



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 4/22/2005

GAIN Report Number: LO5003

Slovakia

Grain and Feed

Grain Update--Spring Planting Targets

2005

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Report Highlights:

Sowing area for spring barley in 2005 is set at 208,000 hectares. Sowing area for spring wheat is expected at 11,300 hectares, representing an increase of 300 ha from 2004. Oat production in Slovakia has been on the rise since 2000 and is expected to continue with 25,000 hectares sown in 2005. Sowing area for corn is expected to increase with plantings at 150,000 hectares in 2005. The Ministry of Agriculture recommends a minimum sowing area of 15,000 hectares for peas. Peas are an important feed crop in Slovakia.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Vienna [AU1]
[LO]

The Slovak Ministry of Agriculture makes recommendations for sowing areas twice a year. The targets are provided to Slovak farmers and are based on the current situation and expected developments in the grain and oilseeds markets. The recommended sowing areas are vetted with major consumers/buyers/processors and reflect the size of the current sown areas. Farmers consider the recommendations as important information for their decision-making. Actual sowing areas usually do not differ significantly from recommended areas.

No dramatic changes for grain sowing areas are expected this year. This means Slovakia is likely to have another grain surplus (mainly wheat) next marketing year.

Barley

During fall of 2004, 15,250 ha of winter barley was sowed. Winter barley production is expected to meet all feed barley demand.

Sowing area for spring barley in 2005 is set at 208,000 hectares. This recommendation reflects a slight decrease in malting barley consumption and compensates for a smaller winter barley area. An estimated 100,000 hectares of barley production is expected to go into malt production totaling 350,000 metric tons.

There is an upward trend for barley consumption in Slovakia. The higher consumption is due to growth in the total barley supply and a temporary drop in wheat production.

Barley exports are on the rise, and this trend is expected to continue. Sales of barley within Slovakia have become less profitable.

According to latest reports, barley sowing has been delayed due to unfavorable weather conditions. This might affect per hectare yield. However, a significant effect is not anticipated.

Wheat

The Ministry of Agriculture recommends 11,300 hectares for spring wheat sowing for 2005. This is an increase of 300 ha. In general, spring wheat has lower yields than winter wheat.

Winter wheat in Slovakia survived the winter without harm and according to the Slovak Research Institute for Plant Production winter wheat is in a good condition with fewer diseases. There is an expectation that Slovakia's wheat production might reach its peak again.

During the last years, Slovakia's hectare yield improved to 4.8 MT/ha and this is expected to level off.

Oats

Most of the oats production in Slovakia is used as feed (for horses). Oat sowing area in 2004 totaled 25,400 hectares. The recommended area for 2005 is 25,000 hectares, which amounts to 1.8 % of arable land.

Oat production in Slovakia has grown every year since 2000. This trend is expected to continue mainly due to gradually increasing hectare yield.

Estimates for oat exports are higher compared to last year due to the general upturn in the oat supply. Prices of oats in Slovakia are anticipated to decline because of higher production and yield.

Corn

Corn in Slovakia sells well. Therefore, sowing area is increasing. Last year the sowing area reached 146,900 hectares. For 2005, the MoA recommends 150,000 hectares for planting.

Corn yields rose significantly. This will have a positive impact on total corn production.

Peas

MoA suggests the minimum sowing area for peas should be 15,000 hectares. Peas are considered an important feed crop in Slovakia.

Table: Recommended Areas of Spring Crops for 2005

Crop	2003 Area (hectares)	% of Arable Land	2004 Area (hectares)	% of Arable Land	2005 Proposal	% of Arable Land
Spring Barley	249 098	18,00	204 805	15,02	208 000	15,00
Spring Wheat	16 138	1,17	11 008	0,81	11 300	0,80
Oats	30 533	2,21	25 396	1,86	25 000	1,80
Corn	150 139	10,85	146 955	10,78	150 000	10,80
<i>Spring Grain Crops</i>	<i>445 908</i>	<i>32,22</i>	<i>388 164</i>	<i>28,47</i>	<i>394 300</i>	<i>28,50</i>
<i>Winter Grain Crops</i>	<i>350 509</i>	<i>25,32</i>	<i>427 177</i>	<i>31,33</i>	<i>385 649</i>	<i>28,28</i>
Peas	4 878,00	0,35	6 012	0,44	15 000	1,10

Source: Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic, www.mpsr.sk