



Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Voluntary Report -
public distribution

Date: 2/21/2000

GAIN Report #AR0013

Argentina

Grain and Feed

Rice Production Update

2000

Approved by:

U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:
Randall J. Hager

Report Highlights:

The upcoming rice harvest in Argentina will be significantly lower than that for the previous year, due to smaller area and poor growing conditions.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Buenos Aires [AR1], AR

Rice Situation Update

During field travel through the principle rice growing province of Entre Rios, updated information was obtained on the current status of the crop and the factors that may lead to a notable decrease in production year to year. Among those factors is the lack of sufficient, timely applications of water for which profitable rice production is dependent. Auxiliary factors include low output prices and their negative effect on planting intentions, and high production costs inherent in that crop's cultivation.

For the current production year, almost all of the preliminary cultivation work was done in dry soils, and the little rain that did fall only served to later put a hard cap on the soil surface, restricting plant emergence and development. Although seeding did start at the optimal time, germination was poor and farmers in some cases had to irrigate before planting to get sufficient moisture for early development. Further, the farmers were not able to adequately flood the fields for weed control as the season progressed, further damaging potential yield.

In Entre Rios province, the main producing area, planted area fell, mostly due to the sharp decline in market prices, but with some additional decline due to inability to plant resulting from poor soil moisture levels. Continued drought (some areas of Entre Rios did not receive rainfall for six months) could lead to greater abandonment of planted land.

The decline planted area was more pronounced in the southern part of Entre Rios, as the farmers reacted to low rice prices by shifting to the alternative crops that can be produced there. Farmers in the norther parts of the province have fewer options, and therefore continued to plant rice in spite of the expected difficulties.