2019 – 2020 Agriculture Seasonal Performance

KEY UPDATES

FAS Meeting, July 2020
Presentation Outline

1. Crop Planted this season vs last season *(Wheat, Barley and Other Crops)*

2. Rainfall Performance and Temperature

3. Crop Damage and Loss – Effect of Flooding, Hail and Fires, including Affected Governorates

4. Livestock Situation and Condition

5. Effect of Covid – 19 on Agriculture

6. Impacts of devaluation of the Syrian currency on Agriculture
1. Crop Planted and harvested Area Estimates – vs last season

Wheat and Barley – Cereals

A. Planted area

**Wheat**
- Total area planted this current season is quite close to the area planted last season,
- Cultivated area in **Hasakeh, Aleppo and Raqqa** constitute more than 70% of total cultivated area,

**Barley**
- Total cultivated area for current season is slightly higher than last season,

B. Harvesting

- Barley harvesting has been completed in all Governorates,
- Wheat harvesting is underway and nearing completion in most Governorates *(By the first Dekad of July 2020, 80% of the total cultivated area had been harvested)*,
- MAAR estimates expected production for Wheat and Barley for this season to be close to last season,

**NOTE**: Final figures have not been released yet.
2. Rainfall Performance and Temperature

October 2019 | November 2019 | December 2019 | January 2020

February 2020 | March 2020 | April 2020 | May 2020
Temperature

- Mostly around the averages and slightly higher in most Governorates and most months,
- Note that during March and April 2020, frost occurred in some governorates (Rural Damascus, As-Suwayda, Quneitra and Homs),
- In second decade of May 2020, temperatures increased around 5-6 °C above average in most governorates (especially Hama, Raqqa and Aleppo),
- This had negative impact on some crops (especially wheat) and fruit trees.
3. Crop Situation, Condition and Damage - Effect of Flooding, Hail and Fires including Affected Governorates

- Crop condition is generally good due to the good precipitation received in most Governorates,
- However, some areas and crops (legumes, early vegetables, nurseries, wheat, barley and fruit trees) were affected by frost, hail, strong winds and flooding (i.e. high rainfall in March 2020,
- About 4500 hectares of wheat and barley were flooded in Raqqa, Hasakeh, Hama, Homs and Tartous,
- Livestock death (i.e. dozens of SHEEP) were also reported in Al Badia (i.e. died due to torrential rains,
Crop conditions and damage – Effect of Flooding, Hail and Fires including Affected Governorates

The most affected governorates by crop fires

- Al Hasakeh: 82%
- Raqqa: 9%
- Hama: 6%
- Aleppo: 2%
- Daraa: 1%

The burned cropped area is approximately 30,000 hectares

**Ratios of crops burned**

- Wheat, 55%
- Barley, 41%
- Other crops and Fruitful trees, 4%
4. Livestock Situation and Condition

- Livestock are not in the best condition and generally **fair** across most governorates,
- The Livestock sector faces many challenges, the most significant challenges being;
  i. High **feed prices**, especially **poultry feed**,  
  ii. Weak **supply and high cost** of veterinary services for Ecto / Endo Parasites,  
  iii. Difficulty in accessing all **natural pastures** as before and increase in fodder prices,  
  iv. Spread of some diseases, especially **Lumpy skin** affecting cattle,
5. Effect of Covid – 19 on Agriculture

- Measures to contain Covid-19 and the Curfews have had both direct and indirect impacts on agriculture production,
- The Livestock sector (especially poultry) has been greatly impacted due to the effect of Covid-19 on input and output markets,
- Including agricultural labor and most agricultural-based livelihoods,
  
  This is mainly due to;
  
  i. Restricted and slow access to fields to implement farm operations,
  ii. High cost of transporting agricultural produce and farming inputs,
  iii. Closure of the Livestock markets and slaughterhouses,
  iv. Difficulty of flocks reaching natural pastures and the high feed prices,
6. Impact of devaluation of the Syrian currency (SYP)

- **Supply chain** disruption for agriculture inputs is evident,
- Limited **availability of agricultural inputs** and **high cost** especially for pesticides and veterinary medicines,
- Rise in **agricultural production costs** compared to returns (i.e. prices of farming inputs have risen sharper than final products),
- Low **quality of agricultural inputs** has also been noted,
- **Feed shortage** for poultry production including limited access due to high costs,
- Fluctuation of the Syrian currency led to a sharp **decline in the purchasing power** of most of the population,
Conclusion

- The Agriculture sector is a key pillar to strengthen the resilience of the Syrian farmers and the affected population, (including Returnees),
- Agriculture is the engine that can drive affected families out of poverty, food insecurity and unemployment in rural areas,
- Agriculture is crucial as it can contribute to the recovery of the Syrian economy, but it does face challenges;
  i. Impact of the protracted Syrian crisis,
  ii. The instability of the Syrian currency and its impact on agricultural supply chains,
  iii. Limited resources (especially Financial) to support the agricultural sector,
Any Questions?