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# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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**Date:** March 15, 2012

**GAIN Report Number:** EC12002

## Ecuador

### Grain and Feed Annual

#### Wheat, Corn, Rice, Imports, Exports, Supply, Demand, Consumption in Ecuador in 2012

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**Report Highlights:**

Higher international commodity prices are not expected to have a significant effect on consumption of wheat, corn, and rice in Ecuador; the baking industry is dependent upon imported wheat while the animal sector depends on imports of corn. Increasingly higher wages in Ecuador are likely to offset changes in food prices. Domestic wheat production, traditionally a very small amount of total consumption, will remain steady. Wheat imports are expected to decrease to 545,000 MT in Market Year 2011/12. Domestic corn production is expected to increase by at least 20 percent while milled rice production is expected to decrease to 624,000 MT in Market Year 2011/12. Corn imports will increase to 560,000 MT in Market Year 2011/12. The United States reclaimed its place as the primary source of corn imports in 2011 with a 40 percent share of the market.

## **Executive Summary:**

Wheat production in Ecuador is expected to remain around 9,000 MT again this year, despite Ecuadorian government incentives to substitute imports of wheat. Adoption of newly developed wheat varieties is currently delayed. Domestic production levels are still insignificant in comparison to current demand. In Market Year (MY) 2011/12 (July 2011-June 2012), imports are estimated to decrease to 545,000 MT in response to slightly lower domestic demand. The market share for sourcing countries returned to a predictable scenario with Canada and the United States as the major exporters in Market Year 2011/12. Ecuador uses the U.S. dollar as its currency which tends to benefit imports from the United States due to the dollar's current depreciation against other currencies.

Corn production is expected to increase by at least 20 percent in MY2011/2012 (May 2011-April 2012) due to more favorable weather conditions. Despite higher commodity prices in 2012, annual consumption is expected to remain stable at around 1.35 million MT. Imported corn is used mainly by the feed meal compound industry and related industries: poultry, eggs, and pork. Post projects that corn imports will increase to above 550,000 MT in MY 2011/12 due to a larger amount of import authorizations granted at the end of 2011. The United States and Argentina will be the primary sources of these imports.

Milled rice production will decrease to 624,000 MT in MY 2011/12 (April 2011-March 2012). Although Ecuador has steadily been increasing rice production, bad weather and uncertain market conditions have discouraged an increase in area planted.

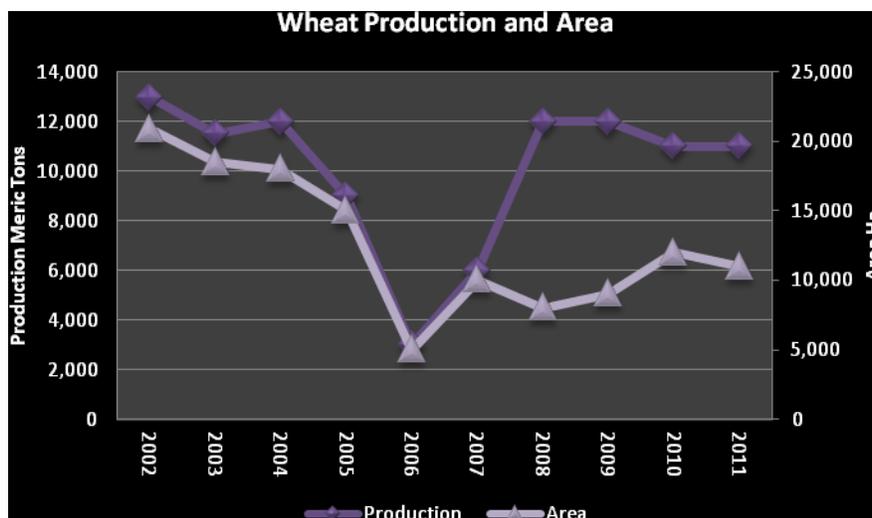
## Commodities:

Wheat

## Production:

Since the 1970s, wheat production in Ecuador has declined steeply. In 1990, Ecuador produced 30,000 MT in 37,000 harvested hectares. Since then, low yields, poor soil quality and the lack of high quality seed combined with low prices local wheat have contributed to reduced production. Local production was about 8,000 MT in MY 2011/12, similar to the previous year. To fulfill local demand, Ecuador imports large amounts of wheat.

In response to the high international prices for wheat in 2008, and in an effort to guarantee self-supply of wheat, the Government of Ecuador (GOE) has continued to influence mills and groups of Ecuadorian farmers in the northern and central highlands through incentives to shift towards planting wheat for local consumption. These incentives have included releasing improved wheat varieties, subsidizing fertilizers, and government backed loans and outreach activities. Business associations have requested lower tariffs for imported wheat until domestic production starts to peak. In July 2010, Ecuador's National Agricultural Research Institute (INIAP) released three wheat varieties. These wheat varieties were the result of traditional breeding of materials introduced from the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center. INIAP varieties are expected to produce about 12,000 pounds of grain per hectare, be resistant to leaf rust (brown rust) and stripe rust (yellow rust) and adapt to weather conditions in Ecuador's highlands. INIAP has indicated that the protein content of this variety is above 13 percent. Currently, there are no significant areas planted with these varieties, although 30 ha have been set aside for seed production throughout the introduction stage. These varieties are expected to be planted commercially in 2013.



In late 2009 the GOE started a price support mechanism for domestically produced wheat. However, supply increases have not been observed. Only about 2,000 MT of total domestic production is made

available for purchase by the millers, the rest is sold locally in small towns near the production areas. The perception is that the GOE's efforts will not be sustainable due to the large size of the market and bakers' preference for imported higher-quality wheat. A GOE requirement to prove purchase of domestic production prior to issuing import permits was eliminated in 2010.

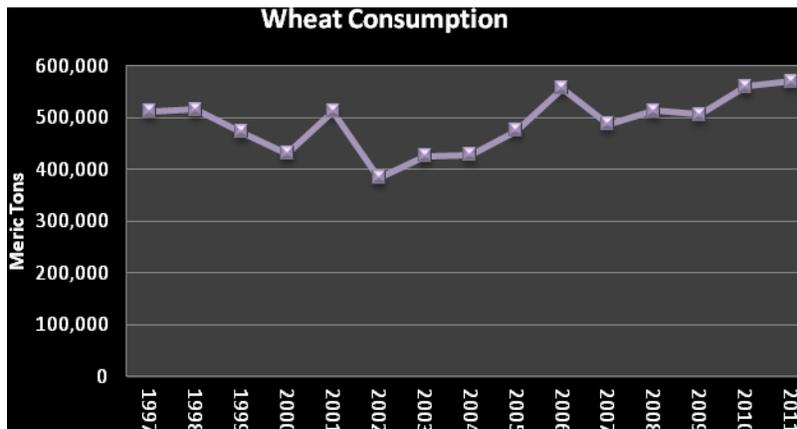
**Consumption:**

More stable international prices and stable bread prices in Ecuador started having an effect at returning consumption to pre-2008 levels through MY 2010/11. In MY 2011/12 demand for wheat has been stable.

Higher global demand for shrimp: Ecuador is a major producer and exporter of shrimp. In response to good world prices, Ecuador has increased its shrimp exports. Wheat is an important ingredient in the feed needed to produce it. Post estimates that the seafood industry would consume at least 45,000 MT of wheat in MY 2011/12, out of 65,000 MT of wheat used for feed in all industries.

Per capita human consumption has decreased slightly. Although Ecuadorian consumers eat bread at least twice a day and increasingly consider pasta as a staple, they also like the convenience of being able to find bakeries with freshly baked bread rolls within walking distance to their homes. According to industry sources, consumers are decreasing their consumption of bread due to dietary considerations. The price of non-specialty bread is set by the GOE. The price of a bread roll has stayed at \$0.12 since January, 2011.

For MY 2012/13, demand of imported wheat for feed is expected to remain flat.



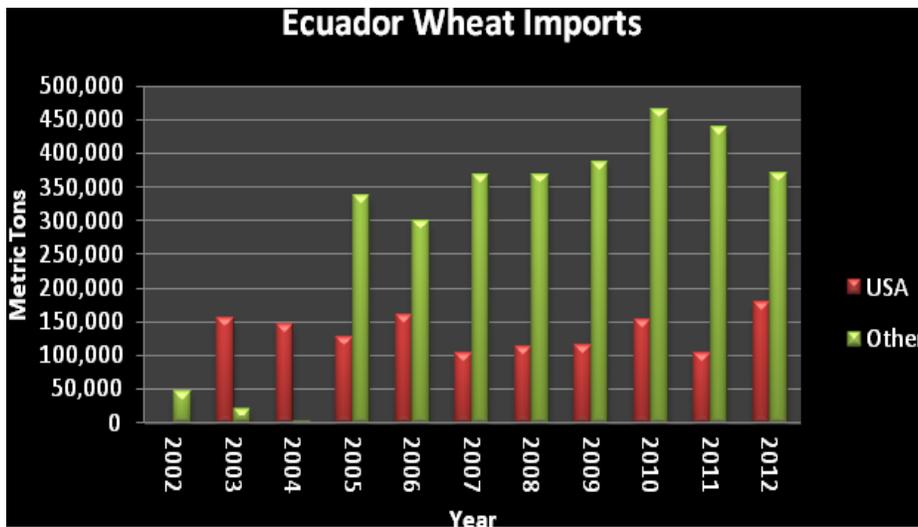
**Trade:**

Imports for Calendar Year (CY) 2011 increased only marginally, less than 1 percent. Total imports in 2011 increased about 3,000 MT compared to the previous year. Since Ecuador basically uses wheat for

bread and pasta, imports of hard wheat are, on average, higher than those of soft wheat, usually by a 3 to 1 ratio. In 2011, this ratio continued to increase and reached 4.4 to 1.

The U.S. market share increased in Ecuador’s wheat imports from 24 percent in 2010 to 24.7 percent in 2011. On average, U.S. wheat exports to Ecuador had been exceeded by imports from Canada since 1995 when the GOE liberalized the importation of wheat. Canada exported 413,294 MT of wheat in 2011, down 5,091 MT from 418,384 MT in 2010 (more than 76 percent of total Ecuadorian imports of wheat). According to buyers, although hard Canadian wheat is still considered more reliable for milling and baking, U.S. wheat is an option if the price is right. Ecuadorian bakers are not highly technical and rely on high-protein wheat to produce bread with consistent quality without changing bread recipes. Thus, Canada is highly regarded by Ecuadorian bakers, and subsequently millers, because of its reputation to ship wheat with higher protein and gluten at competitive prices through the Canadian Wheat Board.

Ecuador’s wheat imports are expected to remain at 545,000 MT in MY 2012/13. Argentina is expected to be the main wheat supplier for MY2012/13. Peru increased exports of pasta products from 4,530 MT in 2010 to 6,190 MT in 2011. Canada and the United States were the largest two sources of imports in 2011.



**Policy:**

In order to address a balance of payments problem, the GOE has engaged in a process to substitute wheat imports with local production while at the same time addressing rural development issues in Ecuador’s highlands. In October, 2009 at a major summit gathering producers, government authorities, and millers, an agreement was reached to guarantee a minimum price for one ton of wheat equivalent to \$400. In 2011, the price per ton of domestically produced wheat was set at \$450. The policy aims at encouraging small farmers in the provinces of Bolivar, Chimborazo, Carchi, Imbabura and Pichincha to start growing wheat. Ecuador spent \$220.8 million on wheat imports in 2011. Each year in November, a consultative committee is expected to determine changes in the minimum price of wheat. Millers are

required to buy domestic production in amounts relative to their imports, a process similar to the management of soybean meal imports. The GOE intends to increase the harvested area to 50,000 ha in the next few years. INIAP and other research institutions have stated their interest in expanding wheat production to the warmer and flatter lands of the Ecuadorian Coast. Pilot research projects including seed development and best agricultural practices are underway.

Wheat is a marker product under the Andean Price Band System (APBS), with a basic duty of 10 percent plus an additional variable levy, depending on international reference prices. In July of 2001, the GOE phased-out wheat from the price band system as part of its WTO commitments. However, Ecuador and other Andean countries included wheat in the price band in August of 2003 arguing an obligation to do so by Andean Community commitments. For the last year, the variable levy remained zero because of high world prices, thus most final APBS tariffs on wheat were 0 percent for most of 2011. The APBS was activated only once in 2011 for a small amount of wheat imported. The Andean Community set floor and ceiling prices of wheat currently \$249 and \$319 per MT

Ecuador has bilateral trade agreements with Peru and Chile, and regional trade agreements with the Latin American Association of Integration (ALADI). In 2004, Ecuador reached a tariff liberalization agreement with MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay). Implementation of these agreements in Ecuador started in April 2005. Wheat has special treatment under MERCOSUR, thus tariff preferences are granted over the total duty, which is comprised of the ad-valorem (basic) duty plus the Andean Price Band variable levy. In 2007, trade partners agreed to the following tariff reductions:

HTS	Product	Paraguay/4	Uruguay/2	Argentina/3	Brazil/3	Mexico/1	U.S. and Canada
10011090	Wheat, durum	42%	99%	15%	15%	8%	0%
10019020	Wheat, other	42%	99%	15%	15%	8%	0%

/1 under ALADI  
 /2 Uruguay will have reached zero tariffs on wheat by January 1, 2009  
 /3 Argentina and Brazil will have reached zero tariffs on wheat by January 1, 2018  
 /4 Paraguay will have reached zero tariffs on wheat by January 1, 2015

**Production, Supply and Demand Data Statistics:**

Wheat Ecuador	2010/2011		2011/2012		2012/2013	
	Market Year Begin: Jul 2010		Market Year Begin: May 2011		Market Year Begin: Jul 2012	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Harvested	11	11	8	11		11
Beginning Stocks	114	114	133	21		4
Production	8	8	6	8		8

<b>MY Imports</b>	571	509	550	545		545
<b>TY Imports</b>	571	542	550	545		545
<b>TY Imp. from U.S.</b>	127	102	0	95		130
<b>Total Supply</b>	693	631	689	574		557
<b>MY Exports</b>	0	0	2	0		0
<b>TY Exports</b>	0	0	2	0		0
<b>Feed and Residual</b>	60	60	65	65		70
<b>FSI Consumption</b>	500	550	510	505		480
<b>Total Consumption</b>	560	610	575	570		550
<b>Ending Stocks</b>	133	21	112	4		7
<b>Total Distribution</b>	693	631	689	574		557
1000 HA, 1000 MT, MT/HA						

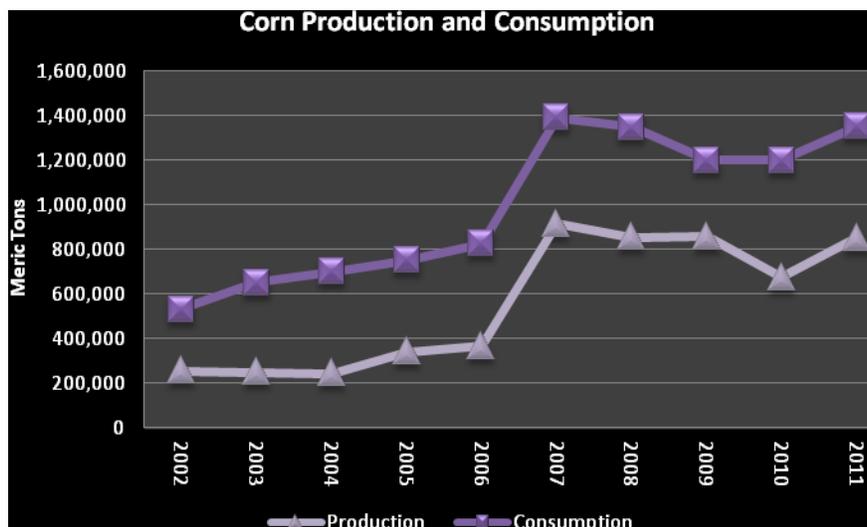
**Commodities:**

Corn

**Production:**

Since 1995, corn production has been very unstable with a record high of 913,000 MT in 2007 followed by fluctuations in production levels. For MY 2011, production is expected to be around 850,000 MT. High international prices have encouraged farmers to increase production while the GOE sets prices at lower levels than international prices which discourage producers from increasing planted area. In addition, practices such as requiring purchase of local production before importing and guaranteeing prices at least equal to the corn CIF import cost are likely to continue to be enforced by the current GOE. These different signals create confusion in the market and uncertainty prevents expansion or reduction in the area planted.

Post estimates that corn production will remain stable through MY 2012/13. Yields will remain low with an average of less than 3 MT per hectare. This is because the winter planting and harvest season (80 percent of the annual production) is highly dependent upon rainfall from November through January. At the beginning of the last planting season in MY 2011/12, production areas in the coastal region benefited from good weather conditions. Large cultivated areas are often lost to droughts or floods in the lower altitude production areas. Another factor limiting corn production is the lack of irrigation systems and very limited access to credit.



### Consumption:

Corn consumption depends on local demand for animal feed, basically by poultry growers and on the availability of lower-priced corn substitutes. The strong annual growth in poultry consumption has continued in the last three years: 2010, 424,000 MT; 2011, 444,000 MT and 2012 forecast at 450,000 MT. Chicken meat consumption has increased by about 5 percent a year. Per capita consumption of chicken remains at 32 Kg (about 70.5 lb). The poultry industry, with a total population of 221 million birds in 2011, is expected to increase to 228 million in 2012 (8 million egg laying chickens, 220 million broilers), and continue to experience an annual sales growth rate of 5-10 percent. The industry consumes 75-80 percent of feed corn every year. Total egg production was estimated at 2.279 billion in 2010, 1.9 billion in 2011 and projected to decrease to 1.8 billion in 2012. Egg production has been decreasing in

response to lower informal exports from Ecuador's northern border with Colombia, triggered by more competitive egg production in Colombia.

Ecuador's corn consumption increased by about 12.5 percent in MY 2011/12, and it is expected to increase by at least 5,000 MT in MY 2012/13. Overall, feed meal production has significantly grown in the past 15 years, from 576,000 MT in 1995 to 2.1 million MT in 2010 and 2.25 million MT in 2011. About 70 percent of feed is destined to poultry production, 20 percent to pork production, and 10 percent to the aquaculture industry. Annual pork production is estimated at 130,000 MT of meat.

Higher international prices of corn will likely be offset and have a negligible impact on imports due to slightly higher average incomes in the Ecuadorian population.

**Trade:**

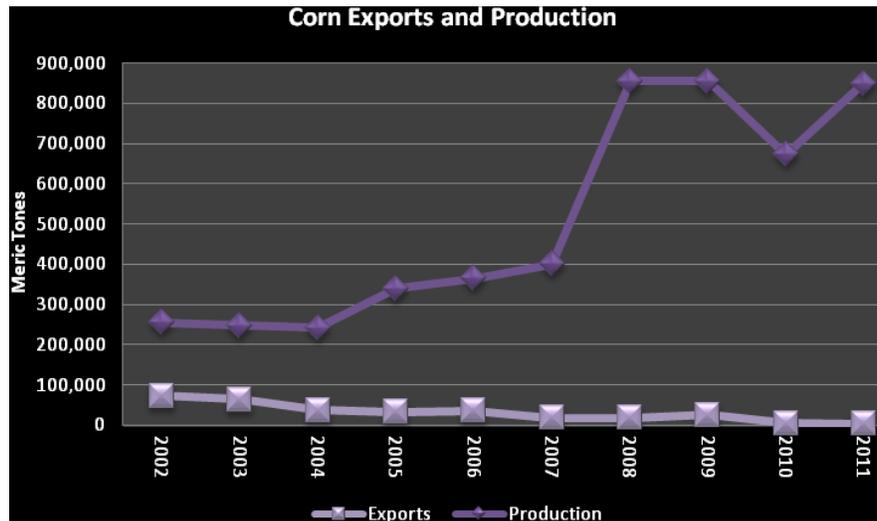
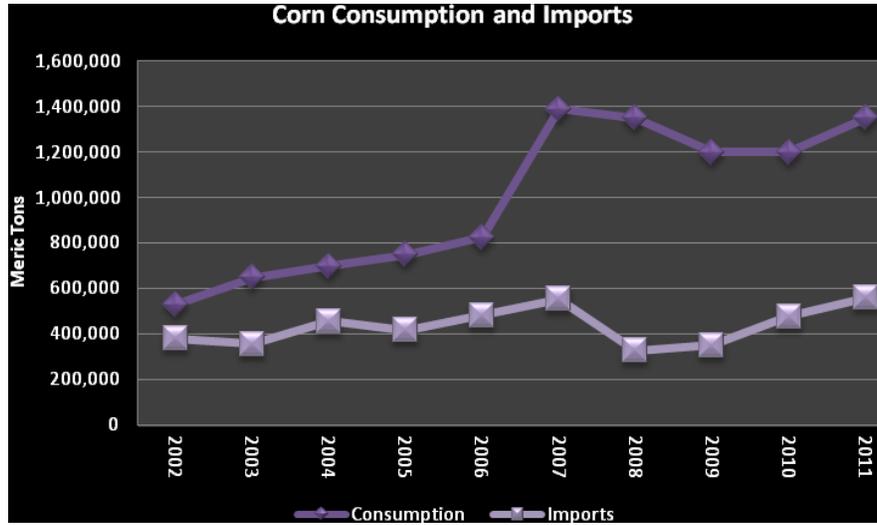
In MY 2010/11, total corn imports are estimated at 479,000 MT. Corn imports continued to outnumber corn exports and U.S. market share was about 38 percent in MY 2010/11. It is expected that in MY 2011/12 the U.S. market share will increase. It is not clear if importers will prefer Argentinean corn over U.S. corn in MY 2012/2013.

Ecuador's feed industry traditionally prefers U.S. corn to others because of its lower foreign material content, faster delivery to Ecuadorian ports and lower transportation costs. However, because U.S. prices of corn are currently high, importers might prefer Argentinean corn if the price is competitive. Imports for MY 2011/12 are estimated to reach 560,000 MT and remain stable through the next year.

Corn imports still represent a significant percentage of Ecuador's total consumption. From 2001-2011, Ecuador imported, on average, more than 50 percent of its corn, a minimum of 150,000 MT and a maximum of 552,500 MT.

Post projects that corn imports will increase to above 550,000 MT in MY 2011/12 due to a larger amount of import authorizations granted at the end of 2011.

Ecuador exports corn to Colombia in order to satisfy that country's southern border demand of corn: yellow, white and other local varieties for human consumption and increasingly for animal consumption. Most exports are made by land, in trucks, and at high prices usually paid to farmers in cash. Exports usually take place during the peak of the winter harvest season (May-June). Ecuadorian corn is used in Colombia to make "arepas" due to Colombian consumer's preferences for a particular type of corn native to the Andean region. Ecuador exported about 5,000 MT of corn to Colombia in MY 2010/2011. Exports of corn to other markets are largely targeted to Ecuadorian migrants living in Spain, Italy and the United States.



**Policy:**

Corn imports are assessed a 15 percent ad-valorem duty (over CIF), plus a variable levy applied under the APBS. The Andean Community set floor and ceiling prices of corn are currently \$194 and \$236 per MT. The variable levy for corn currently remains at -15 percent, thus import duties for corn are zero. Upon accession to the WTO, Ecuador bound its tariffs (including the additional APBS levy) for corn at 45 percent. In addition, Ecuador maintains a worldwide TRQ of 19,600 MT of corn at a set tariff of 25 percent. This TRQ is filled when international corn prices drop and the APBS increases corn duties beyond 25 percent (15 percent ad-valorem + a variable levy over 10 percent).

The GOE does not provide any formal subsidy or economic assistance program to promote yellow corn production. However, the Ministry of Agriculture aggressively encourages production by implementing mandatory purchases of all domestic production by corn importers and banning imports during the domestic corn harvest season. If domestic production is not sufficient, importers will likely import from

the United States due to the proximity of the market. The GOE also sets a minimum price in accordance with feed producers and animal processing plants. Domestic producers are usually paid lower than international prices, in part due to pressure from industry groups and also due to lower production costs in Ecuador. These GOE's interventions seek to guarantee the complete purchase of local production at higher prices. In addition, Ecuadorian corn producers have effectively lobbied the GOE to stop imports of sorghum for many years despite efforts by the feed industry to import it. Ecuadorian producers claim that sorghum imports would significantly reduce demand of domestically-produced and imported corn.

Under the CAN-MERCOSUR trade talks, Ecuador has negotiated bilateral tariff reductions with Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. These tariff reductions apply only to the ad-valorem duties as the Andean Price Band System is maintained for corn. The Ecuador-MERCOSUR agreement entered into effect in Ecuador on April 1, 2005 and has liberalization schedules of 14 years for most cereals, including corn, as follows:

Country of Origin	First Liberalization	Full Liberalization
Argentina	3 year grace period 2005-2008, 10% reduction starting in January 2008.	In 2018, 100% liberalization
Brazil	In 2008: 10% reduction. 15% in 2009.	5% yearly reduction from 2009 to 100% in 2018.
Paraguay	In 2007, 40% reduction until 2012.	In 2018, 100% liberalization
Uruguay	In 2007, 50% reduction until 2013.	100% reduction in 2018.

### Production, Supply and Demand Data Statistics:

Corn Ecuador	2010/2011		2011/2012		2012/2013	
	Market Year Begin: May 2010		Market Year Begin: May 2011		Market Year Begin: May 2012	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Harvested	300	255	385	308		310
Beginning Stocks	122	122	217	69		125
Production	950	673	1,155	850		900
MY Imports	500	479	300	560		500
TY Imports	650	478	300	536		550
TY Imp. from U.S.	214	182	0	220		250
Total Supply	1,572	1,274	1,672	1,479		1,525
MY Exports	5	5	15	4		5
TY Exports	10	5	15	4		5
Feed and Residual	1,300	1,150	1,350	1,300		1,300
FSI Consumption	50	50	50	50		55
Total Consumption	1,350	1,200	1,400	1,350		1,355
Ending Stocks	217	69	257	125		165
Total Distribution	1,572	1,274	1,672	1,479		1,525

1000 HA, 1000 MT, MT/HA

\* 2011, expressed as "MY 2011/12" is May 2011 to April 2012.

TY 2011, expressed as "TY 2010/11" is October 2010 to September 2011.

### Commodities:

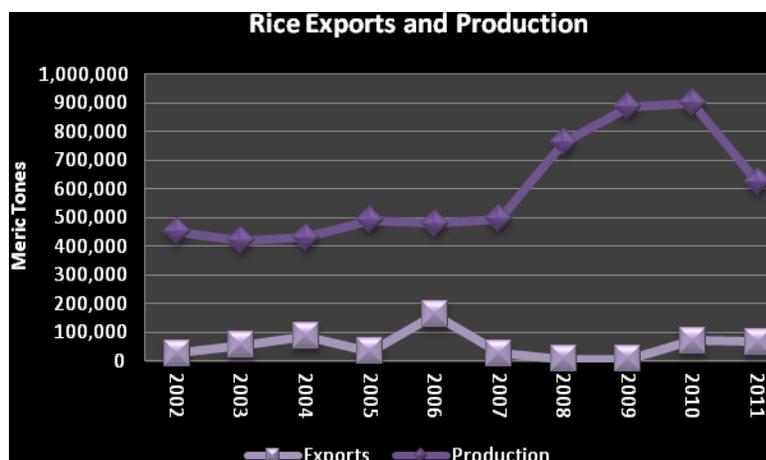
Rice, Milled

### Production:

Milled rice production is expected to be 624,000 MT in MY 2011/12 but is forecast to increase to 780,000 MT in MY 2012/2013. Low prices in MY 2010/2011 discouraged farmers to plant rice.

The availability of new rice varieties that allow for 2.5 harvests per year in areas under irrigation, high international prices, government subsidized inputs, and sustained demand for Ecuadorian rice by the GOE, have kept rice production at high levels in recent years. As of February 2012, new plantings have started and recent heavy rains have affected only about 40,000 ha of rice growing areas. Low prices of urea have also provided an incentive to producers to plant. The planting season started normally this year and Ecuador is expected to have a first harvest in late April.

Rice production takes place in the lowlands of the coastal region, on areas that flood during the rainy season (November through April) and remain humid during the summer (May-September). Therefore, lack of or excessive rainfall is a determining factor for the volume of production. The largest harvest registers at the end of the rainy season (May through June). During the summer only a third of the available area is planted because irrigation is expensive and limited to large farms and specific areas. The majority (75 percent) of rice producers in Ecuador are poor, small farmers that own and plant less than 5 hectares with yields below 2.2 MT per hectare.



### Consumption:

Rice is a staple food for Ecuadorians and the majority of Ecuador's production is consumed locally. Total consumption is expected to reach 700,000 MT in MY 2011/12, in response to high prices and market distortions driven by mismanagement at Ecuador's grains warehousing agency. It is believed that tens of thousands of paddy rice have been lost. Ecuador's per capita consumption ranges between at 5.0 and 5.5 kg per month. As with wheat and other sources of carbohydrates, consumption seems to be decreasing slightly among the Ecuadorian population due to dietary considerations.

Rice sales are traditionally marketed through wholesalers in one hundred pound sacks (45 kg) or through small stores by the pound. Prices vary depending on the marketing channel. For example, the official wholesale price of the 100-pound sack is \$28, while sales by the pound can make the price grow to \$45 per sack. Approximately 80 percent of rice sales are made in sacks or by the pound. In addition, as a result of supermarket expansion in the main cities of Ecuador, purchasing habits have shifted

towards buying branded bags of 2 or 5 kg. It is estimated that 15 to 20 percent of total rice sales are now made through supermarkets under these presentations. Locally produced parboiled rice was available in supermarkets in 2009, reflecting a shift in consumer preference toward ready-to-eat food products. Ecuador is also experiencing an increase in the range of rice varieties available for purchasing. They include basmati rice, wild rice, risotto, and sushi rice. Imported amounts are still very limited.

**Trade:**

Ecuador has imported minimal quantities of paddy rice in the last ten years, with the exception of 1998 when weather-related losses caused imports to grow to 140,000 MT. If Ecuador’s production capacity were to continue at its current pace, it is unlikely that Ecuador would need to import rice in the future. However, there remains a small niche market that for specialty rice varieties such as basmati, sushi-type rice, risotto, wild rice, and parboiled rice.

Ecuador has typically exported rice surpluses to neighboring Colombia. Milled rice exports to Colombia experienced a sharp decline in recent years. In TY 2009/2010 exports of rice to Colombia were nil. Exports reassumed in TY 2010/2011 reaching 23,000 MT. In the same year, Ecuador exported 36,500 MT to Venezuela.

**Policy:**

Rice imports are a very sensitive issue in Ecuador. The GOE is pushing a self-sufficiency program for rice by continuing to implement the APBS and by controlling imports and exports. APBS set floor and ceiling prices of rice are currently \$441 and \$600 per MT. Imports of rice can be levied up to a 68 percent ad-valorem tariff. The GOE through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries is the only authorized issuer of export permits. It also acts as authorized exporter of existing reserves.

The GOE’s position from a food security perspective is to have a permanent emergency stock of 80,000 MT. Post has been informed that there are only about 40,000 MT in stock and it is not clear if this product can still be used for human consumption. After a period of two years when there was a ban on Ecuadorian exports of rice to Colombia, trade with Colombia was reopened in 2011.

Ecuador’s new Food Sovereignty Law has been approved by Ecuador’s Congress. The Law prohibits any exports of food products unless there are surpluses. In the best harvesting scenario, Ecuador could end with a 150,000 MT surplus available for exporting in any given year.

In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture’s Consultative Committee on rice which consists of producers, millers and government officials, decides on the timing and quantity of rice imports. The ad-valorem duty for paddy rice is set at 20 percent and is up to 67.5 percent for all other types of rice. Members of the Andean Community are assessed zero tariffs and are not assessed the Andean Price Band. However, a ministerial decree is necessary before an import can be authorized. Other Latin American countries have been granted ad-valorem tariff preferences under Latin American Integration Association, but they still are assessed the Andean Price Band, as follows:

HTS	Description	U.S. & World	CAN	Peru	Chile	ALADI *
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						Paraguay	Uruguay	Argentina	Brasil	Mexico
10061090	Rice, Paddy	20%	Zero	Zero	15%	15%	7.5%	15%	15%	15%
10062000	Rice, Brown	68%	Zero	Zero	20%	20%	10%	20%	20%	20%
10063000	Rice, Milled	68%	Zero	Zero	20%	12%	10%	20%	20%	20%
10064000	Rice, Broken	25%	Zero	Zero	20%	20%	10%	20%	20%	20%

\* ALADI stands for Latin American Integration Association.

**Note:** Although Peru is part of CAN, Ecuador has a bilateral agreement with that nation, which includes preferences on rice. Chile has also negotiated a bilateral trade agreement with Ecuador.

### Production, Supply and Demand Data Statistics:

Rice, Milled Ecuador	2010/2011		2011/2012		2012/2013	
	Market Year Begin: Apr 2010		Market Year Begin: Apr 2011		Market Year Begin: Apr 2012	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Harvested	380	380	350	360		365
Beginning Stocks	154	154	134	134		3
Milled Production	900	900	706	624		780
Rough Production	1,429	1,429	1,121	990		1,238
Milling Rate (.9999)	6,300	6,300	6,300	6,300		6,300
MY Imports	5	5	35	0		0
TY Imports	10	10	20	0		0
TY Imp. from U.S.	0	0	0	0		0
Total Supply	1,059	1,059	875	758		783
MY Exports	75	75	10	55		25
TY Exports	70	70	15	65		25
Consumption and Residual	850	850	770	700		750
Ending Stocks	134	134	95	3		8
Total Distribution	1,059	1,059	875	758		783

1000 HA, 1000 MT, MT/HA

\* MY 2011/12 is April 2011 to February 2012.

TY 2010/11 is January 2011 to December 2011