



# GIEWS Country Brief Jordan

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### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Snowfall in January 2022, but limited rainfall in subsequent months
- Stable cereal import requirements forecast in 2022/23
- Inflation remains relatively low despite increases in international commodity prices buffered by pegged exchange rate

## Snowfall in January 2022, but limited rainfall in subsequent months

Agriculture provides an important livelihood in rural areas. Out of the total cropland area, estimated at about 196 000 hectares, approximately 43 percent is irrigated, and 57 percent is rainfed (2020 data). An equal share of slightly over 40 percent is dedicated to tree and field crops, and the rest is planted with vegetables.

Domestic production of cereals is negligible due to the uncondusive climatic and geographic conditions. Only very small quantities of sorghum are planted as winter cereals in October and November and harvested in June. Wheat is mostly sown in February for harvest from June. Cereal production in 2022 is estimated at a slightly above-average level of 100 000 tonnes, a similar level to the harvest gathered in 2021.

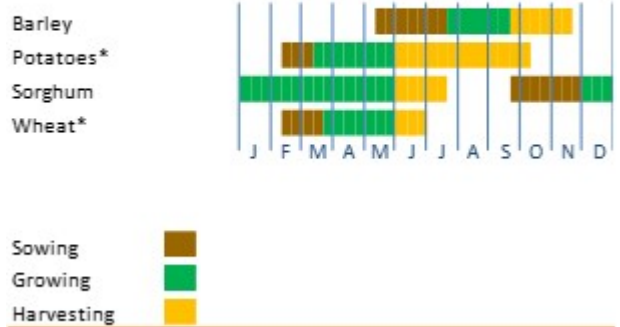
With the exception of Mafraq, average to slightly above-average accumulated precipitation was recorded over all other agriculturally significant governorates in 2022. Above-average levels of precipitation were mostly due to rare snowfall in the last decade of January 2022 in northern and central regions, with up to 30 cm of snow accumulation, which resulted in significant damages to field crops. Below-average rainfall was recorded in the subsequent months, reducing the amount of stored water in dams and reservoirs. Although average dam levels were about 20 percent full as of July 2022, a level similar to 2021, some of the dams in the southern region, mostly used for drinking water, were between 1 and 3 percent of their capacity, increasing the risk to run dry.

Jordan is among the top ten world exporters of phosphate fertilizer and could potentially benefit from the current wave of high fertilizer prices. Concurrently, domestic agricultural input prices remain high, constraining the planted area for many crops.

## Jordan

Crop Calendar

(\*major foodcrop)



Source: FAO/GIEWS.

## Jordan

### Cereal Production

	2017-2021	2021	2022	change
	average			forecast
	000 tonnes			percent
Barley	31	35	35	0.0
Wheat	29	30	30	0.0
Maize	23	25	25	0.0
Others	10	10	10	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Note: percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet.

## Stable cereal import requirements in 2022/23

Even in years with above-average domestic production, over 97 percent of the domestic cereal food and feed requirements are satisfied through imports. Cereal import requirements in the 2022/23 marketing year (July/June) are forecast at an average level of 3 million tonnes. Wheat and barley imports are usually sourced from the Black Sea Region given the lower freight costs compared to other origins, with the largest share originating from Romania. Between 2016 and 2020, the country sourced about 20 percent of its wheat imports from Ukraine and the Russian Federation. During the same period, over 35 percent of barley imports originated from the Russian Federation and 14 percent from Ukraine. The start of the war in Ukraine put a halt on marine exports from Ukraine. Although shipments of food from the Russian Federation were not subject to direct sanctions, restrictions on financing and insurance coverage slowed down the pace of exports.

Despite the elevated global cereal prices, the country continued tendering, mostly for wheat and barley. Current wheat stocks cover 15 months of the national consumption requirements. Stocks of rice and maize usually cover about a one month of consumption needs, and feed barley for 12 months. To avoid future market turbulences, the government plans to maintain strategic stocks of wheat (both in the country and in transit) to cover two years of food consumption needs.

## Price inflation remains relatively low

In July 2022 (latest available information), the annual food price inflation rate was estimated at 3.8 percent, down from the 5.5 percent recorded in May 2022. Despite the slight increases compared to 2021, the levels of food price inflation remain relatively low despite high import reliance. The headline inflation rate was estimated at 5.3 percent in July 2022, following a gradual increase since 2021 when rates ranged from 0 to 2 percent. Despite moderate upticks in inflation rates, reflecting elevated global commodity prices, the national currency is pegged to the United States dollar and this has helped buffer larger domestic price gains.

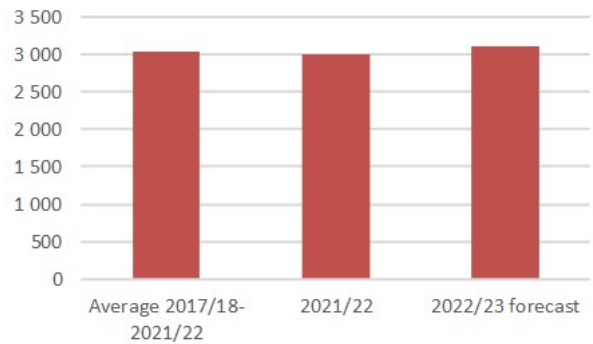
In previous years the country subsidised the price of bread, but in 2018 it switched to providing direct cash subsidies to target low-income families. The government, however, now sets the retail price of *mowahad* bread (flat bread) at USD 0.45/kg (compared to USD 0.22/kg before the reform). To offset the increased cost of several inputs used in bread production, including energy, the government lowered the price of wheat flour which is sold to bakers. The switch in policies has eliminated 90 percent of waste in consumption and subsidy abuse.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of July 2022, about 676 000 registered Syrian refugees were hosted in the country, mostly concentrated in Mafraq, Amman and Irbid governorates. This figure has not changed significantly since late 2016. Most of the refugees arrived between January and April 2013, when the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic escalated. Since 2020, they are also allowed to work in the healthcare sector and, since last year, in all sectors open to non-Jordanians, assuming they secure a work permit.

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## Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



Notes: Includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets.