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Korea, Democratic Peoples Rep

Grain and Feed

2008 Grain Production Estimates

2009

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Report Highlights:

South Korea's Rural Development Administration (RDA) recently released its 2008 (Jan-Dec) grain production estimates for North Korea. RDA estimates grain production at 3.6 million metric tons, up nearly 8 percent over the 2007 harvest in large part due to favorable weather conditions. 2008 production was constrained by fertilizer availability.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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The South Korean Rural Development Administration recently released its 2008 (Jan-Dec) grain and staple food production estimate for North Korea. Production in 2008 increased over the previous year.

RDA estimates the combined grain and staple food production for 2008 at 4.3 million MT, up 300,000 MT (+7.5%) from 2007 production levels. The increase in production is mainly attributed to drier weather conditions during the final months of the growing season, which are typically disrupted with damaging typhoons. The increase in production, however, would likely have been larger if sufficient supplies of fertilizer had been available.

2008 grain production alone is estimated at 3.6 million MT, which is still slightly below where it was before the disastrous 2007 floods. Rice production is up 330,000 metric tons to 1.9 million MT. Corn production, which is more dependent on fertilizer, slipped 50,000 MT to 1.5 million MT. Barley and minor grain production also fell, leveling off at 240,000 MT.

Meanwhile, the World Food Program (WFP) recently released estimates for DPRK grain production at 2.8 million metric tons for MY08/09 (Nov-Oct).¹ The WFP grain production estimate is roughly 700,000 metric tons lower than the RDA forecast. This disparity is partially attributed to different milling rate calculations for rice. The WFP milling rate is 65% and the RDA rate is 74% - the same rate used in South Korea. However, even after adjusting for these differences, the WFP rice production estimate is still well below the RDA figure.

North Korea: Grain/Staple Food Production (1,000 MT)							
Calendar Year	Grand Total	Soybeans	Potatoes ¹	Grains			
				Total	Rice ²	Corn	Others ³
2004	4,310	130	450	3,730	1,800	1,670	260
2005	4,540	170	470	3,900	2,020	1,630	250
2006	4,480	160	450	3,870	1,890	1,750	230
2007	4,005	152	474	3,378	1,527	1,587	264
2008	4,310	160	510	3,640	1,860	1,540	240
WFP	3,630	114	675	2,841	1,077 (65%) 1,226 (74%)	1,411	353

Source: Rural Development Administration

1/ Potatoes are measured on a 4:1 grain equivalent basis.

2/ Milled basis.

3/ Other grains such as wheat, barley, sorghum, and millet.

North Korea: Crop Areas (1,000 HA)							
Calendar Year	Rice	Corn	Wheat/ Barley	Other Grains	Bean	Potato	Total
2008	587	526	137	25	139	201	1,615

Source: Rural Development Administration (RDA)

¹ WFP Press Release, "8.7 Million North Koreans Need Food Assistance," December 8, 2008

<http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=3012>

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp193548.pdf>

