Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GIEWS Country Brief
The Republic of Kenya

Reference Date: 16-September-2024

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Below-average production of 2024 *long-rains* main season crops**
- **Above-average rangeland conditions benefitting livestock**
- **Prices of maize at low levels due to adequate carryover stocks and sustained imports**
- **Improving food security situation due to consecutive favourable rainy seasons**

Below-average production of 2024 *long-rains* main season crops

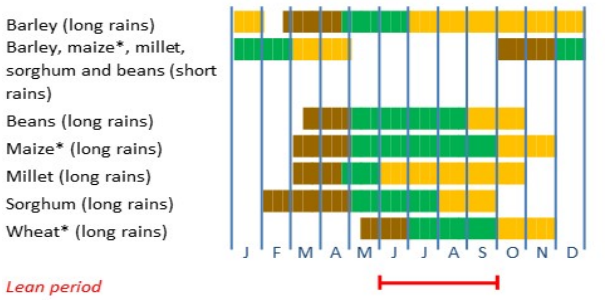
In major unimodal rainfall growing areas of Central, Rift Valley and Western provinces, the 2024 *long-rains* main season crops were planted last Apriland will be harvested from October onwards. In marginal bimodal rainfall southeastern and coastal agriculture areas, crops have already been harvested in June and July. Seasonal rainfall was characterized by average to above-average amounts, but they had an erratic temporal distribution. The onset of rains, normally occurring in March, was delayed by up to one month. Torrential precipitation in April resulted in widespread floods which affected almost 170 000 hectares of cropland, causing substantial crop losses. In western areas, where the rainy season extends until August, rainfall amounts were average to above average. By contrast, in southeastern areas, where rains normally subside in mid-June, they had an early cessation in mid-May, resulting in crop wilting. In these areas, as of early July, between 40 and 85 percent of cropland was affected by severe drought (ASI map for cropland).

Total 2024 *long-rains* maize production is officially estimated at 5 to 10 percent below average. The largest production shortfalls, up to 70 percent below average, were recorded in southeastern and coastal marginal agriculture areas, where the unfavourable performance of the rainy season was compounded by low availability of certified seeds and localized outbreaks of Fall Armyworm.

According to latest weather forecasts by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Climate Predictions and Application Centre (ICPAC), below-average precipitation amounts are expected during the October to December *short-rains* secondary season, with a likely negative impact on yields of crops, to be harvested in early 2025.

Kenya

Crop Calendar (*major foodcrop)



Kenya

Cereal Production

	2019-2023 average	2023	2024 forecast	change 2024/2023
	000 tonnes			percent
Maize	3 492	3 700	3 325	-10.1
Wheat	319	310	300	-3.2
Sorghum	228	200	200	0.0
Others	367	413	434	5.1
Total	4 406	4 623	4 259	-7.9

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Above-average rangeland conditions benefitting livestock

In northern and northeastern pastoral areas, abundant March to May *long-rains*, estimated at up twice the long-term average, significantly improved rangeland conditions, with a positive impact on livestock due to the ample availability of pasture and water. However, torrential rains triggered floods, which resulted in the death of about 30 000 animals. Vegetation conditions entered the June to September dry season at well above-average levels (ASI map for grassland) and, despite some seasonal declines, as of end-August they were still favourable. Between March and May, during the rainy season, livestock trekking distances from grazing fields to watering points declined on average by about 35 percent. Although distances increased by about 50 percent between May and July, they remained about 10 percent shorter than a year earlier. Good animal conditions have resulted in increased conception rates and milk production, which in July was estimated to be about 50 percent above the average.

Prices of maize at low levels due to adequate carryover stocks and sustained imports

In Kitale and Eldoret markets, located in southwestern key growing areas of Rift Valley Province and in the capital, Nairobi, prices of maize in July, after having followed mixed trends in previous months, were 40 to 50 percent below their year-earlier levels.

In counties located in southeastern and coastal marginal agriculture areas, including Kwale, Taita Taveta, Makueni, Meru North, Embu (Mbeere) and Tharaka Nithi, maize prices remained firm or declined only marginally between June and July despite the harvest of *long-rains* crops, due to the poor performance of the cropping season in these areas. However, in July prices were 45 to 55 percent lower than their year-earlier values.

The low prices of maize across the country are due to adequate carryover stocks following the 2023 above-average cereal production and sustained imports from Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

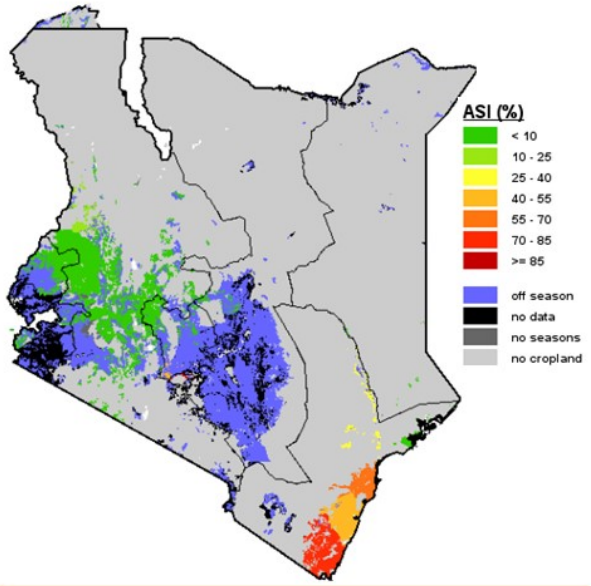
In pastoral areas, prices of cattle, camels and small ruminants followed an increasing trend since mid-2023 due to improving body conditions, and in July 2024, goat prices were on average about 40 percent higher than one year earlier. In these areas, maize prices in July were on average about 20 percent below their year-earlier levels, due to adequate carryover stocks. With livestock prices having increased over the previous 12 months, while cereal prices declined, the livestock-to-cereal terms of trade for pastoralists have substantially improved, and in July 2024 they were on average more than 80 percent higher than one year earlier. For example, in Samburu County, the equivalent in maize of a medium-sized goat increased from 42 kg in July 2023 to about 80 kg in July 2024. However, as herd sizes are still low due to the massive animal deaths which occurred during the 2020-2023 drought, pastoralists have few animals to sell.

Improving food security situation due to consecutive favourable rainy seasons

According to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, about 1 million people (6 percent of the analyzed population) are estimated to face severe acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 [Crisis]) between

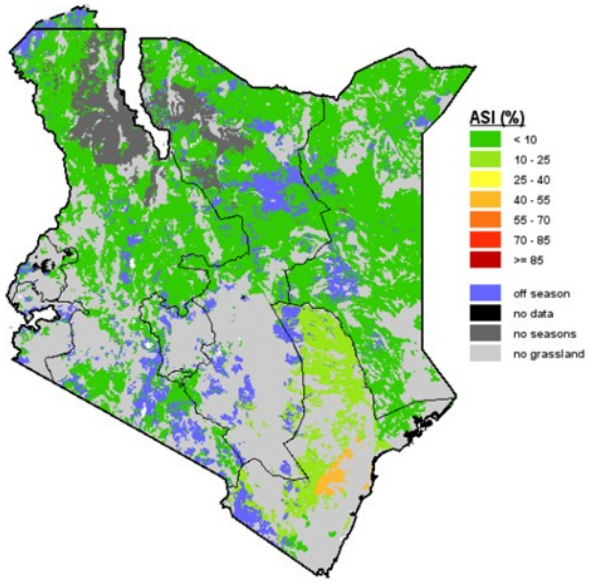
Kenya - Agricultural Stress Index (ASI) for cropland

from start of season 1 to dekad 1, July 2024



Kenya - Agricultural Stress Index (ASI) for grassland

from start of season 1 to dekad 3, June 2024



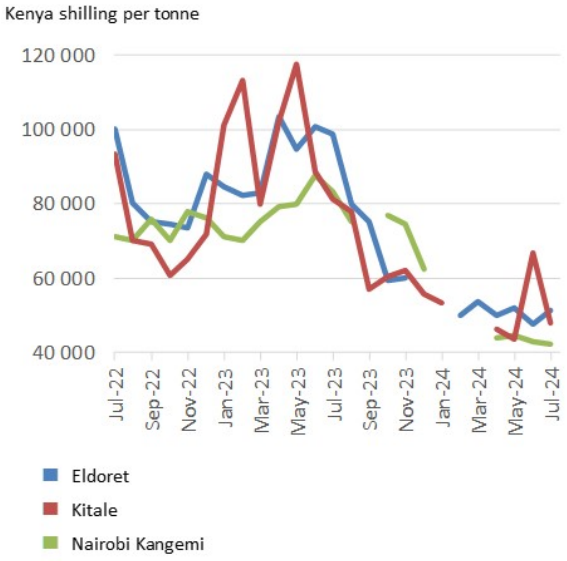
July and September 2024 in the 23 counties classified as rural Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL), covering most of the country. This figure represents a marked improvement from the 2.8 million people (17 percent of the analyzed population) estimated to be severely acute food insecure in the same period of the previous year.

The improvement is mainly driven by favourable weather conditions in 2023 and 2024 which boosted crop and livestock production, and marked the end of the severe 2020-2023 drought, which affected mainly pastoral and marginal agriculture areas.

As weather forecasts point to below-average precipitation amounts during the October to December *short-rains* rainy season, the number of people affected by severe acute food insecurity is projected to increase to 1.8 million between October 2024 and January 2025, due to the negative impact of dry weather conditions on crops, livestock and agricultural employment opportunities.

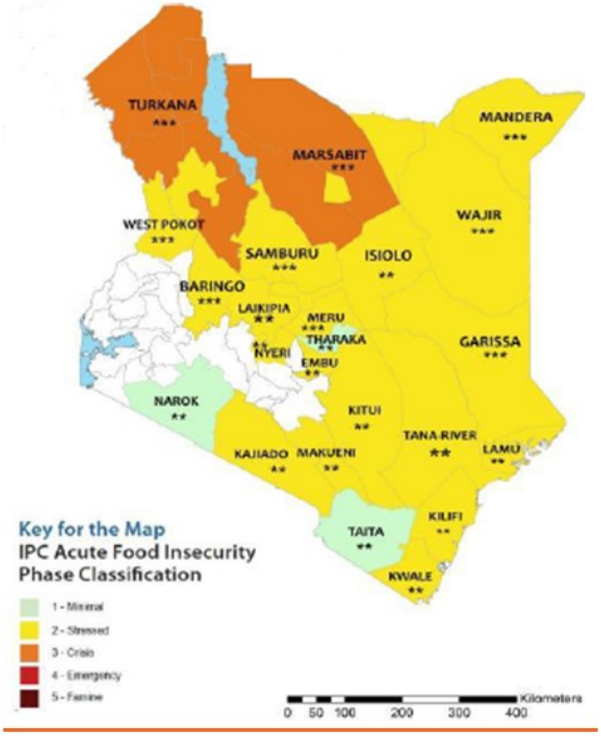
Kenya

Retail prices of white maize



Kenya – Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

Projection July-September 2024



This brief was prepared using the following data/tools:
FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet (CCBS) https://www.fao.org/giews/data-tools/en/.
FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool https://fpma.fao.org/.
FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation for Crop Monitoring https://www.fao.org/giews/earthobservation/.
Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) https://www.ipcinfo.org/.