



GLEWS Country Brief

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Reference Date: 02-June 2025

FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Wheat production forecast at above-average level in 2025 driven by government support**
- **Cereal imports estimated below average in 2024/25**
- **Food price inflation increased slightly in 2025**

Wheat production forecast at above-average level in 2025 driven by government support

The wheat harvest started in end-April 2025 and was completed by May. Wheat was planted between mid-November and mid-December 2024, mainly irrigated, heavily relying on groundwater and largely produced in Al Jawf, Al Qasim and Tabuk provinces. In 2025, wheat production is forecast to more than double the five-year average, as the government supported small farmers to cultivate wheat through a quota system that allows them to sell at encouraging, guaranteed government-set purchase prices. Furthermore, the government plans to completely phase out *alfalfa* production by the 2027/28 season and it encouraged farmers to shift from *alfalfa* to wheat cultivation. In May 2025, the Saudi National Grain Supply Company (SABIL) began procuring domestic wheat from various regions, including Al Qassim, Hail and Al Jawf. It is noteworthy that the country's storage capacity exceeds 2.7 million tonnes, more than half of its annual wheat consumption, maintaining strategic grain stocks to ensure food security.

Cereal imports estimated below average in 2024/25

Cereal import requirements for the 2024/25 marketing year (July/June) are estimated at 12.5 million tonnes, about 10 percent below the average, largely driven by low barley imports, which are estimated at 3 million tonnes, about less than 40 percent below the average, reflecting a growing preference for domestically produced barley feed which is more cost-effective than imported alternatives.

Wheat import requirements are estimated at 3.5 million tonnes, about 6 percent below the average, mainly due to high ending stocks from the 2024 harvest.

Maize imports are estimated at 4.5 million tonnes, about 16 percent above the average, mainly driven by the expansion of the local poultry sector. Rice import requirements are projected at a near-average level of 1.5 million tonnes, but about 20 percent

Saudi Arabia

Crop Calendar

(*major foodcrop)



Saudi Arabia

Cereal Production

| | 2020-2024 average | 2024 | 2025 forecast | change 2025/2024 |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------|
| | 000 tonnes | | | percent |
| Wheat | 920 | 1 320 | 1 600 | 21.2 |
| Sorghum | 135 | 160 | 170 | 6.3 |
| Maize | 66 | 65 | 67 | 3.1 |
| Others | 44 | 36 | 31 | -13.9 |
| Total | 1 165 | 1 581 | 1 868 | 18.2 |

Note: Percentage change calculated from unrounded data.

below the record-high imports of the previous year, which ensured adequate stock volumes.

Food price inflation increased slightly in 2025

In April 2025, the average food inflation rate was about 2 percent higher than the same month in 2024. Prices of vegetables increased by 9 percent, while the national average price of Indian *Basmati* rice decreased by about 4 percent, following the downward trend of export prices from India, the country's main rice supplier.

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This brief was prepared using the following data/tools:

FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheet (CCBS)

<https://www.fao.org/giews/data-tools/en/>

FAO/GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA) Tool

<https://fpma.fao.org/>

FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation for Crop Monitoring

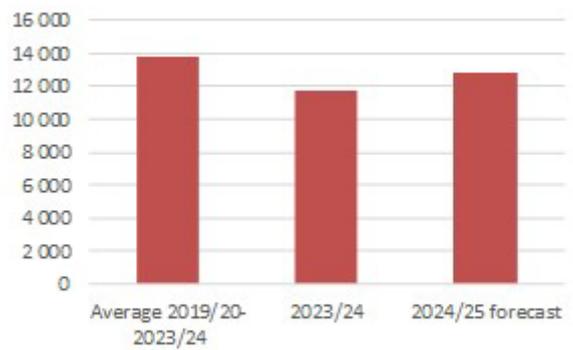
<https://www.fao.org/giews/earthobservation/>

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) <https://www.ipcinfo.org/>

Saudi Arabia

Cereals Imports

000 tonnes



Notes: Includes rice in milled terms. Split years refer to individual crop marketing years (for rice, calendar year of second year shown).

Saudi Arabia

Retail prices of rice prices

Saudi Arabian riyal per kg

