

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: September 23,2020

Report Number: BU2020-0032

Report Name: Grain and Feed Market Update

Country: Bulgaria

Post: Sofia

Report Category: Grain and Feed

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Report Highlights:

On September 17, 2020, the Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture (MinAg) reported the 2020 wheat harvest at 4.63 million metric tons (MMT), a 21-percent decline from marketing year (MY) 2019/20. Reported average yields were 24 percent lower from last year. The barley crop (winter and spring) was reported at 560,000 metric tons (MT), with average yields down 14 percent from last year. Winter grain crops are lower than previously expected due to dry weather during critical development stages. Post revises down its estimates for the MY 2020/21 wheat crop to 5.0 MMT. Post's barley forecast is stable at 570,000 MT. The corn harvest began in late August and was at three percent completed as of early September. Bulgaria's corn area planted was 27 percent above MY 2019/20, a record high. However, hot and dry weather in July and August negatively affected yields. Post reduces its corn production forecast to 3.3 MMT.

Weather Overview

Following a wet June, hot and dry conditions prevailed in late July and throughout most of August, particularly in central and eastern Bulgaria. Western regions received near- or above-average rainfall. After mid-July, spring crop soil moisture fell to below-average levels in the eastern and central regions (see Maps 1 and 2, [Crop Explorer](#) and [Bulgaria data](#)).

According to MinAg, 10,700 HA of wheat, barley, and rapeseed were lost in 2020 due to drought, including 8,500 HA of wheat will not be harvested. Another 95,000 HA of wheat were reportedly significantly damaged. 400 HA of barley will not be harvested and 4,200 HA are reported to have serious drought damage. MinAg reports the most drought affected areas are Bourgas, Dobrich, Varna, Shoumen, and Sliven (along the Black Sea and in northeastern Bulgaria). These regions are close to international seaports and are export oriented.

During an early September Post field trip to the Pleven, Veliko Turnovo, and Lovech regions in northcentral Bulgaria, farmers reported that the last significant rainfall was in early June, followed by light showers in July. In late August during the corn harvest, high temperatures and strong winds reportedly further reduced corn moisture, yields, and quality. See field photos in the Appendix.

MY 2020/21 Forecast

Wheat: MinAg reported the area harvested for wheat was four percent above the previous year (see Table 1). Final average yields were reported at 3.93 MT/HA, a 24-percent decline from last year. Total production was reported at 4.63 MMT (MinAg Weekly Bulletin #37, September 17, 2020). Disappointing yields were largely due to the dry fall and spring in major production regions. MinAg reported highest average wheat yields in the regions of Montana, Vidin, Veliko Turnovo, Pleven and Lovech (northwestern and northcentral Bulgaria). The overall share of milling quality wheat is reported at 50 percent, above the 45 percent in MY 2019/20. Post revises downward its wheat crop estimate to 5.0 MMT (4.25 MT/HA).

Barley: The barley harvest was completed with average yields reported at 4.06 MT/HA, a 14-percent decline from MY 2019/20. The barley area planted, however, was more than 20 percent higher this MY. MinAg reported production at 560,000 MT. Post currently estimates total barley crop at 570,000 MT with average yields of 4.13 MT/HA.

Corn: According to MinAg, this year's corn area planted reached 575,000 HA, a record high. Despite favorable weather in May and June, hot and dry July weather during tasseling and kernel production negatively affected Bulgaria's corn crop. Private yield estimates vary widely from below 5.0 MT/HA to 6.6 MT/HA, with corn production from 2.5 MMT to 3.8 MMT. According to MinAg, the corn harvest was 29 percent complete as of September 10. Reported yields were below expectations at 4.4 MT/HA, a 35-percent decline from last year, although there is speculation that yields increased as the harvest progressed. Post's September field trip verified reports of small, lightweight and undeveloped ears compared to MY 2019/20. Post revises down its corn crop forecast to 3.3 MMT (5.75 MT/HA). Further revisions are possible pending additional harvest information.

MY 2019/20 Production Estimates and Trade

Wheat: According to Eurostat (Trade Data Monitor/TDM based on Eurostat), wheat and product exports during the first 11 months of MY 2019/20 were 5.04 MMT (in wheat equivalent), mostly to

Spain, Greece, Portugal, Romania, South Korea, and Indonesia. This marks a 23-percent increase in wheat exports over the first 11 months of MY 2018/19 (4.08 MMT).

Barley: According to Eurostat/TDM data, exports during the first 11 months of the MY were 297,000 MT, mainly to Saudi Arabia, Spain, and Greece, a 48-percent increase over the first 11 months of MY 2018/19 (200,000 MT).

Corn: Exports through August were 51 percent higher than in MY 2018/19, per MinAg data (2.57 MMT vs 1.7 MMT). Corn exports to non-EU markets more than doubled and exports within the EU increased by 20 percent. The latest Eurostat/TDM data for corn exports in MY 2019/20 through May show 2.22 MMT, a 49-percent increase over the corresponding period in MY 2018/19 (1.49 MMT). FAS Sofia revises upward its forecast for corn exports in MY 2019/20 from 2.2 MMT to 2.6 MMT. Official corn stocks as of August 28 were reported at 400,000 MT, almost half of the stocks at the end of August 2019 (741,000 MMT).

Appendix:

Table 1: Grain Area Planted and Harvested, MY 2019/20 and MY 2020/21, HA, September 2020

	September 12, 2019	September 10, 2020	Difference in Percentage
Winter Grains			
Wheat			
--Planted	1,131,709	1,176,072	+3.9%
--Harvested	1,130,614 (99.9%)	1,176,072 (100.0%)	+4.0%
Barley (Winter and Spring)			
--Planted	113,607	138,059	+21.5%
--Harvested	113,607 (100%)	138,059 (100.0%)	+21.5%
Triticale			
--Planted	13,569	13,824	+1.9%
--Harvested	13,385 (98.6%)	13,794 (99.8%)	+3.0%
Rye			
--Planted	5,862	6,861	+17.0%
--Harvested	5,719 (97.6%)	6,530 (95.2%)	+14.2%
Spring Grains			
Corn			
--Planted	455,876	574,762	+26.1%
--Harvested	149,690 (32.8%)	166,855 (29.0%)	+11.5%

Source: MinAg Weekly Bulletins

Table 2: MY 2020/21 Trade in Major Grain Crops, September 18, 2020

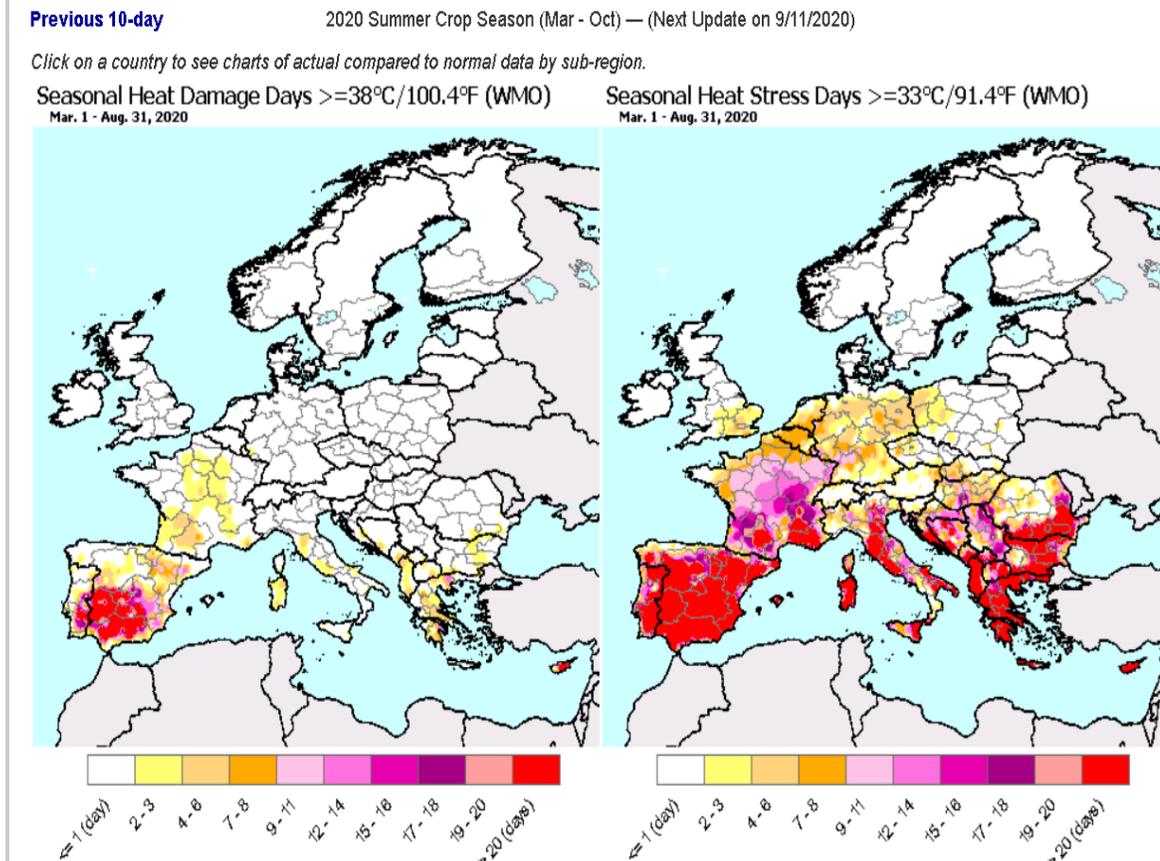
Types of Grains	Imports, MT	Exports, MT
Wheat	9,400 MT	873,312 MT (including 256,505 MT to non-EU markets);
Barley	0 MT	112,098 MT (including 105,092 MT to non-EU markets);
Corn (MY 2019/20, trade data as of the end of August)	18,952 MT	2,566,042 MT (including 1,079,293 MT to third countries)

Source: MinAg Weekly Grain Market Bulletins 2020

Table 3. FAS Sofia Grain Production Estimates MY 2020/21, Sept. 2020

Crops	Area Harvested, HA	Production, MT
Wheat	1,175,000	5,000,000
Barley	138,000	570,000
Corn	575,000	3,300,000

Map 1: USDA Crop Explorer, Europe, Seasonal Heat Damage Days March 1-Aug. 31, 2020



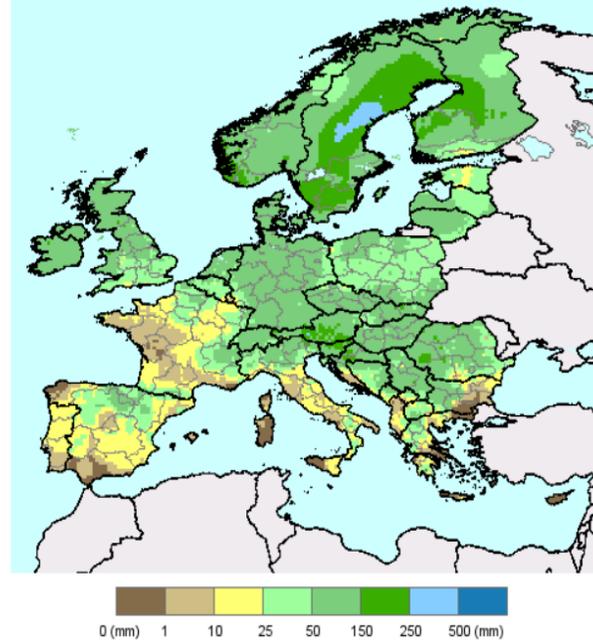
Map 2: Europe, Precipitation and Percent of Normal Precipitation, July 2020

[Previous 30-day](#) | [Next 30-day](#) 2020 Summer Crop Season (Mar - Oct) — (Next Update on 10/1/2020)

Click on a country to see charts of actual compared to normal data by sub-region.

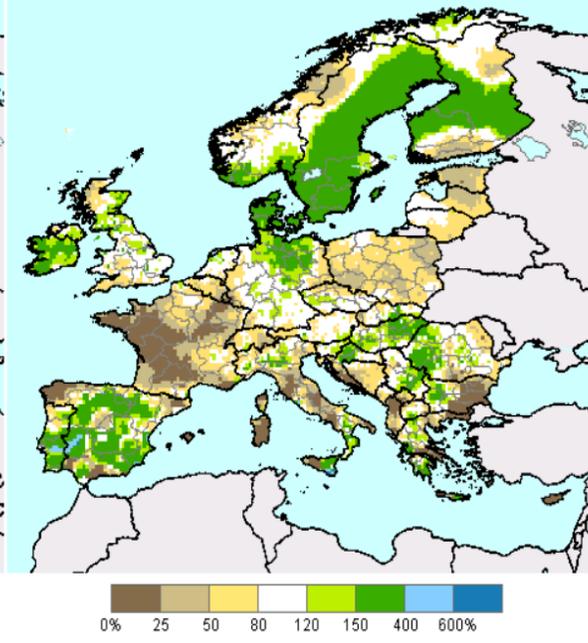
[View in Google Earth](#)

Precipitation 1-Month (USAF)
Jul. 1 - 31, 2020



[View in Google Earth](#)

Percent of Normal Precipitation 1-Month (USAF)
Jul. 1 - 31, 2020



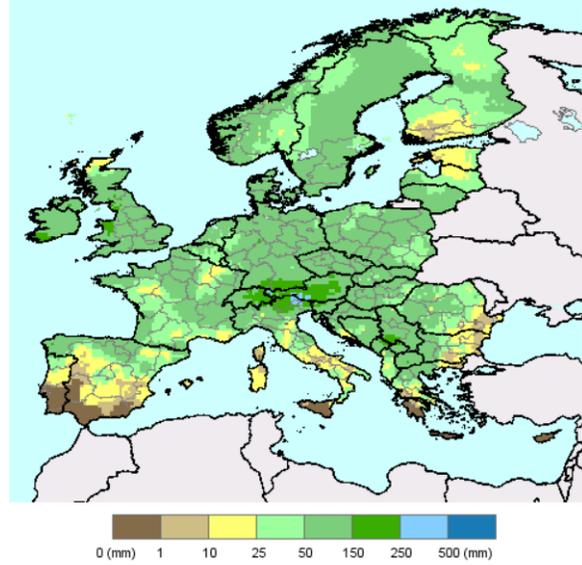
Map 3: Europe, Precipitation and Percent of Normal Precipitation, August 2020

[Previous 30-day](#) 2020 Summer Crop Season (Mar - Oct) — (Next Update on 10/1/2020)

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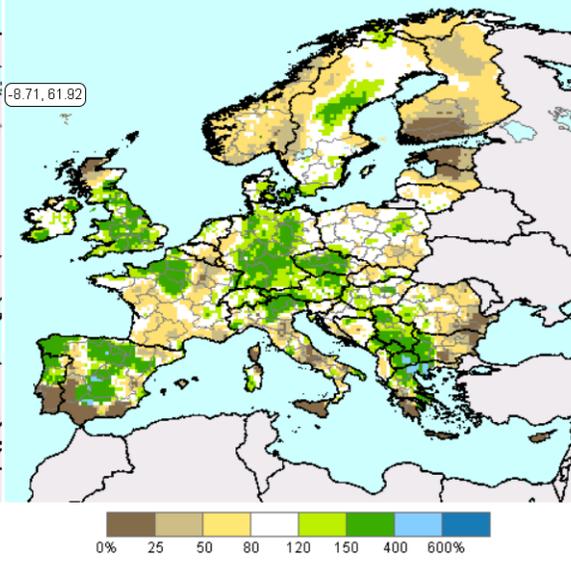
[View in Google Earth](#)

Precipitation 1-Month (USAF)
Aug. 1 - 31, 2020



[View in Google Earth](#)

Percent of Normal Precipitation 1-Month (USAF)
Aug. 1 - 31, 2020



FAS Sofia Corn Field Photos from Northcentral Bulgaria





Attachments:

No Attachments.