USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Outlook

Economic Research Service | Situation and Outlook

RCS-20E May 14, 2020

Next release is June 15, 2020

Rice Outlook

Nathan W. Childs, coordinator

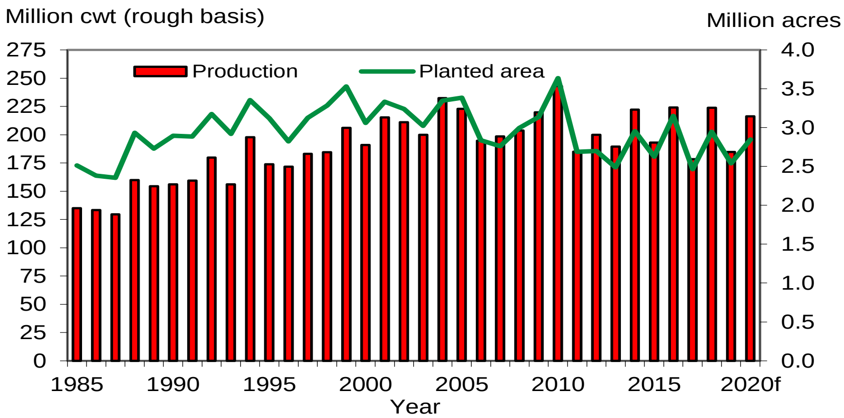
In this report:

Rice Outlook monthly tables, in excel format, can be found on the Rice Outlook report page on USDA's Economic Research Service website.

U.S. 2020/21 Rice Production Projected at 216.2 Million Hundredweight

The 2020/21 U.S. rice crop is forecast at 216.2 million cwt (hundredweight), up 17 percent from a year earlier, mostly due to a strong recovery in area. Imports are projected at another record, and total supplies are projected to be up 7 percent from 2019/20. Domestic and residual use is projected to be stronger in 2020/21, as are exports, boosting total use 3 percent. Ending stocks are projected to increase 37 percent to 41.8 million cwt, yielding a more normal 17.6-percent stocks-to-use ratio. The long-grain season-average farm price (SAFP) is projected to decline in 2020/21, while medium- and short-grain SAFPs are projected unchanged from 2019/20. Global production and consumption are projected to be record high, with ending stocks rising to a 14th consecutive high. Global trade is projected to increase 5 percent in 2021, as export restrictions and limitations are expected to be removed. India is projected to be the largest exporter and the Philippines the largest importer.

Figure 1
U.S. Rice Production in 2020 Is Projected to Increase 17 Percent



Cwt = Hundredweight. 2020f = forecast.
Sources: 1985-2017, *Rice Yearbook Data Set,* USDA, Economic Research Service; 2018-2020, *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, USDA,* World Agricultural Outlook Board.

Domestic Outlook

U.S. Rice Crop Projected Up 17 Percent in 2020/21

The 2020/21 U.S. rice crop is projected at 216.2 million cwt, up 31.5 million cwt from a year earlier, a result of both larger area and higher yield. At 2.81 million acres, harvested area in 2020/21 is almost 14 percent larger than in 2019/20 when persistent rainfall nearly all spring sharply reduced plantings in much of the South, especially in the Delta. The 2020/21 harvested-area estimate is based on the March 31 intended plantings reported by NASS and uses a 5-year Olympic average planted-to-harvested ratio by class. The first survey of actual plantings of the 2020/21 U.S. rice crop will be reported by NASS in the June *Acreage,* scheduled for release on June 30.

The 2020/21 average rice yield is projected at 7,699 pounds per acre, up 228 pounds from a year earlier and the highest on record. The yield is based on 20-year trends yield by class. The first objective yield forecast for the 2020/21 U.S. rice crop will be released on August 12 in the NASS *Crop Production*.

By class, long-grain rice production in 2020/21 is projected at 155.5 million cwt, up 24 percent from a year earlier. Almost all U.S. long-grain rice is grown in the South. The 2020/21 combined medium- and short-grain crop is projected at 60.7 million cwt, up 2.8 percent from a year earlier and the largest since 2011/12. About 80 percent of the U.S. medium- and short-grain crop is grown in California.

Progress of the 2020/21 U.S. rice crop remains behind normal in the Delta, a result of persistent rain and wet conditions. For the week ending May 10, 70 percent of the U.S. rice crop was reported planted, well ahead of last year's rain-delayed 53 percent but slightly behind the U.S. 5-year average of 75 percent. Progress varied by region and State. On the Gulf Coast, planting was nearly complete in Texas by May 10, with 95 percent of the crop reported in the ground, up from 82 percent a year earlier and the Texas 5-year average of 84 percent. Early planting bodes well for both a higher main-crop yield and a good quality ratoon crop. Progress was only slightly slower in Louisiana, with 87 percent of the crop reported planted by May 10, 2 percentage points behind a year earlier and behind the Louisiana 5-year average of 93 percent.

In the Delta, the Arkansas crop was reported 67 percent planted by May 10, up from a year-earlier, rain-delayed 51 percent but well behind the Arkansas 5-year average of 82 percent. Missouri's crop was reported 51 percent planted by May 10, fractionally behind a year earlier but well behind the Missouri 5-year average of 74 percent, a result of continued rain, wet conditions, and storm damage in some areas. Mississippi's crop was reported 57 percent planted by May 10, 5 percentage points ahead of a year earlier but well behind the Mississippi 5-year average of 76 percent. Finally, in California, 65 percent of the rice crop was reported planted by May 10, well ahead of last year's rain-delayed 16 percent and well ahead of the California 5-year average of 35 percent. Conditions in California have been favorable for rice production this season, with adequate water availability.

Emergence of the 2020/21 U.S. rice crop remains behind normal as well, with the pace of emergence varying by State and region. For the week ending May 10, 43 percent of the U.S. 2020/21 rice crop had emerged, just 3 percentage points behind a year earlier but well behind the U.S. average of 57 percent. On the Gulf Coast, 90 percent of the Texas crop had emerged by May 10, well ahead of both 72 percent a year earlier and the Texas 5-year average of 77 percent. In Louisiana, 82 percent of the crop had emerged by May 10, 2 percentage points behind a year earlier and 5 percentage points behind the Louisiana 5-year average. The Louisiana harvest is expected to begin by mid-July.

In the Delta, 42 percent of the Arkansas crop had emerged by May 10, 4 percentage points ahead of a year earlier but well behind the Arkansas 5-year average of 67 percent. In Missouri, 31 percent of the rice crop had emerged by May 10, 6 percentage points ahead of last year's rain-delayed crop but well behind the Missouri 5-year average of 48 percent. Mississippi's crop was reported 30 percent emerged by May 10, 6 percentage behind a year earlier and well behind the Mississippi 5-year average of 56 percent. In California, 5 percent of the crop had emerged by May 10, 1 percentage point ahead of last year but still behind the California 5-year average of 9 percent.

U.S. Rice Supplies Projected Up 7 Percent in 2020/21

In 2020/21, a larger crop and a slight increase in imports are projected to more than offset a much smaller carryin, boosting total U.S. rice supplies 31.5 million cwt to 279.3 million cwt. At 196.2 million cwt, the 2020/21 long-grain total supply forecast is up 7 percent from a year earlier, with a much larger crop and slightly increased imports more than offsetting a substantial decline in carryin. Combined medium- and short-grain total supplies are forecast at 81.1 million cwt, also up 7 percent from 2019/20, mostly due to a larger carryin, with expected increases in production and imports much smaller.

Total U.S. rice carryin in 2020/21 is forecast at 30.5 million cwt, down 32 percent from a year earlier but fractionally larger than the 2018/19 carryin. Movements in carryin vary sharply by class. For long-grain, carryin is projected at 14.7 million cwt, down 55 percent from a year earlier. In contrast, the medium- and short-grain carryin is projected to increase 35 percent to 13.7 million cwt, the highest since 2016/17.

U.S. all-rice imports in 2020/21 are projected at a record 32.6 million cwt, up 2 percent from 2019/20. Imports are projected record high for both classes of rice in 2020/21. For long-grain, imports are projected at 26.0 million cwt, up 2 percent from this year. The increase is based on expected continuing growth in imports of specific aromatic varieties from Asia, primarily jasmine from Thailand and basmati from India and Pakistan, with Thailand the largest supplier by a wide margin. Vietnam supplies a much smaller amount of jasmine rice as well. Brazil has supplied small amounts of broken kernel rice—included in the long-grain import category—in recent years.

Combined medium- and short-grain imports in 2020/21 are projected at 6.6 million cwt, up 0.1 million cwt from this year. China supplies about a third of U.S. medium- and short-grain imports, with shipments to Puerto Rico accounting for nearly all of China's rice exports to the United States. China returned as a major supplier to Puerto Rico in May 2018, selling older and substantially-discounted rice from Government stocks. India and Thailand supply most of the remaining medium- and short-grain imports, shipping specialty rices classified by the U.S. Census Bureau as medium- and short-grain rice. Italy regularly ships around 10,000 tons of its Arborio rice to the United States.

Both Exports and Domestic Use Projected Larger in 2020/21

Total use of U.S. rice in 2020/21 is projected at 237.5 million cwt, up 3 percent from a year earlier, with both the export and the domestic and residual use forecast projected to be higher in 2020/21. Long-grain total use is projected to increase 4 percent to 175.0 million cwt, while combined medium- and short-grain total use projected to increase less than 1 percent to 62.5 million cwt.

Total domestic and residual use in 2020/21 is projected at 137.5 million cwt, up more than 3 percent from a year earlier, the second highest on record. The increase is primarily based on increased supplies of rice and expectations of greater post-harvest losses associated with a larger crop. By class, long-grain domestic and residual use is projected at 103.0 million cwt, up 4 percent from a year earlier. Combined medium- and short-grain domestic and residual use is projected at 34.5 million cwt, up 1.5 percent from 2019/20.

Total U.S. rice exports in 2020/21 are projected at 100.0 million cwt, up 2.0 million cwt from the year-earlier revised estimate and the highest since 2016/17. Long-grain accounts for all of the expected increase in U.S. exports in 2020/21. At 72.0 million cwt, U.S. long-grain exports are forecast to be up 3 percent from a year earlier, also the highest since 2016/17. The increase in long-grain exports is based on larger expected supplies and lower projected U.S. long-grain prices. By market, the U.S. is likely to increase long-grain sales to Latin American buyers, partly due to weaker total exports projected from South America in 2020 and 2021. Most of these additional U.S. long-grain exports are expected to be shipped as rough rice. Similar to recent years, the United States is expected to ship little rice to Sub-Saharan Africa beyond food aid shipments—which account for less than 3 percent of total U.S. rice exports—and is likely to continue to sell almost no long-grain rice to Asia. U.S. prices are too high for these two price-sensitive markets.

U.S. rice medium- and short-grain exports in 2020/21 are projected at 28.0 million cwt, unchanged from this year. As in 2019/20, the U.S. is expected to export little rice beyond its current six core markets. First, the three major buyers in Northeast—Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, whose purchases are all made as part of WTO agreements—are expected to again account for around two-thirds of U.S. medium- and short-grain exports (on a rough-basis). Jordan typically imports around 3 million cwt, all milled rice. Mexico typically purchases a small amount of U.S. medium-grain rough rice. Canada is a regular buyer of relatively small quantities U.S. medium-grain milled rice. Turkey returned as small buyer of U.S. rice in 2019/20, purchasing less than a million cwt of California rough rice.

By type, U.S. rough rice exports are projected at 37.0 million cwt, up 1.0 million from the revised 2019/20 level. Most of the rough rice is expected to be sold to Latin American buyers, primarily Mexico, Central America, and northern South America. Milled rice exports in 2020/21 are projected at 63.0 million cwt, also up 1.0 million cwt from 2019/20. Haiti—the largest market for U.S. long-grain milled rice—is expected to account for most of the increase in milled rice exports. Japan, Korea, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Canada are also major buyers of U.S. milled rice.

The above supply and use projections yield a 2020/21 ending stocks forecast of 41.8 million cwt, 37 percent larger than the year-earlier abnormally low level. The 2020/21 stocks-to-use ratio of 17.6 percent is well above a revised abnormally low 13.2 percent for 2019/20. By class, long-grain ending stocks in 2020/21 are projected at 22.2 million cwt, up 44 percent from this year's unusually low level. The long-grain stocks-to-use ratio is forecast at 12.1 percent, well above the abnormally low 8.7 percent a year earlier. In contrast, medium- and short-grain ending stocks are projected to increase 36 percent in 2020/21 to 18.6 million cwt, the highest since 2015/16. The medium- and short-grain stocks-to-use ratio is projected at 29.7 percent, up from 22.2 percent a year earlier, also the highest since 2015/16.

U.S. 2019/20 Long-Grain Rice Export Forecast Lowered

The only revision this month to the 2019/20 U.S. rice balance sheet was a 1.0-million cwt reduction in the long-grain export forecast to 70.0 million cwt, still more than 6 percent larger than a year earlier. The reduction was based on the shipment pace reported by the U.S. Census Bureau through March, exports and outstanding sales through April 30 reported in the weekly *U.S. Export Sales*, and expectations regarding shipments and sales the remainder of the market year. An additional factor supporting a reduced U.S. long-grain export forecast for 2019/20 has been a sharp increase in the price difference over South American exporters for the past several months, as U.S. prices have risen and prices for most grades of South American rice have declined, especially after the harvest there started in late March. The lower export forecast raised the 2019/20 ending stocks forecast 1.0 million cwt to 14.7 million cwt, still 55 percent below a year earlier.

Few changes are projected in season-average farm prices (SAFP) for rice in 2020/21. The long-grain SAFP is projected at $11.80 per cwt in 2020/21, down 20 cents from the revised 2019/20 SAFP of $12.00. The small decline in SAFP projected for 2020/21 is based on larger U.S. supplies and lower global trading prices, with global prices expected to decline when export bans and restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 virus are lifted and logistical hindrances cease. The 2020/21 southern medium- and short-grain SAFP is projected at $11.80 per cwt, unchanged from the revised 2019/20 SAFP. Little if any increase in exports of southern medium- and short-grain rice is projected for 2020/21, continuing the quite-low level of 2019/20 exports, with North Africa not buying U.S. rice.

The California 2020/21 medium- and short grain SAFP is projected at $18.00 per cwt, also unchanged from the 2019/20 revised SAFP. Production and export of California medium- and short-grain rice is projected similar to the 2019/20 levels, with plantings indicated up slightly. In the global medium- and short-grain market, Australia is expected to increase exports next spring due to a projected crop recovery, likely pressuring prices lower toward the end of the 2020/21 market year. The U.S. medium- and short-grain 2020/21 SAFP is projected at $16.00 per cwt, unchanged from the revised 2019/20 SAFP. The 2020/21 all rice SAFP is projected at $12.90 per cwt, down 10 cents from the revised 2019/20 all rice SAFP.

The 2019/20 SAFP for each class of rice was lowered this month, primarily based on NASS-reported cash prices through March and expectations regarding prices the remainder of the 2019/20 market year. The long-grain 2019/20 SAFP was lowered 20 cents to $12.00 per cwt, the southern medium- and short-grain SAFP was reduced 10 cents to $11.80 per cwt, and the California 2019/20 SAFP was decreased 20 cents to $18.00 per cwt. These revisions lowered the U.S. medium- and short-grain SAFP 10 cents to $16.00 per cwt and reduced the all-rice SAFP 20 cents to $13.00 per cwt.

International Outlook

Global Rice Production in 2020/21 Projected at a Record 502.0 Million Tons

The first *WASDE*-released projection for 2020/21 global rice production is 502.0 million tons, a record and up almost 2 percent from the year-earlier revised estimate. Global harvested area is projected to increase 1.5 percent to 163.0 million hectares, just 0.3 million hectares below the 2016/17 record. Burma, China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Thailand, and the United States are expected to substantially increase rice area, while rice area is expected to continue to decline in Brazil and the Philippines. The average global yield of 4.59 tons per hectare (rough basis) is up from 4.56 tons in 2019/20 and the highest on record. Both Thailand and the United States are expected to achieve strong yield recoveries in 2020/21.

China, Thailand, and the United States are expected to show the largest production increases in 2020/21. Australia, Burma, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan are expected to harvest significantly larger crops as well. India's production is projected to remain at this year's record high. In contrast, Brazil and the Philippines are projected to harvest substantially smaller crops in 2020/21.

Global rice consumption and residual use in 2020/21 is projected at a record 498.1 million tons, up almost 2 percent from a year earlier. China and India account for most of the expected increase in global consumption and residual use in 2020/21, with much of China's growth accounted for by increased industrial uses of rice. Bangladesh, Egypt, the Philippines, Thailand, the United States, and Vietnam are also projected to increase consumption and residual use of rice in 2020/21.

With production exceeding use by 3.8 million tons, global ending stocks in 2020/21 are projected to increase 2 percent to a record 184.2 million tons, the 14th consecutive year of increasing global rice stocks. China's 2020/21 rice ending stocks are projected at a record 117.0 million tons and India's at a record 38.0 million tons, accounting for 64 percent and 21 percent, respectively, of global ending stocks. U.S. ending stocks are projected to increase 37 percent to 1.3 million tons. The global ending stocks-to-use ratio is forecast at 37.0 percent, up slightly from 36.8 percent in 2019/20 but still below the 2000/01 record of 37.3 percent.

Global rice trade in 2021 is projected at 45.2 million tons, up more than 5 percent from the revised 2020 estimate but still below the 2017 record of 48.1 million tons. Thailand is expected to account for the largest share of the total export increase, with exports increasing 1.5 million tons in 2021. Australia, Cambodia, China, and Vietnam are also projected to increase exports in 2021. On the 2021 import side, the Philippine imports are forecast to increase 800,000 tons and imports are projected to increase 200,000 tons each for Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. These expected 2021 import increases are expected to be partially offset by reduced imports in 2021 for China, Indonesia, and South Korea.

Table A - Global rice production, selected monthly revisions and year-to-year changes, May 2020						
Country or region	Current forecast	Change from last month's forecast	Percent change from a year earlier	Month-to-month direction	Year-to-year direction	Explanation and comments on year-to-year change
1,000 metric tons (milled basis)						
Rice production in 2020/21						
Australia	300	- -	669.2%	- -	↑	Adequate rainfall in early 2020 has replenished reservoirs sufficiently to boost projected harvested area 35,000 hectares to 40,000 hectares, the highest since the 2017/18 pre-drought level. The yield is expected to be slightly lower with expanded area.
Bangladesh	36,000	- -	0.4%	- -	↑	Record production is projected based on a slight expansion in harvested area to a record 11.9 million hectares. Bangladesh is now the third largest global rice producing country, recently surpassing Indonesia. Although a major importer for many decades, Bangladesh is now almost self-sufficient in rice.
Brazil	6,868	- -	-3.8%	- -	↓	Brazil's rice production continues to decline due to contracting acreage, with other cropping options such as soybeans more profitable. At 1.6 million hectares, Brazil's 2020/21 rice harvested area is projected to be down 5 percent from a year earlier and the smallest in more than 60 years. The bulk of Brazil's rice is now grown in Rio Grande Do Sul, where the rice is all irrigated and growers consistently achieve high yields.
Burma	13,100	- -	3.1%	- -	↑	Record rice production is projected based on an expected 2.9-percent expansion in harvested area to 7.1 million hectares, matching the 2018/19 record. The area expansion is based on favorable weather so far in 2020/21. The 2019/20 rice crop was adversely impacted by drought.
Cambodia	5,780	- -	0.7%	- -	↑	The record crop is based on a slight increase in harvested area. The 2019/20 dry-season crop was adversely impacted by drought. Weather conditions have been more favorable thus far in 2020/21.
China	149,000	- -	1.5%	- -	↑	Record rice production is projected based on the Government of China's encouragement of growers to expand double-cropping of rice to ensure adequate supplies for domestic use. This is a reversal of its previous policy that discouraged double-cropping due to the low-quality of the early indica rice. At 30.2 million hectares, China's 2020/21 rice harvested area is projected to be up 1.7 percent from 2019/20.
Egypt	4,300	- -	0.0%	- -	→	Both area and yield are projected to be unchanged from 2019/20. Although the Government of Egypt has set maximum allowable planted area at 452,000 hectares, Egyptian growers are again projected to harvest 760,000 hectares despite penalties for overplanting.
Guyana	663	- -	-2.9%	- -	↓	Production is projected to be slightly lower due to a 4.5-percent decline in harvested area.
India	118,000	- -C7	0.0%	- -	→	Production is unchanged from last year's record as a slight area increase is offset by a return to trend yield.
Indonesia	34,900	- -	4.2%	- -	↑	Production projected higher due to a 1.8-percent area expansion and an expected yield increase of 2.4 percent. The higher yield is based on an expected return to normal weather after a delayed start to the rainy season in 2019/20, expanded use of modern high-yielding varieties, and greater availability of irrigated facilities.
Iraq	333	- -	-4.0%	- -	↓	Production is projected to decline based on a return to a normal yield after last year's record high. Area is projected to remain at 110,000 hectares, the highest level achieved since 2007/08. Despite the projected decline, the 2020/21 crop is the second-highest on record.
Japan	7,650	- -	0.5%	- -	↑	A slightly higher yield is projected to offset a small drop in harvested area. Rice area in Japan has generally declined for nearly 60 years, mostly a result of diet diversification and Government policies aimed at diverting area since 1971.
South Korea	3,744	- -	0.0%	- -	→	Area and yield are projected to be unchanged from 2019/20, with harvested area projected at 730,000 hectares. The 2019/20 rice area was the smallest in more than 60 years.
Laos	2,000	- -	2.6%	- -	↑	Harvested area is projected to be record high in 2020/21, while yield will be near-record. Production matches the 2017/18 record.
Mexico	193	- -	10.3%	- -	↑	Production is projected to be the highest since 2003/04 due to a 10-percent area expansion to 44,000 hectares. The area expansion is largely the result of new government subsidies, including guaranteed prices for rice.
Nepal	3,675	- -	1.6%	- -	↑	Both area and yield are projected to be slightly higher in 2020/21. Despite the increases, production is projected to be below the 2018/19 record of 3.73 million tons.
Nigeria	4,961	- -	5.3%	- -	↑	Expanded area is expected to boost production to a record high. The Government of Nigeria has been encouraging increased rice production to reduce reliance on imports for several years.
Pakistan	7,500	- -	4.2%	- -	↑	Record production is based on a projected higher yield. Harvested area is estimated at 3.0 million hectares, unchanged from the 2019/20 record.
Paraguay	697	- -	-1.0%	- -	↓	A 4.4-percent expansion in harvested area to a record 165,000 hectares is projected to be more than offset by a lower yield. Paraguay has emerged as a major regional exporter over the past decade, mostly a result of expanded area.
Philippines	11,000	- -	-3.5%	- -	↓	Area and production are projected to continue to decline, mostly a response to low farm prices which have declined due to record imports. At a projected 4.45 million hectares, 2020/21 harvested area is down 4.3 percent from a year earlier and the smallest since 2009/10.
Taiwan	1,136	- -	-3.9%	- -	↓	The production decline is based on a 10,000-hectare drop in harvested area to 250,000 hectares, the smallest since 2003/04. Yield is nearly unchanged. Rice area has been generally declining in Taiwan for more than 50 years.
Thailand	20,400	- -	13.3%	- -	↑	Production is projected to be record high based on expected record wet-season plantings to be followed by a normal dry season area. The average total yield is projected to be up 3.5 percent from 2019/20. In 2019/20, dry season plantings were sharply reduced due to drought.
United States	6,865	- -	17.1%	- -	↑	Rising prices at planting time and expectations of normal weather are projected to boost plantings 13.6-percent from last year. The 2019/20 crop reported record preventive plantings due to excessive springtime rainfall in the South. The 2020/21 all-rice yield is projected to be up more than 3 percent from last year based on 20-year trends by class and assumes normal weather.
Vietnam	27,500	- -	0.5%	- -	↑	Record production is based on a projected 1.2-percent expansion in harvested area to 7.6 million hectares, largely a response to recent increases in global rice trading prices. Despite the expected area increase, Vietnam's rice area remains below the 2012/13 record of 7.9 million hectares as the Government of Vietnam has encouraged farmers to diversify production away from rice.

- - Not applicable

-- *Continued*

Source: Created by USDA, Economic Research Service with data from USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Database.

Table A - Global rice production, selected monthly revisions and year-to-year changes, May 2020--continued						
Country or region	Current forecast	Change from last month's forecast	Percent change from a year earlier	Month-to-month direction	Year-to-year direction	Explanation and comments on monthly revisions and year-to-year change
Rice production in 2019/20						
Argentina	780	-26	0.8%	↓	↑	The average yield was lowered slightly based on the Ministry of Agriculture's latest estimates.
Cambodia	5,740	540	0.0%	↑	→	Both the area and yield estimates were revised higher this month. The Government of Cambodia reported that a small reduction in the dry season crop due to drought was offset by expanded wet season plantings and production, yielding a total crop unchanged from 2019/20.
Cameroon	230	9	9.5%	↑	↑	Area estimate was raised 10,000 hectares to 280,000 hectares, down 9,000 hectares from 2018/19. Production increase in 2019/20 was due to a yield growth of 13 percent. Production in 2019/20 was the highest on record.
European Union	1,970	-15	0.2%	↓	↑	The 2019/20 production estimate was lowered 15,000 tons due to a 3,000-hectare drop in harvested area to 417,000 hectares. In 2019/20, a slight area contraction was almost offset by a higher yield.
Ghana	540	70	1.7%	↑	↑	Production estimate raised due to larger harvested area.
Guinea	1,448	-96	-6.2%	↓	↓	Production estimate lowered based on a weaker yield.
Indonesia	33,500	-3,000	-2.0%	↓	↓	The 2019/20 crop revision was based on a 700,000-hectare reduction in harvested area to 11.3 million hectares and a lower yield. The revised area estimate was based the Government of Indonesia's data reporting smaller harvested area in both 2018/19 and 2019/20. Some rice land has been converted to nonfarm uses; and the Government of Indonesia eliminated the fertilizer subsidy. The yield was revised lower due to a late start to the rainy season that especially impacted rice production on Java, which produces slightly less than half of Indonesia's total annual rice crop.
Iraq	347	47	2659%	↑	↑	Production estimate was raised to a record high based on a 15,000-hectare increase in the harvested area estimate to 110,000 hectares, the highest since 2007/08. The average yield of 4.74 tons per hectare was the highest on record. Weather and water availability were extremely favorable for rice production in Iraq in 2019/20.
Mali	2,061	111	0.1%	↑	↑	Production was raised to a record high due to a 50,000-hectare increase in harvested area to 950,000 hectares.
Nepal	3,617	87	-3.0%	↑	↓	Production estimate was raised based on a larger area and a higher yield.
Nigeria	4,712	-188	3.8%	↓	↑	A 200,000-hectare reduction in the area estimate to 3.4 million hectares more than offset a revised yield. This month, Nigeria's area, yield, and production estimates were revised for 2017/19-2019/20.
Pakistan	7,200	-300	-1.4%	↓	↓	The average yield was lowered 7 percent based on abnormal day and night temperature variations in September and October 2019.
Paraguay	704	47	11.7%	↑	↑	A higher yield estimated boosted 2019/20 production to a record high.
Sierra Leone	945	145	2.7%	↑	↑	Harvested area was increased 100,000 hectares to a record 800,000 hectares. The 2019/20 yield was raised slightly. Production was record high also.
Taiwan	1,182	46	0.1%	↑	↑	Harvested area estimate was increased 10,000 hectares to 260,000 hectares based on final data.

Source: Created by USDA, Economic Research Service with data from USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Database.

Table B - Selected rice importers at a glance (1,000 MT), May 2020.						
Country or region	Current forecast	Change from last month's forecast	Change from a year earlier	Month-to-month direction	Year-to-year direction	Explanation of year-to-year change in forecast
Rice importers, 2021						
Benin	625	- -	4.2%	- -	↑	Continued growth in domestic use is projected to outpace a slight increase in production. Imports are projected to match the 2018 record.
Brazil	900	- -	5.9%	- -	↑	Production is projected to continue to decline.
Burkina-Faso	620	- -	3.3%	- -	↑	Growth in domestic use is expected to continue to outpace production increases.
Cameroon	640	- -	3.2%	- -	↑	Domestic use continues to rise while production remains stagnant. Imports are projected high.
China	2,200	- -	-4.3%	- -	↓	Imports are expected to decline in the face of record production and supplies.
Côte d’Ivoire	1,400	- -	3.7%	- -	↑	Continued strong growth in domestic use is projected to outpace production increases.
Cuba	500	- -	6.4%	- -	↑	Imports projected to increase due to rising consumption and stable production.
Ethiopia	580	- -	16.0%	- -	↑	Continued strong increases in use and no growth in production.
European Union	2,250	- -	2.3%	- -	↑	Consumption continues its steady growth, partly due to immigration, while production is projected to be unchanged from 2019/20. Imports are projected to be record high.
Ghana	950	- -	5.6%	- -	↑	Consumption growth continues to outpace production. Imports are projected record high.
Guinea	650	- -	0.0%	- -	→	Production growth expected to match rising use.
Haiti	510	- -	2.0%	- -	↑	Record imports are projected as consumption is expected to continue to rise while production remains stagnant.
Indonesia	500	- -	-50.0%	- -	↓	Declining consumption and a larger projected rice crop in 2020/21.
Iran	1,200	- -	9.1%	- -	↑	Rising consumption and stagnant production.
Iraq	1,100	- -	0.0%	- -	→	Two consecutive years of bumper crops expected to boost supply.
Kenya	650	- -	4.0%	- -	↑	Projections for steady growth in consumption and only a slight increase in production. Imports are projected record high.
Malaysia	1,050	- -	5.0%	- -	↑	Little growth is projected for production while consumption continues to increase.
Mexico	800	- -	1.9%	- -	↑	Despite projections for a larger crop, consumption growth still outpaces production.
Mozambique	700	- -	7.7%	- -	↑	Production growth is too small to satisfy steadily rising demand.
Nepal	750	- -	-6.3%	- -	↓	Three consecutive years of bumper crops have reduced the amount of imported rice needed.
Nigeria	1,400	- -	16.7%	- -	↑	Despite projections for a larger crop, Nigeria will need expanded imports to meet domestic demand.
Philippines	3,300	- -	32.0%	- -	↑	Another year of declining production in the face of steady growth in domestic use. Imports are projected record high. Prices for imported rice are lower than prices for domestic rice.
Saudi Arabia	1,300	- -	18.2%	- -	↑	Rising domestic use based on increasing numbers of tourists and guest workers. Saudi Arabia grows no rice.
Senegal	1,075	- -	7.5%	- -	↑	Rapidly rising demand is projected to offset production growth.
Sierra Leone	400	- -	11.1%	- -	↑	Rapidly rising demand is projected to offset production growth. Imports are projected record high.
Somalia	475	- -	5.6%	- -	↑	Rapidly rising use and virtually no domestic production. Imports are projected record high.
South Africa	1,050	- -	5.0%	- -	↑	Steadily rising use and no domestic production.
United Arab Emirates	1,200	- -	20.0%	- -	↑	Strong projected growth in use that is partly due to guest workers and tourists. Imports are projected record high. In addition, the Government wants to increase stock levels.
United States	1,100	- -	7.3%	- -	↑	Continued growth in demand for imported aromatic Asian varieties. In addition, China is expected to continue to supply most of Puerto Rico's rice, which is nearly all non-aromatic medium- and short-grain varieties. U.S. imports are projected record high.
Venezuela	460	- -	2.2%	- -	↑	Production projected to continue to decline.
Yemen	525	- -	5.0%	- -	↑	Continued strong growth in consumption. No rice is produced in Yemen.

--Continued

Table B - Selected rice importers at a glance (1,000 MT), May 2020.--Continued						
Country or region	Current forecast	Change from last month's forecast	Change from a year earlier	Month-to-month direction	Year-to-year direction	Explanation of month-to-month change in forecast
Rice importers, 2020						
Bangladesh	60	30	-25.0%	↑	↓	Import forecast raised based on recommendations from U.S. Agricultural Office in Dhaka. The Government of Bangladesh wants to keep prices from rising.
Colombia	250	50	31.6%	↑	↑	Increase based on trade data to date and expected increases in the Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) with the United States and the TRQ with the Community of Andean Nations, primarily Peru and Ecuador.
Cuba	470	-30	2.8%	↓	↑	Reduced imports from Vietnam, Cuba's main rice supplier, due to its earlier export ban and April export quota.
Iran	1,100	50	-21.4%	↑	↓	Increase for 2020 based on revised 2019 imports.
Iraq	1,100	-50	-9.8%	↓	↓	Upward revision in 2019/20 production--already a record high--and expectation of a bumper 2020/21 rice crop.
Madagascar	440	40	0.0%	↑	→	Stronger-than-expected consumption growth.
Sierra Leone	360	-40	9.1%	↓	↑	Consumption revised lower based on higher prices.
Sri Lanka	20	-80	-16.7%	↓	↓	Government-announced import restrictions.
Tanzania	200	-30	5.3%	↓	↑	Asian export restrictions are expected to reduce total rice imports in 2020.
Uganda	80	-45	33.3%	↓	↑	Import forecast for 2020 lowered based on revised 2019 import level.
United Arab Emirates	1,000	125	17.6%	↑	↑	Imports raised on the Government's decision to fill new storage facilities.

- - No previous forecast.

Source: Created by USDA, Economic Research Service with data from USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Database.

Table C - Selected rice exporters at a glance (1,000 MT), May 2020						
Country or region	Current forecast	Change from last month's forecast	Change from a year earlier	Month-to-month direction	Year-to-year direction	Explanation of year-to-year change in forecast
Rice exporters, 2021						
Argentina	300	- -	-9.1%	- -	↓	Modest growth in production and tighter total supplies reduce export potential in 2021.
Australia	120	- -	300.0%	- -	↑	Expectations of a large production rebound in 2020/21.
Burma	2,200		0.0%	- -	→	Declining imports by top-buyer China prevent growth in Burma's rice exports.
Brazil	500	- -	0.0%	- -	→	Exports remain at a low level due to declining production and competition from regional exporters.
Cambodia	1,300	- -	8.3%	- -	↑	Higher exports in 2021 are based on expectations of a record crop in 2020/21.
China	3,200	- -	3.2%	- -	↑	Exports are projected to increase slightly due to record production.
Egypt	20	- -	0.0%	- -	→	No growth in production and continued growth in consumption keep exports minimal, nearly all to nearby markets.
European Union	300	- -	0.0%	- -	→	Lack of significant production growth, record consumption, and uncompetitive prices prevent any increase in exports.
Guyana	485	- -	0.0%	- -	→	A slightly smaller crop projected for 2020/21 prevents any growth in exports.
India	11,000	- -	4.8%	- -	↑	Despite record consumption, supplies are more than adequate to increase exports in 2021, especially with two consecutive years of matching record crops.
Pakistan	4,300	- -	-2.3%	- -	↓	Increased competition from India is expected to lower exports despite a record crop projected for 2020/21.
Paraguay	610	- -	1.7%	- -	↑	Exports projected to increase slightly due to larger supplies, despite a small contraction in production.
Thailand	9,000	- -	20.0%	- -	↑	Production in 2020/21 is expected to sharply recovery from the 2019/20 drought-reduced crop, providing ample supplies for expanded exports.
United States	3,200	- -	0.8%	- -	↑	Exports are expected to increase slightly based on larger supplies and lower prices for long-grain rice, the dominant class produced and exported by the United States.
Uruguay	800	- -	0.0%	- -	→	Production growth is too small to increase exports, given domestic demand and desired ending stocks.
Vietnam	6,600	- -	1.5%	- -	↑	A record crop and expectation of a complete end to any export restrictions related to the COVID-19 virus.

--Continued

Table C - Selected rice exporters at a glance (1,000 MT), May 2020.--*Continued*

Country or region	Current forecast	Change from last month's forecast	Change from a year earlier	Month-to-month direction	Year-to-year direction	Explanation of month-to-month change in forecast
Rice exports, 2020						
Cambodia	1,200	300	-11.1%	↑	↓	The 2019/20 crop estimate was revised higher.
China	3,100	-300	14.0%	↓	↑	Shipments slowed since late 2019, although March was strong. Also expect more competition from Southeast Asian exporters after they relaxed their export restrictions.
Egypt	20	-80	0.0%	↓	→	Supply situation remains tight and the Government of Egypt has not made an announcement allowing any new exports.
Guyana	485	-25	-2.2%	↓	↓	Exports in 2020 lowered based on a projection for a slightly smaller 2020/21 crop.
Taiwan	90	40	-1.1%	↑	↓	Stronger-than-expected food aid shipments, including to Haiti.
United States	3,175	-50	1.3%	↓	↑	A slower than expected shipment pace thus far in 2020 and an increasing price difference over South American competitors.
Vietnam	6,500	200	-1.2%	↑	↓	Export forecast raised based on termination of the March export ban and increase in the April export quota to 500,000 tons from 400,000 tons, still below typical monthly shipment levels.

- - No previous forecast.

Source: Created by USDA, Economic Research Service with data from USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Database.

The 2020 global trade forecast was raised 0.1 million tons to 42.9 million tons, 1 percent smaller than a year earlier. On the 2020 export side, Cambodia's exports were increased 0.3 million tons while China's 2020 export forecast was lowered 0.3 million tons. In addition, Vietnam's exports were raised 0.2 million tons, more than offsetting an 80,000-ton reduction in Egypt's export forecast. On the 2020 import side, larger forecasts for Colombia and the United Arab Emirates more than offset reduced import forecasts for Sri Lanka and Uganda. There were additional smaller import and export revisions for 2020 this month.

Trading prices for most grades of Thailand's regularly milled nonaromatic white rice declined 6 percent from mid-April as Vietnam ended its outright export and announced a monthly quota for April and India continued to make new sales despite its continued nationwide lockdown. Thailand's prices were well above competitor levels, making Thailand an uncompetitive source. Thailand's 100-percent Grade B long-grain milled rice for export was quoted at $546 per ton for the week ending May 4, down from $582 for the week ending April 6. Prices for Thailand's premium jasmine rice (an aromatic rice)—quoted at $1,115 per ton for the week ending May 4—were up from $1,099 for the week ending April 6.

Vietnam terminated its export ban on April 13, announcing quotas of 400,000 per month for April and May. In late April, the April quota was raised to 500,000 tons and the Minister of Trade recommended ending all export restrictions in May as supplies were adequate for domestic use despite concerns over the COVID-19 virus. For the week ending May 5, Vietnam's 5-percent broken kernels long-grain milled rice were quoted at $470 per ton, unchanged from mid-April when the export ban was removed. Quoted prices from Uruguay for most grades of rice are up slightly from a month earlier, while export prices from Argentina and Paraguay are virtually unchanged from a month earlier. The South American harvest began in late March in the southern part of the continent that accounts for the bulk of the region's exports. The harvest is nearly over in this region.

U.S. trading prices for long-grain rice continued to increase over the past month, with prices for U.S. long-grain milled rice, Number 2 Grade, 4-percent broken kernels (free on board a vessel at a Gulf port, Iraq specifications) currently quoted at $675 per ton, up $10 from the week ending April 7. U.S prices for Latin American milled markets—Haiti, Colombia, and Mexico—were quoted at $605 per ton for the week ending May 5, also $10 from the week ending April 7. These are the highest U.S. prices in more than 7 years. U.S. long-grain milled rice prices are currently being supported by continued large sales to Haiti and expectations of much tighter U.S. supplies this summer prior to the 2020/21 harvest. The U.S. price difference over Thailand's long-grain milled rice is currently $129 per ton, up from $83 per ton a month earlier.

Quotes for California Number 1 Grade, 4-percent broken kernels for the week ending May 5 were $938 per ton (free on board at a domestic mill), up $78 from the week ending April 7. For delivery at the Port of Oakland, California medium-grain milled rice was quoted at $975 per ton for the week ending May 5, unchanged from a month earlier. For listings of trading prices by exporter and grade of rice, see Table 9 in the Excel file.

Suggested Citation

Childs, Nathan, RCS-20E, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, May 14, 2020.