

Thursday, 27 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>

12,916,067

Confirmed cases of
Covid-19 in the
Americas



Countries



Highest number of
cases in the
Americas:

USA (5,854,342)
BRA (3,717,156)
PER (613,378)
MEX (573,888)
COL (572,243)

Covid-19 in the world



Source: Johns Hopkins University, available at <https://bit.ly/3dJ1CZX>. Data as at 27 August 2020 (14:00 pm 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:

[WTO countries discuss anti-Covid-19 measures and call for greater transparency in agricultural trade](#)

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) shared COVID-19-related experiences at the meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. During the meeting, participants continued discussions about the **Fifth Review of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement (SPS Agreement)** and examined a **possible statement on sanitary and phytosanitary measures** for the Twelfth Ministerial Conference (MC12), to be held next year.

The countries also took part in a meeting of the Committee on Agriculture, in which **discussions** focused on policies addressing the three pillars of agricultural trade: **market access, domestic support and export competition**. During the meeting, it was stressed that **agricultural notifications continue to be essential** in informing countries about these issues and can prove useful in assisting governments and companies to make policy and market-related decisions.

Find out all the details in this week's post by *Horrys Friaca*, Specialist in the Agricultural Health, Safety and Food Quality Program at IICA and *Adriana Campos Azoifeifa*, Specialist in IICA's International Trade and Regional Integration Program. <https://bit.ly/32tVUqk>

[Working with rural youth in Latin America: a critical review is needed](#)

When we assessed public policies related to rural youth, we found at least three broad perspectives: **(i) youth, as a risk group; (ii) youth, as subjects of law; and (iii) youth, as strategic actors in development.**

It is pointless, for example (and this is a lesson gained over time), for youth to create active, effective, friendly, and fruitful relationships among themselves, **but to be isolated from the rest of society**, which is something that occurs more frequently than we would imagine. Why?

This is because for several decades, public policies on youth **have focused on creating forums exclusively for young people** (youth institutes, youth centers, youth clubs, youth parliaments, youth cards, etc.), and therefore, in many instances, **youth have been isolated more than they have been integrated into the societies to which they belong.**

Thus, instead of just creating specific forums for youth, we must also inject a generational perspective into all public policies.

Find out all the details in this week's post by *Ernesto Rodríguez*, Sociologist, youth specialist and Director of the Latin American Center on Youth (CELAJU) in Uruguay. <https://bit.ly/3lxDCT>

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: wheat output in various parts of the country expected to fall by up to 50%</p> <p>According to Reuters, the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange (BCBA) has reported a decline of as much as 50% in wheat output for the 2020/21 crop year in the north and in some of the central region of the country, due to prolonged drought conditions, frost and pests.</p> <p>BCBA data indicates that, due to the adverse weather, 6.5 million hectares of wheat were sown, which is less than the 6.8 million hectares projected at the start of the season. https://reut.rs/2YDpBDW</p>	<p>Bolivia: unemployment climbed to 11.8% in July</p> <p>Figures from the National Statistics Institute (INE), indicate that the unemployment level in July was 11.8%. According to the entity, had the pandemic not occurred, the unemployment rate would have been only 3.9%.</p> <p>It appears that 434,000 of this group have already started to look for a job and that 289,000 of these individuals became unemployed between April and July, directly as a result of the pandemic. The figures refer to urban Bolivia. https://bit.ly/3lqTz80</p>
<p>United States: farmers concerned as California fires spread</p> <p>CNN has reported that farmers in California are worried about the wave of fires affecting the state, which have already ravaged thousands of hectares of land, and that coupled with the effects of the pandemic could cause them to lose their crops. https://cnn.it/32vnbbU</p> <p>On the other hand, Univision has reported that the Office of Agriculture of Fresno County will distribute more than 300,000 masks to protect farm workers in the areas affected by the smoke, as air pollution has risen to unhealthy levels and, by law, workers must be provided with special equipment. https://bit.ly/2Qtu1ZB</p>	<p>Mexico: economic activity plummets 14.5% in June</p> <p>Figures from the Global Economic Activity Index (IGAE) reveal that there was a 14.5% interannual contraction of the economy in June. Seasonally adjusted data shows that economic activity increased 8.9%, in real terms, in June, in comparison to May.</p> <p>When broken down into major groups of activities, the interannual performance of secondary activities decreased the most (17.5%), with tertiary activities declining by 13.6% and primary activities (which includes activities in the agriculture and livestock sector) by 1.5%, in comparison to the same month in 2019. https://bit.ly/2D5zAKX and https://bit.ly/31zMyd7</p>

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.

Peru pushes to enhance the quality of its coffee to improve exports

During the Covid-19 era, countries must strive to ensure the proper functioning and integration of regional chains to generate production linkages; reduce the risk of extra-regional trade dependency; and to make better use of the complementarities that exist between countries, given their natural resource base.

This is how Peru is seeking to improve the quality of its coffee production, by applying quality standards that positively impact the product and increase the possibilities for trade, given that this is one of the country's main exports and a source of employment.

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

Argentina begins its first blueberry exports to China

Amidst the Coronavirus crisis with which the world is now grappling, Argentina has managed to diversify its product markets, identifying new trade opportunities; strengthening its export capacities, including compliance with norms and sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, while also strengthening its trade promotion.

This is apparent, as the country sends its first blueberry exports to China, the outcome of negotiations that have been taking place between both nations regarding the reduction of tariffs on this product.

<https://bit.ly/2QBI7YV>

Brazil increased melon exports in the first half of the year

The pandemic has not affected all countries and chains to the same extent.

One product that has benefitted in the Brazilian export market is melons.

External melon sales moved from 6 million dollars in the first six months of last year to 14 million dollars between June to July 2020.

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

Chilean clementine exports grew, despite the impact of the pandemic

The successful export performance of the product during the pandemic, enabled the country to increase its export volume during the production season and it was not affected by logistical disruptions or by commercial measures restricting trade.

<https://bit.ly/3b1liX3>

Supply

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

Ibero-American countries, SEGIB and IICA are driving cooperation with a focus on food security

Representatives of national cooperation agencies, other government entities and international organizations exchanged information and experiences, with a view to strengthening food security in the region.

A total of 21 countries participated in the virtual meeting, sharing knowledge and good practices to strengthen synergies and achieve progress in building a powerful roadmap to further strengthen South-South cooperation in Ibero-America and, in turn, national responses to the crisis triggered by Covid-19. The dialogue was organized by the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Ibero-American Program for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCSS)—whose current Chair is Belén Bogado, Director of International Cooperation at the Foreign Ministry of Argentina. <https://bit.ly/2G10THf>

Ecuadorian youth develop virtual platform to overcome the pandemic and foster agricultural trade and rural tourism in Ecuador

Five young innovators from Manabí, Ecuador, won IICA's 2020 Hackathon, by generating a user-friendly and innovative technological solution to overcome the issue of distance between producers and consumers in that country as a result of the pandemic.

The winners were selected from a total of 74 teams from across the hemisphere. Despite not having worked together previously and having limited Internet access, the members of the winning team succeeded in developing a tool that facilitates the marketing of products and fosters rural tourism.

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

Argentinian agroindustrial exports – 73% of total shipments

Agroindustrial exports accounted for 73% of total exports from Argentina during the first six months of the year, amounting to USD 19.993 billion, which was 0.6% less (USD 122 million) than during the same period last year. The relative stability of agroindustrial shipments, even during the Coronavirus pandemic, was recorded, even as total shipments from the country between January and June experienced an 11% interannual decline.

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

The Mexican agriculture sector needs a technological and a cultural change

María de Jesús Ordóñez, a researcher from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), states that technological changes have helped to increase production and harvesting. However, 80% of agricultural cropland is used by big businesses, whose production supplies only 20% of the world's population. The remaining 80% are fed by small farmers, with 1 to 5-hectare holdings, a great deal of whose production consists of mixed farming with *milpas**, vegetable plots or age-old production systems.

**Milpa* is a traditional Mexican crop-growing system.

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

Brazil temporarily eliminates import tariffs on soybean, rice and corn imports

Brazil has temporarily eliminated import tariffs on rice, corn and soybean. The measure is intended to combat inflation, given the recent price increases for all three products. Imports from the MERCOSUR trade bloc (Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay) are now exempt. <https://bit.ly/32u6ldi>