

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Pakistan Highlights

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Report Highlights:

This report is the first installment of a regular series of reports that will provide short briefs on topics affecting agriculture and USDA development programs and marketing efforts in Pakistan. The report will draw from information obtained in local news papers and periodicals, meetings with Pakistani officials, and trips made throughout Pakistan. The Office of Agricultural Affairs invites any comments and suggestions about the report and how we can make it better.

General Information:

Flood Waters Continue to Create Problems for Sindh: Agricultural Counselor and Commodity Specialist traveled to Sindh province to talk to government officials and private sector representatives about the impact the severe flooding there is having on agriculture. Total damage is still not fully known, as Sindh government estimates and local producers, traders and processors differ in their estimates of crop damage. It is clear, however, that horticulture, cotton and rice crops were most affected with over 50 percent of total agriculture in Sindh completely lost. While waters have begun to recede, significant amounts of standing water are making it difficult for farmers to enter their fields to prepare for the *Rabi*, or winter season, plantings. Planting of wheat and other winter crops would normally begin now in late October, but will likely be delayed well into December in much of the affected area. There is a growing concern that many farmers in the affected area will not plant wheat at all. OAA forecasts for 2010-2011 cotton production will be reduced in our November update, but our wheat forecast for 2011-2012 will likely not change. *Source: OAA Contacts and Sindh Government Officials.*

Pakistan Creates New Ministries: On October 26, the Pakistan government announced the creation of four new Federal Ministries. Most important to agriculture was the creation of the new Ministry for Food Security and Research (MFSR). This move comes after the elimination of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MINFA) in June 2011, as the result of devolution under Amendment 18 of the Constitution. This Amendment moved responsibilities of certain federal government to the provinces. According to the government, creation of MFSR is an effort to combine agriculture and livestock policy and program administrative functions that were transferred to other federal Ministries. According to press reports, Mir Israr ullah Zehri of Baluchistan will be Minister of the new MFSR and Shafqat Nagmi will be the Secretary. Both gentlemen were serving in the same capacity respectively in MINFA before it was eliminated. The impact the new Ministry will have on USDA programs and U.S. trade is still unclear as operations of the new Ministry will not begin for another month or more. OAA will monitor and report any changes in the situation as they unfold. *Source: DAWN, October 27, 2011, the largest daily English Pakistani news paper; The Office of Agricultural Affairs, Islamabad contacts.*

Pakistan to Import Urea Fertilizer: In compliance with the Economic Coordination Council's (ECC) decision to import 700,000 tons of urea fertilizer, the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) has announced an international tender for the purchase and import of urea. According to TCP officials, pre-qualified urea suppliers can submit bids for a minimum of 50,000 tons up to the total 700,000 tons with terms that meet Pakistan's minimum standards outlined in the Pakistan Standards & Quality Control Authority requirements. The bidding for the tender will be held on October 28, 2011. Delivery is to be made no later than the end of November 2011. Pakistan has traditionally imported urea from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Dubai. The expected purchase price of a 50 kg bag of urea is around Rs. 3,000 (U.S. \$34.0) and the government will make same quantity available to farmers at around Rs. 1500 (U.S. \$17.00). *Source: The Office of Agricultural Affairs, Islamabad and Government Tender Announcement.*

Mango Meeting: APHIS Plant Health Advisor participated in the "Market Linkages Working Group" meeting in Lahore sponsored by USAID. The meeting brought together mango industry stakeholders including mango growers, packinghouse owners, exporters, grocery buyers, logistics and transportation

experts, and the Pakistan Department of Plant Protection. APHIS made two presentations, one focusing on phytosanitary safeguards for export programs and one summarizing the export program to the United States this year. USDA participation in this meeting is part of a larger phytosanitary capacity building effort with the Pakistani Department of Plant Protection and other government organizations. **Source:** *APHIS/Islamabad*