has launched a series of webinars entitled, “**Reflections on the World and Food Security in Latin America and the Caribbean post-Covid-19**”. The initiative is designed to **anticipate possible solutions and the requisite policies to contribute to food security, economic reactivation and trade in the aftermath of the pandemic.**

There have been **6 webinars** in total. Please see below the **presentations for the sixth webinar**: “The post Covid-19 scenario from the perspective of Caribbean countries”.

[Presentation by James Fletcher, former Minister of Energy of St. Lucia](#)



“The current crisis has demonstrated **just how fragile our development agendas are.** In 10 Caribbean countries, tourism accounts for more than 25% of the national GDP, while in Eastern Caribbean states, this figure ranges from 30% to over 80%. **Tourism is the sector that has been hit the hardest, and it will be one of the slowest ones to recover,** which will impact government revenues, employment and families”.

We invite you to share your comments, questions and doubts on the **#IICABlog**, where you can find the complete presentation: <https://bit.ly/2MlprdR>

[Presentation by Chelston Brathwaite, Director General Emeritus of IICA and former ambassador of Barbados to China](#)



“In China, I learned that the word crisis has two components: **danger and opportunity.** Within the context of the coronavirus pandemic, we are already in the danger zone, so we have to **seek out opportunities,** which could arise from this situation”.

We invite you to share your comments, questions and doubts on the **#IICABlog**, where you can find the complete presentation: <https://bit.ly/3crg3A4>

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: agriculture sector criticizes new regulations of the Central Bank</p> <p>The new regulations of the Central Bank, which establish conditions for accessing the foreign exchange market, have been criticized by associations of the agriculture sector, which believe that the measures put a clamp on imports of supplies for farming activities.</p> <p>The associations are awaiting further information about the regulations, and expect the Central Bank to issue regulations regarding the exchange rate that would apply to fertilizer imports.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2MkeWaZ and https://bit.ly/2U5YSON</p>	<p>Brazil: agriculture grows by 1.9% during first quarter of the year compared to the same period in 2019</p> <p>According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), agriculture was the only sector that grew during the first quarter of the year. The sector grew by 0.6% compared to the same period in 2019, due to increased farming of certain crops, such as soybean.</p> <p>Overall, the country's GDP fell by 1.5% during the first quarter compared to the fourth quarter of last year. Despite the pandemic, the agriculture sector's GDP is expected to grow by 2.5% in 2020.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2Avlek8</p>
<p>Colombia: new measures for agricultural credit facility</p> <p>The Ministry of Agriculture and the Agrarian Bank made a series of changes to the credit facility for farmers that was launched in March.</p> <p>Among other things, credit opportunities are now being offered to young farmers with no credit history; an agreement has been reached with unions to bring producers closer together; and a total of 600 centers have been set up to receive applications in areas where the bank has no offices.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/3elovwn</p>	<p>El Salvador: vegetable sector has been hit the hardest by tropical depression Amanda</p> <p>According to <i>La Prensa Gráfica</i>, planting on vegetable farms is 30% completed. During this time of the year, tomato, chili pepper, cucumber, <i>güisquil</i>, squash, <i>pipián</i>, spinach, blackberry and coriander are sown. Even before heavy rainfall affected farming activities, the agriculture sector was already in need of resources to purchase supplies and invest in infrastructure.</p> <p>In addition to being impacted by a tropical depression, the vegetable sector has also been affected by the pandemic and the resulting restrictions on movement.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/2U6cLvX</p>

Peru: plan to reactivate agriculture would involve an investment of S/2500 million

The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Peru (MINAGRI) has presented a plan that describes actions to be undertaken both during and after the coronavirus emergency. These actions include providing capital injections for farmers, continuing the construction of water infrastructure, setting up an emergency fund for natural disasters, and giving greater attention to small-scale family farmers. <https://bit.ly/2XSX0JU>

Uruguay: this year's wheat harvest will resemble that of 2019

Thus far, 60% of the wheat crop has been sown. The farming area is expected to total 210 to 230 thousand hectares, similar to that of 2019.

The Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) estimates that the country's total farming area will span 480 thousand hectares this year, of which more than 220 thousand would correspond to wheat.

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

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: trade surplus in May reached US\$4.5 billion

In May 2020, the country's trade surplus reached the lowest level for the month of May, since 2015. With respect to the export volume, there was a 5.6% increase compared to May 2019; this was due to the fact that the volume of agricultural exports increased by 36.1%.

However, the value of exports decreased by 4.2%. <https://bit.ly/2XqLEOp> and <https://bit.ly/2zOG7Va>

Chile exports 74 tons of lemons to China

Following China's recent reopening of its market to citrus fruits from Chile, a total of 74 tons of lemons have been shipped to the Asian market. According to the president of the Chilean Citrus Committee, the country hopes to export 10% of its total lemon harvest to China.

During the 2018-2019 period, Chile exported more than 335 thousand tons of citrus fruits. The United States was the top destination. <https://bit.ly/3eKhYl0>

Central America: operations at the Nicaragua-Costa Rica border resume

After two weeks of closure, Costa Rica's northern border has been reopened to allow the movement of goods through Nicaragua, following an agreement reached between representatives of the two Central American countries, who will meet again on 5 June to evaluate the measures.

Among other measures, Costa Rica will no longer administer COVID-19 tests to foreign trailer drivers, unless they display symptoms, although Costa Rican drivers and residents will be tested. Costa Rica will also allow truckers to remain in the country for five days.

<https://bit.ly/3dyqjlo> and <https://bit.ly/3cyiwcg>

Colombia: 52.3% slide in exports in April vis-à-vis the same month last year

Declining exports in April can be attributed to the 70.1% fall-off in sales of fuel and other mining industry products.

Exports of agricultural products, food and beverages were valued at USD 569.3 million – a 9.4% decline compared to April 2019.

This was due to reduced sales of banana and coffee. <https://bit.ly/2XShiqF>

Honduras: coffee exports contracted in May

During the month of May, coffee exports experienced a 21% interannual decline, falling to 729 million 60kg bags. According to IHCAFE, this was due to reduced production, as a result of the drought and lower international coffee prices.

Uruguay: exports fell 26.4% in May (including exports from the free zone)

According to the Uruguayan Exporters Union, during the first five months of the year, the country recorded a 13.94% decline in exports in comparison to the same period last year.

A 4.3% decline in the volume of exports is forecast for the 2019/2020 season.

<https://reut.rs/2zUQt9u>

If this figure is expanded to include free zone trade over the same period, the decline amounts to 18%.

May's falling numbers were due to reduced sales to China, Europe, Brazil and Argentina.

<https://bit.ly/2Mp7pYw> and <https://bit.ly/2XrYz2s>

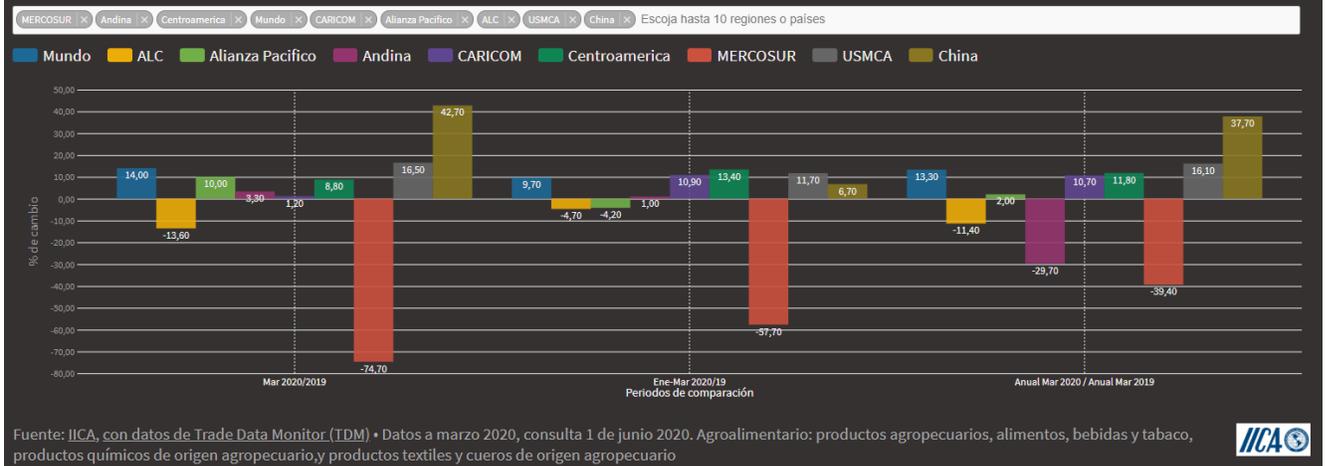
This week's graph

Monitoring agricultural trade during Covid-19: **Mexico – Agrifood exports by region and by export destination countries (as at March 2020).**

The value of Mexican agrifood exports increased 14.3% from March 2019 to March 2020. When broken down according to destination market and region, exports to China increased 42.7%, while increasing 16.5% to USMCA (formerly NAFTA); 10% to the Pacific Alliance and 3.3% to the Andean Region. Yet, exports to MERCOSUR plummeted by 74.7%. It must be mentioned that the United States is the main export market, accounting for 78.4% of market share. Only 7% of exports are sold to Latin America and the Caribbean, 0.5% of which are sold to MERCOSUR.

México: Exportaciones agroalimentarias por destino por regiones y países

% de cambio en USD, tres periodos de comparación



More details in the [#IICABlog](https://bit.ly/3gqwMGU) post at <https://bit.ly/3gqwMGU>

Supply

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

Strengthening Caribbean agriculture to produce more food, enhance tourism linkages and reduce imports: a matter of urgency.

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on world tourism and trade demonstrate that Caribbean countries must modify their current economic development model, which is excessively dependent on tourism and food imports.

Chelston Brathwaite, Director General Emeritus of IICA, and James Fletcher, former Minister of Energy of St. Lucia, agreed that the pandemic has brought to light five of the Caribbean region's main vulnerabilities: the impacts of climate change (evidenced by droughts and more hurricanes), countries' debt levels, high rates of non-transmissible chronic diseases (such as diabetes, hypertension and cancer), dependence on tourism and food insecurity.

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

Water harvesting project to benefit 2,500 farming families in the Nicaraguan Dry Corridor

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) will support the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), in implementing a water harvesting project to benefit 2,500 family farmers in the Nicaraguan Dry Corridor.

The aim is to generate opportunities for market access and entry for producers, enabling them to improve their income and standard of living.

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

How does my start-up contribute to agriculture?

During these times of crisis, the agribusiness sector is one of those essential services that must continue to operate, ensuring that food reaches the tables of consumers. New Brazilian agribusinesses have contributed significantly during this period, providing solutions such as mobile devices, drones and digital tools for rural businesses. <https://glo.bo/36SVZFE>

Pandemic has modified frozen food consumption in the United States

United States consumers spent \$15.5 billion dollars in the frozen food aisles during the 11 weeks ending the 16 May 2020, which is 40.2% more than the equivalent period last year, according to Nielsen data. <https://cnn.it/3cqEo9j>

Mexico's agrifood sector adopts international prevention measures

The Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development contributed to reinforcing international measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the agrifood sector, in order to guarantee continued production and distribution of food to the population.

The Undersecretariat of Agriculture assisted in the preparation of the "Practical Guide for COVID-19 Prevention and Mitigation in Agriculture" that was published by the International Labor Organization (ILO), and which production units in Mexico are urged to adhere to, on a voluntary basis.

<https://bit.ly/2AAKo1L>