

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 4/23/2013

GAIN Report Number:

Panama

Post: Panama

2013 Emergency declaration on Coffee production in Panama

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation

Coffee

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Approved By:

Kelly Stange, Regional Agricultural Attaché

Prepared By:

Arlene Villalaz, Agricultural Specialist

Report Highlights:

The Government of Panama (GOP) has officially declared a state of national emergency due to the severe damage caused by Coffee Rust (*Hemileia vastatrix*), “Ojo de Gallo” (*Mycenia citricolor*) and Coffee Borer Beetle (*Hypothenemus hampei*). The GOP is obligated to implement, with the necessary resources, technical measures which are established to prevent the spread of these pests. 20,097 hectares are affected.

General Information:

The Ministry of Agricultural Development of Panama (MIDA) issued Resolution DAL-011-ADM-2013 on March 21, 2013, which officially declared a state of national emergency due to the severe damage caused by Coffee Rust (*Hemileia vastatrix*), “Ojo de Gallo” (*Mycenia citricolor*) and Coffee Borer Beetle (*Hypothenemus hampei*). MIDA will implement technical measures to prevent the spread of these pests. This report explains the measures and interventions to be taken in response to this emergency situation.

The resolution, signed by Minister Oscar Osorio, specifically mentions the provisions of the National Emergency System Plan (SINEFI), created in 2010, for the operation and management of an emergency. Standards and phytosanitary measures will be applied to prevent the spread and gain control of the three pests of concern.

In Panama, there are 20,097 hectares affected. Moreover, 82 percent of the coffee production is Arabica and 18 percent is Robusta. Climatic phenomena such as rainfall, sunshine, temperature and relative humidity recorded during 2012, directly favored the development of these pests.

Depending on the results of research and phytosanitary measures implemented during the 2013-2014 production cycle, further measures may be implemented for management and control of the pests.

The specific actions taken by MIDA’s National Directorate for Plant Health are thus far:

1. Participation in regional workshops.
2. Field days with technicians and producers.
3. Restructuring the “Committee Against Coffee Rust.”
4. Conduct monitoring surveys by area.
5. Working sessions with technicians and producers to determine the correct actions and interventions to follow.

The specific phytosanitary measures that MIDA’s National Directorate for Plant Health will enforce are:

1. Field Sampling
2. Adequate regulation of shadow
3. Pruning coffee trees
4. Weed control
5. Proper fertilization
6. Preventive chemical control
7. Healing chemical control

Producers are obligated to fully cooperate with MIDA. Owners or occupants of coffee plantations will have to allow free entry for phytosanitary authorities to their properties to take the samples that are required for analysis. Violations of any provision contained in Resolution DAL-011-ADM-2013 shall be punished as provided in the Law 47 of July 9, 1996 about the Plant Health Act. A breach of the provisions contained in the resolution empowers MIDA’s National Directorate of Plant Health to apply all legal measures necessary to safeguard the country's plant heritage.

Coffee is one of the main agricultural export items of Panama; therefore, the protection of agricultural areas, crops, plants and plant products is a key objective of the GOP. As in other countries affected in the region, lower-income farm workers will be the most impacted of all producers. In Panama, the main coffee farm workers are the indigenous group Gnabes Bougle, who live in the provinces of Chiriqui and Bocas del Toro. They depend nearly entirely on coffee production for their livelihood.