

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: October 25, 2022

Report Number: ET2022-0032

Report Name: Ethiopia is Expected to Export Wheat for the First Time as Summer Production Progresses Nicely

Country: Ethiopia

Post: Addis Ababa

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Grain and Feed

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Report Highlights:

Ethiopia's Ten-Year Development Plan (2021-2030) identifies sustained and quality agriculture programs to accelerate economic progress and ensure national food security as its national strategy. The development of small and large-scale irrigation infrastructure in the Ethiopian lowlands has recently been given increasing due attention by the GOE - among other contributing factors like improved seed, fertilizer supply, and use of mechanization on the clustered wheat farms.

The GOE recently announced that Ethiopia will export wheat in the coming year (2022/23)

The Government of Ethiopia's (GOE) agricultural policies have been heavily dependent upon crop production during the short rainy season, known as the *Belg* rains from February to May and followed by the long rainy season, known as the *Meher*, which is between June and mid-September. Over the last three years the agricultural offices of the government at all levels have initiated and focused on the production of summer wheat, adding a third cropping season by utilizing small and large-scale irrigation schemes as well as a cluster farming approach to efficiently utilize agricultural machines and equipment starting from land preparation up to harvest.

Wheat, cultivated on a total area of 2 million hectares annually with a total production of 5.5 million tons, is one of the most important food security crops in Ethiopia. However, there is a huge gap between wheat production and supply due to the increasing demand associated with the surge in urban population and change in food culture such as the increasing consumption of bread, biscuits, pasta, noodles, and porridge which are easy and quick to prepare.

The practice of expanding irrigated and mechanized commercial wheat farming in the lowlands will be instrumental to meet set targets of increasing production. Engagement and close monitoring of progress at the highest levels of government has been and will continue to be a factor for success. The efforts to replace imported wheat with domestic production have shown some results. Ethiopia is working to accelerate its productivity for self-sufficiency while targeting import substitution and even to export in the coming production year.

The GOE recently announced that Ethiopia will export wheat this year (2022/23). The announcement took place at the official launching ceremony of the summer wheat production campaign which was hosted by the Prime Minister and attended by the Cabinet and some Parliament members. The government expects 1.3 million hectares of land will be developed with summer wheat during this Ethiopian Agricultural Calendar year and that 52 million quintals (4MT/Ha) will be harvested. Ethiopia and Kenya have also reached an official agreement that will allow Kenya to import wheat from Ethiopia. An agreement with Djibouti is also in the works.

Ethiopians must harvest around 7 million tons of wheat per year to meet the local demand. Currently, the country's 6 million households grow only 5.52 million tons on 2 million hectares. The summer wheat irrigation strategy which has been developed, introduced, and implemented in all parts of Ethiopia is a good start but its goal to reach self-sufficiency in wheat success has yet to be accomplished.

Ethiopia, like many other countries, is affected by the trade and investment fluctuations associated with the Russia-Ukraine war. However, some experts say that the nationally developed summer irrigation strategy for wheat production will help Ethiopia to withstand this global impact of Russia-Ukraine war.

Attachments:

No Attachments.