

Pakistan Leads Upswing In Global Rice Production



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The 2009/10 global rice production forecast is raised more than half a million tons to 440.8 million tons (milled basis), still 1.4 percent below the 2008/09 record. The largest upward revision was for Pakistan, whose crop was raised 300,000 tons to 6.5 million tons due to a higher yield.

The largest downward revision was made for Burma, whose 2009/10 production estimate was reduced 133,000 tons to 10.6 million tons. Thailand's production estimate was also reduced, down 100,000 tons to 20.3 million tons. Elsewhere in the region, the 2009/10 production estimate for Laos was reduced 79,000 tons to 1.82 million tons based on data from FAO and government sources. Smaller production reductions were made this month for Argentina, Mexico, and Turkey.

There were several production revisions for 2008/09. The largest was a 146,000-ton reduction in Ecuador's production to 762,000 tons based on information from the U.S. Agricultural Counselor in Quito. Smaller revisions were made for production estimates for Honduras, Laos, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Global disappearance for 2009/10 is projected at a record 441.5 million tons, up slightly from last month's forecast and almost 1 percent larger than a year earlier. Upward revisions in 2009/10 disappearance projections for Burma, North Korea, Peru, Pakistan, the United States, and several other countries more than offset reductions for Iran, Laos, and Uruguay.

The 2009/10 global ending stocks forecast was decreased nearly 1 percent this month to 90.2 million tons, primarily due to reduced stock estimates for Burma, Iran, the Philippines, Thailand, and the United States. Global stocks remain slightly below the 2008/09 level of 90.9 million tons.

Reduced Export Forecasts for Burma and Pakistan

Lower the 2010 Global Trade Projection to 29.97 Million Tons

The global trade forecast for calendar year 2010 was revised down 2 percent to 29.97 million tons, still 4 percent higher than 2009 trade but well below the 2007 record.

The largest export reduction this month was made for Pakistan. Burma's 2010 export forecast was reduced 200,000 tons to 600,000 tons based on reports that greatly increased exports in 2009 depleted that country's stocks.

These downward revisions in exports were partially offset by several increases. The U.S. 2010 export forecast was raised 150,000 tons to 3.3 million tons based on a stronger-than-expected pace of sales to date and expectations regarding sales for the rest of the year. Elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere, Uruguay's exports were raised 50,000 tons to 800,000 tons based on an expected continuation of their current export pace. A larger production estimate and reports of recent sales to Venezuela are behind an upward revision in Ecuador's export forecast from 40,000 tons to 50,000 tons.

Import forecasts for 2010 were lowered for several countries this month. The Philippines' imports were reduced 400,000 tons to 2.6 million tons – still a record – based on delivery pace and the prohibition of further imports until after next month's elections.

These reductions were partially offset by several upward revisions. Syria's imports were raised 40,000 tons to 350,000 tons based on information from the U.S. Agricultural Counselor in Damascus. Smaller increases were made to import estimates for Laos, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

Several exporter revisions were made for 2009 based on year-end trade data. Ecuador's exports were raised 27,000 tons to 37,000 tons based on reported sales to Venezuela. Brazil's exports were reduced 59,000 tons to 591,000 tons based on year-end data. Smaller 2009 export reductions were made for Argentina, Australia, and Kazakhstan.

Year-end trade data was responsible for several 2009 import revisions as well. Upward revisions were made this month for Azerbaijan, Brazil, Croatia, Ghana, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Liberia, North Korea, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine. The largest 2009 import reduction was made for Iran. Smaller 2009 import reductions were made for Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei, Burma, Papua New Guinea, and Uzbekistan.

Lack of New Sales Continue To Depress Global Trading Prices

Trading prices for Thailand's high- and medium-quality grades of non-specialty rice have fallen 5-8 percent from the first week of March.

Prices for Thailand's high-quality, 100-percent Grade B (fob vessel, Bangkok) milled rice for export were quoted at \$521 per ton for the week ending April 5, down 5 percent from the week ending March 2. Prices for Thailand's 5-percent broken rice were quoted at \$490 per ton for the week ending April 5, down 5 percent from the week ending March 2. Prices for Thailand's 5-percent parboiled rice – a specialty rice – were quoted at \$513 per ton for the week ending April 5, down 8 percent from the week ending March 2.

Thailand's low-quality rice prices experienced similar declines over the last month. For the week ending April 5, prices for Thailand's A-1 Super 100-percent broken rice were quoted at \$364 per ton, down 7 percent from the week ending March 2. All price quotes for Thailand's rice are from the Weekly Rice Price Update, reported by the U.S. Post in Bangkok.

Vietnam's trading prices have also declined. Price quotes for 5-percent broken rice dropped to \$370 for the week ending April 6, down 8 percent from the week ending March 2. Vietnam's prices have declined 30 percent since the completion of the large Philippines tenders in December. The price difference between Vietnam and Thailand remains substantial, with Thailand's price quotes \$151 higher than Vietnam's.

U.S. long-grain milled rice export prices have fallen as well, also due to a lack of fresh milled rice export demand. For the week ending April 6, prices for high-quality southern long-grain rice (No. 2, 4-percent broken, bagged, free alongside vessel, U.S. Gulf port) were quoted at \$502 per ton, down \$16 from the week ending March 2. U.S. prices (adjusted to reflect the fob vessel price) are now \$4 below Thailand's quotes. U.S. long-grain rough-rice (bulk, fob vessel, New Orleans) is quoted at \$305 per ton for the week ending April 6, down \$10 from the week ending March 2.

Prices for California rice have also declined over the past month. Prices for California package-quality medium-grain rice (sacked) for domestic sales are quoted at \$728 per ton for the week ending April 6, down \$22 from the week ending March 2. Export price quotes (for 30-kg bags, fob vessel) are reported at \$625 per ton, down \$25 from March 2. California milled rice export prices have dropped more than 25 percent since August. △



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