Africorp International
Scientific & Technical Support Unit

Season Report 2016/2017

❖ REGIONAL RAINFALL AND VEGETATION SITUATION

▪ Rainfall

Persistent above-average seasonal rains continued over Sudan, western Ethiopia, western Eritrea, and eastern and western South Sudan.

In Uganda and eastern DRC, average to above-average rainfall helped ease prolonged soil moisture deficits that had adversely affected cropping conditions earlier in the season. However, parts of southern and central Ethiopia, northern Somalia, and central South Sudan experienced below-average rainfall amounts in the past month.

Increased rainfall in the western sector of the region is attributed to the southward movement of the Inter Tropical Front (ITF). This has led to the start of the October to December rainy season in DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, and bimodal areas of Uganda.

▪ Vegetation

Vegetation conditions are above average in much of Sudan, Eritrea, northern Ethiopia and western South Sudan in response to above-average rainfall in the past month. According to FEWS NET crop model outputs, average to slightly above-average yield prospects are likely in these areas, with the exception of Oromia and SNNPR of Ethiopia, where persistent below-average rainfall has negatively impacted crop production, and South Sudan, where conflict is disrupting agricultural activities.

Vegetation conditions remain below average along the coastal strip of Kenya, southern Somalia, and parts of northeastern Tanzania, due to the poor performance of the March to May rains season and hotter-than-normal land surface temperatures. This has resulted in a rapid deterioration of pasture and water resources and poor cropping conditions in these regions.

❖ SUDAN CURRENT SITUATION

Seasonal rainfall has been well above average across Sudan since the beginning of the current main (June to September). Frequent, above-average rainfall since the end of June has led to flooding over many parts of Sudan, including Kassala, Sennar, Gazeira, South Kordofan, and North Darfur States. The areas where localized rainfall deficits have been greatest are southern Kassala and northern Gadaref, but small deficits are also present in southern South and West Kordofan.

Despite heavy rainfall that has led to some crop losses in irrigated areas, overall cropping prospects are favorable in the main rain-fed crop producing areas of Gadaref, Blue Nile, White Nile, and South Kordofan States, and in the traditional rain-fed sector of greater Darfur, and North and West Kordofan states. Some agricultural households affected by flooding, particularly in riverine areas, are likely to engage in off-season, flood recession cropping.

1. Planting area of crops

As 90% of the cultivated area is rain fed, the quantity and distribution of rains remains a dominant factor for the size of the areas to be planted and the expected yield. Due to the above-average rainfall amounts received throughout the season, the area of crops is increased in comparison with last season. The area of main crops planted till end of August 2016, included irrigated sector, is 45.5 million feds compared to the over 32 million feds in previous season.

2. Problems (Insects & diseases, Flooding, Labors, etc)

a. Pests and Diseases

The situation of pests and diseases was calm and no serious incidents of pests and diseases were reported till end of rainy season. Crop health has been generally good and outbreaks of locusts and migratory birds were reported in parts of South Darfur, East Darfur, North Kordofan and West Kordofan states, but crop losses were mostly minimal as a result of local authorities taking appropriate control measures. Watermelon bug, however, caused significant damage in North Kordofan. Mealy bug infestation was also reported on many crops in various parts of the country

b. Flooding

Above-average rainfall amounts received throughout the season, caused flooding that caused to crop losses and temporarily displaced a significant number of households, most significantly in Kassala, Sennar, Kordofan, Al Gezira, Gedaref, White Nile, and Darfur States.

c. Labor

Labor is available as the number of labors coming from Ethiopia and the south is in increase, and their cost is stable or even in increase compared with the last year.

3. Crops:

1. Oilseeds

a. Ground nuts

i. Planted area:

This year was very good for groundnut in the traditional rainfed sector, with significant increases in harvestable area (113 percent), yield (21 percent) and production (159 percent) compared with 2015. Production was also up, by 23 percent, in the semi-mechanized rainfed sector, but down by 23 percent in the irrigated sector, the result largely of a reduction in planted area. Much of the reduction in planted area was attributable to farmers' growing the more lucrative pigeon pea instead

ii. Production:

Overall groundnut production this year is estimated at 1.77 million tones is similar to that of 2014, which also received good rainfall. The average yield this year was 760 kg/ha, which, although low for groundnut, is slightly higher than that of last year (720 kg/ha) and substantially better than the long-term average of about 500 kg/ha.

iii. Price

G. nuts prices increased in Sudan local market in spite of good production and availability of buffer stock from the last season. Reason behind is the increase in the transportation cost by 100% due to the increase in the fuel cost. Today price is around 11500 SDG/ MT across most markets in Sudan.

b. Sesame Seeds

i. Planted area

The cultivated area of sesame in the current season is 5.587 million feds. The share of planted area in the irrigated sector is 180000 million.

ii. Production

At an estimated 514 000 tones, this year's sesame production is 56 percent higher than last year's, the result mainly of a 50 percent increase in harvestable area. The average yield of 240 kg/ha is similar to last year's but above the long-term average of about 180 kg/ha.

iii. Prices

Prices of sesame either remained stable or slightly increase across most markets in Sudan when compared to the same period in 2015/2016. Current price 900USD/MT FOB Port Sudan and local price today is around 15000 SDG/MT

c. Watermelon seeds

i. Planted area

The total targeted area is 500000 feds, representing around 90%of the area planted in the last season.

ii. **Production**

The total production of the Sudan watermelon seeds this season is below average and represents 50% of production in the last season, which attributed to heavy infestation with watermelon bug, however, caused significant damage in most areas in North Kordofan.

iii. Prices of Watermelon seeds is 16000 SDG/MT and 12400 SDG/MT of Super and Sadir quality respectively.

2. Herpes

a. Hibiscus

i. **Planted area**

The planted area reach 160000 feds in the season 2016/2017 with 7% increased when comparing to the area planted in the previous season.

ii. **Production**

The total production of the Sudanese Hibiscus this season is far below average and may only represent 35% - 40% of production in the last season. The decrease in production is attributed to heavy infestation of insects.

iii. **Prices**

Today price is around 20000 SDG/ MT across most markets in Sudan

b. Senna Pods and Leaves

i. **Planted area**

New crop yield is difficult to ascertain/ estimate early in the season in Sudan because senna is a wild crop and normally collected after the traditional food and cash crops are harvested. Another consideration is the rainy season was very good in last year and hence good crop yields are expected for senna and other Agri-commodities during 2017. The good rains have led to a delay in harvesting/collecting the senna which is likely to continue until April-May and total Sudanese Senna crop size still remains unclear for 2017.

i. Production

Estimated new production however is estimated at 700 - 800 Tons which is 25% less than the previous season. The reasons given for this are:

1. Heavy rainy season 2016
2. Competition from other herbs and plants compete for the same plantation areas.
3. Farmers tend to be busy tending to other more profitable cash-crops

ii. Price

Today price is around 7455 SDG/ MT across most markets in Sudan. This is the same or slightly higher comparing to the same period, last year

3. Gums

a. Gum Hashab

i. Production

Hashab gum harvested has begun since mid November. The first batches arriving to action market end December. Hashab gum supply has improved in January as producers started to bring gum to the auction market

Sudan total production estimated to be around 25,000 MT

ii. Price

Market prices range between 20,700 -21,200 SDG/MT and Hashab FOB prices remain stable, at 2400 USD/MT

b. Gum Talha

i. Production

Sudan total production from Talha gum estimated to be around 38000 MT.: only 6.7 MT coming from West Kordofan has been provided to El Obeid auction.
We expect an increase of talha supply in the next weeks, as South Kordofan producers have started picking the flaky gum.

ii. Price

Talh gum auction price slightly rose to 210 SDG/gintar, ie. 4,672 SDG/MT

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