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## **Report Name:** Grain and Feed Annual

**Country:** Dominican Republic

**Post:** Santo Domingo

**Report Category:** Grain and Feed

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### **Report Highlights:**

Wheat consumption in the Dominican Republic (DR) during marketing year (MY) 2025/26 (July 2025/June 2026) is forecast to increase by two percent, reaching 520,000 metric tons (MT). Wheat imports are projected to reach 745,000 MT, driven by manufacturer international expansion plans and robust tourism growth. Meanwhile, as domestic corn production is expected to satisfy less than 5 percent of local consumption, corn imports for MY 2025/26 (October 2025/September 2026) are expected to climb to 1.67 million MT based on sustained strong demand from the poultry sector. The projection for milled rice production in MY 2025/26 (July 2025/June 2026) stands at 687,000 MT, up from the last MY. Conversely, rice imports are forecast down from the previous MY at 45,000 MT due to increased domestic production and new trade restrictions.

## 1. WHEAT

### 1.1. Statistics for Production, Supply, and Distribution Table

Wheat	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
Market Year Begins	Jul 2023		Jul 2024		Jul 2025	
Dominican Republic	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Harvested (1000 HA)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beginning Stocks (1000 MT)	295	295	374	374	0	435
Production (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
MY Imports (1000 MT)	739	739	650	740	0	745
TY Imports (1000 MT)	739	739	650	740	0	745
TY Imp. from U.S. (1000 MT)	392	392	0	0	0	0
Total Supply (1000 MT)	1034	1034	1024	1114	0	1180
MY Exports (1000 MT)	160	160	150	169	0	170
TY Exports (1000 MT)	160	160	150	169	0	170
Feed and Residual (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
FSI Consumption (1000 MT)	500	500	500	510	0	520
Total Consumption (1000 MT)	500	500	500	510	0	520
Ending Stocks (1000 MT)	374	374	374	435	0	490
Total Distribution (1000 MT)	1034	1034	1024	1114	0	1180
Yield (MT/HA)	0	0	0	0	0	0
(1000 HA), (1000 MT), (MT/HA)						
MY = Marketing Year, begins with the month listed at the top of each column						
TY = Trade Year, which for Wheat begins in July for all countries. TY 2025/2026 = July 2025 - June 2026						

### 1.2. Production

The Dominican Republic (DR) does not produce wheat, remaining entirely dependent on imports to supply the domestic market.

### 1.3. Consumption

The Dominican Republic maintains one of the highest per capita consumption rates for wheat and wheat products in Latin America and the Caribbean. For marketing year (MY) 2025/26 (July 2025/June 2026), Consumption is forecast up by 2 percent, reaching 520,000 MT driven by the need to sustain international tourism and expected per capita domestic growth.

In Calendar Year (CY) 2024, foreign tourism in the Dominican Republic reached a record 11 million visitors. For the CY 2025 outlook, the Ministry of Tourism has projected another record-breaking year, forecasting an increase to 12 million visitors. With sustained strong private-sector investment in the tourism industry, the Ministry expects international arrivals to continue setting new records in the coming years. Meanwhile, the Central Bank of the Dominican Republic (BCRD) has projected an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 5 percent for 2025, reflecting the country's steady economic expansion. In line with this growth, wheat pasta, for example grew by 8 percent in CY 2024, according to the BCRD, driven by rising demand and increased processing capacity.

The DR continues to benefit from a well-established milling industry, sourcing most of its wheat imports from the United States and Canada. The industry continues to expand its milling capacity with the construction of a new mill, ensuring a stable domestic flour supply. This project represents a total investment of US\$17.56 million and is expected to be completed within the next two years. Once operational, the new facility is expected to increase the country's milling capacity by 9 percent. Currently, the country has a total daily milling capacity of approximately 3,320 metric tons (MT), with an average utilization rate of 65-70 percent across six major mills.

**Figure 1.**

<b>MILLS CURRENTLY OPERATING IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC</b>	
Molinos Modernos*	Molinos del Cibao-Grupo Bocol
Grupo J. Rafael Núñez	COOPROHARINA
Molinos del Higuamo	César Iglesias

\* Also owns Molinos del Caribe.

The local government owns half of Molinos Modernos, the largest mill in the country. Together, both Molinos Modernos and Molinos Valle del Cibao process nearly 80 percent of all wheat imports. The main product is wheat flour, although several companies, such as Grupo Bocol, also produce crackers, cookies, and pasta. Additionally, wheat flour imports feed into a large domestic baked goods industry.

According to Euromonitor International, the total retail value of baked goods sold in the DR in CY 2024 is estimated at US\$353 million, a seven percent increase over CY 2023. The largest share of baked goods continues to be unpackaged, leavened bread, the retail value of this category rose by 7 percent during CY 2024. This category includes staple breads called “*pan de agua*” and “*pan sobao*,” which are consumed regularly by a broad spectrum of the population. Industrial bakers, along with small and medium-sized bakeries produce staple breads and subsequently distribute them to a variety of supermarkets, “mom-and-pop” stores (*colmados*), or other bakeries.

The Government of the Dominican Republic’s supplemental nutritional feeding programs, particularly the national school meals program, play a critical role in supporting food security and child nutrition. These programs distribute a variety of baked goods, including bread, cookies, and muffins, to public school students across the country.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Dominican Republic’s school meals program reported the distribution of over 908 million food rations to public school students. As part of its breakfast and snack offerings, the program provided approximately 622.5 million units of milk, bread, muffins and cookies, reinforcing its commitment to improving student nutrition and well-being.

While most of the flour production is destined for the domestic market, the DR also exports significant quantities of wheat flour and other finished products (e.g., crackers, pasta) to neighboring Haiti and the United States. Additionally, the DR has expanded its exports of wheat products to a lesser extent to Central America, Puerto Rico, and other Caribbean markets.

#### **1.4. Stocks**

For MY 2025/26, ending stocks are expected to reach 490,000 metric tons (MT). This stems from international wheat prices, millers’ ongoing expansion efforts, and government investments in the sector.

The Dominican Republic's wheat milling industry depends on reliable, short shipment times from the United States and Canada. However, storage capacity varies significantly among processors. The country's six operational mills collectively hold between 140,000 and 500,000 MT. According to Post

sources, storage capacity will expand in the next two years as millers implement measures to accommodate rising wheat demand. Several companies plan to increase milling capacity and expand storage infrastructure, with completion expected by 2027.

## 1.5. Trade

### Imports

For MY 2025/26, Post forecasts wheat and wheat product imports to reach 745,000 MT, above the last MY estimate. This increase reflects manufacturers' export plans, which require greater raw material for wheat product production. Additionally, the forecast aligns with anticipated population growth and expansion in the hotel, restaurant, and institutional (HRI) sector.

**Figure 2.**

#### **DOMINICAN REPUBLIC WHEAT IMPORTS BY PARTNER MY 2019-2024 (MT)**

Country	Years				
	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
United States	302,990	331,921	276,823	313,875	392,497
Canada	341,279	256,868	249,561	291,279	247,813
Argentina	-	-	53,990	77,259	71,400
Others	20,470	38,320	24,862	29,088	26,897
<b>Total*</b>	<b>664,739</b>	<b>627,109</b>	<b>605,236</b>	<b>711,501</b>	<b>738,607</b>

*\*In WGE*

*Source: Tabulation from GATS/USDA and Trade Data Monitor (TDM)*

In Figure 2, during MY 2023/24, the United States remained the top supplier for wheat imports to the Dominican Republic, accounting for 53 percent (\$118 million) of total imports. Canada supplied 34 percent (\$72 million), while Argentina contributed 10 percent.

Despite industry sources recognizing the superior quality of U.S. wheat, price remains the primary determining factor for Dominican importers. From July 2024 to January 2025, the Dominican Republic has sourced approximately 53 percent of its wheat from the United States (\$59 million), 34 percent from Canada (\$38 million), and 6 percent from Turkey (\$7 million). In a period-to-period comparison, the DR has imported 10 percent more wheat from July 2024 to January 2025 than during the previous year.

Currently, the majority of Dominican wheat imports are comprised of Hard Red Winter (HRW), Soft Red Winter (SRW) and Hard Red Spring (HRS).

### Exports

For MY 2025/26, total wheat and wheat product exports are forecast to increase by 1 percent at 170,000MT, as manufacturer expansion efforts and the pursuit of new export destinations continue to develop.

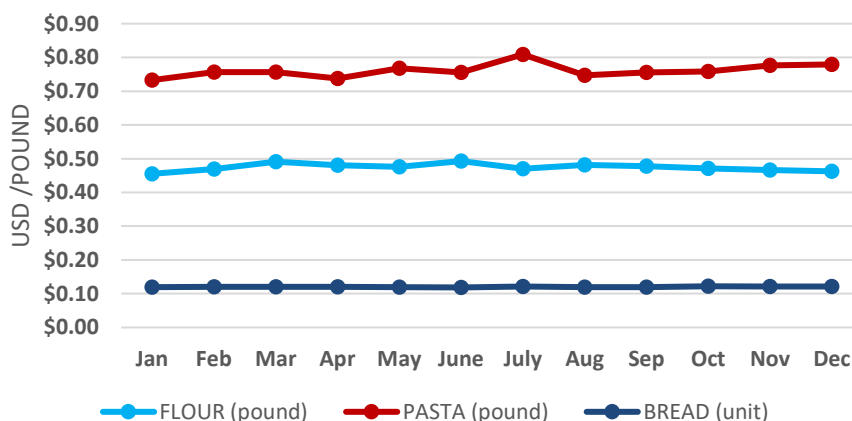
Trade with Haiti has remained steady throughout CY 2024. Ongoing instability has fueled demand for wheat-based products tailored specifically to the Haitian market, sustaining local consumption. Informal exports to Haiti are expected to continue.

In response to Haiti’s political and civil unrest, the DR has adjusted its export strategy. While Haiti remains the primary destination for Dominican wheat products, producers are actively exploring alternative markets. According to Dominican Customs, official exports to Haiti accounted for 98 percent of total wheat product exports in MY 2023/24, with wheat or meslin flour as the top-exported product. Potential new markets include Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other Caribbean nations.

### 1.6. Prices

Government subsidies have played a crucial role in stabilizing the price of locally produced wheat products in the domestic market throughout the year. According to the Ministry of Commerce, daily subsidies cover more than one million pounds of flour, lowering the wholesale price by 25 percent. As a result, in 2024, the price per pound of wheat flour has remained 30 percent lower than in calendar year 2023. In contrast, the average price of pasta per pound has risen slightly, reflecting a 7 percent increase.

**Graph 1. Prices of Wheat Products in DR in CY 2024**



Source: Tabulation from PROCONSUMIDOR

### 1.7. Policy

Within the Dominican Republic – Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), U.S. wheat to the Dominican market enjoys duty-free access. Additionally, as of January 1, 2020, the DR applies no duties on wheat flour, pasta products, or couscous. These products, however, are subject to a value-added tax (VAT<sup>1</sup>) of 18 percent, with the exception of products under HS code 1902.11 and 1902.19 as per article 49 of the [GoDR 2025 budget](#)<sup>2</sup>. Companies in the baking industry generate more than 20,000 formal direct jobs and more than 30,000 indirect jobs. The local government reported spending over DOP1.2 billion (US\$19.6 million) on subsidies to wheat flour processors for CY 2024.

<sup>1</sup> The DR’s value-added tax, or VAT, is known locally as the impuesto a la Transferencia de Bienes Industrializados y Servicios or ITBIS.

<sup>2</sup> <https://mepyd.gob.do/publicaciones/ley-80-24-de-presupuesto-general-del-estado-2025/>

## 2. CORN

### 2.1. Statistics for Production, Supply and Distribution Table

Corn	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
Market Year Begins	Oct 2023		Oct 2024		Oct 2025	
Dominican Republic	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
<b>Area Harvested</b> (1000 HA)	35	35	35	40	0	45
<b>Beginning Stocks</b> (1000 MT)	79	79	149	126	0	127
<b>Production</b> (1000 MT)	60	65	65	70	0	70
<b>MY Imports</b> (1000 MT)	1665	1667	1550	1670	0	1675
<b>TY Imports</b> (1000 MT)	1665	1667	1550	1670	0	1675
<b>TY Imp. from U.S.</b> (1000 MT)	254	256	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Supply</b> (1000 MT)	1804	1811	1764	1866	0	1872
<b>MY Exports</b> (1000 MT)	5	5	5	7	0	7
<b>TY Exports</b> (1000 MT)	5	5	5	7	0	7
<b>Feed and Residual</b> (1000 MT)	1550	1580	1550	1632	0	1637
<b>FSI Consumption</b> (1000 MT)	100	100	100	100	0	100
<b>Total Consumption</b> (1000 MT)	1650	1680	1650	1732	0	1737
<b>Ending Stocks</b> (1000 MT)	149	126	109	127	0	128
<b>Total Distribution</b> (1000 MT)	1804	1811	1764	1866	0	1872
<b>Yield</b> (MT/HA)	1.7143	1.8571	1.8571	1.75	0	1.5556
(1000 HA), (1000 MT), (MT/HA)						
MY = Marketing Year, begins with the month listed at the top of each column						
TY = Trade Year, which for Corn begins in October for all countries. TY 2025/2026 = October 2025 - September 2026						

### 2.2. Production

Corn production in the Dominican Republic satisfies less than 5 percent of total domestic consumption. For MY 2025/26 (October 2025–September 2026), production is forecast to increase to 70,000 MT.

Over the past few years, annual production, which is primarily cultivated in the southwest by approximately 8,000 small farmers, has averaged between 45,000 and 65,000 MT. In San Juan and Azua, the two mayor production cities in the region, drought conditions pose the greatest threat to production. Additionally, rising production costs—driven by labor shortages and higher prices for seeds, fertilizers, and other inputs—further strain the sector.

Recent government initiatives have gradually increased the land available for corn harvesting. The Government of the Dominican Republic (GoDR) has launched a program to allocate land in the northern region for corn production, aiming to supply poultry and swine producers. Farmers receive high-quality genetically improved seeds, along with technical assistance and free land preparation services. This initiative seeks to enhance domestic corn production and support the livestock sector.

According to Post sources, farmers continue adopting higher-yield corn seeds, though, the need for large land areas, limited water resources, and a lack of agricultural technology hinder large-scale corn

cultivation in the Dominican Republic. According to producers, these challenges make high-yield corn varieties for animal feed less profitable in the country.

### **2.3. Consumption**

For MY 2025/26, total corn consumption is projected to rise to 1.7 million metric tons (MT), driven by the poultry industry's continued expansion. In CY 2024, poultry production grew significantly, bolstered by an expanding HRI sector. Egg production increased by 8 percent, while the broiler chicken industry grew by 13 percent year-over-year; the industry is expected to continue expanding over the next two years.

According to post sources, several factors contribute to consumption expansion of corn, including economic stability and investor confidence, strong consumer preference for affordable protein, and a reduction in chicken imports due to high international prices. Government support for modernization and expansion initiatives, along with strengthened commercial relationships with retailers and supermarkets, has further bolstered the sector's development.

Yellow corn plays a crucial role in animal feed for the Dominican Republic's poultry, egg, and pork industries. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, total corn consumption is estimated at nearly 1.7 million MT, with only 4 percent produced domestically.

High-protein feed rations of corn and soybeans sustain more than 25 million broiler chickens, 15 million laying hens, 1 million pigs, and 2 million cattle. Trade sources indicate that broilers and layers consume nearly 70 percent of the total corn supply, while the swine industry accounts for approximately 15 percent. The food processing industry utilizes around 11 percent, and the dairy cattle sector consumes the remaining 5 percent.

Every year, the government and local producers set informal production quotas for chicken and egg production, setting minimum prices throughout the distribution chain. On a per capita basis, the DR consumes 83 pounds of chicken meat per year and approximately 30 pounds of pork.

After the temporary border closure with Haiti on September 14, 2023, egg producers successfully established connections with international markets, such as Cuba, Aruba, Guyana, Martinique, and Saint Martin; they have been able to sustain these export markets throughout 2024.

### **2.4. Stocks**

For MY 2025/26, stocks are forecast to increase to 128,000 MT in order to adjust to current demand. Storage facilities are limited and vary considerably among feed producers. The country's total storage capacity is estimated at 130,000 MT, with utilization rates ranging between 80 and 85 percent.

### **2.5. Trade**

For MY 2025/26, imports are forecast at 1.675 million MT. Strong domestic poultry demand, supported by growth in the HRI sector and poultry's competitive price compared to other animal proteins, continue to drive consumption. Additionally, rising egg exports are expected to further increase demand for poultry feed. As a result, poultry demand is expected to rise further, sustaining high corn import levels.

A small number of companies and producer groups purchase corn. The largest are the following: JUPROPE, Consejo, ASODEP, APROAMOLI, and Pollo Cibao. These groups buy nearly 80 percent of all imported corn.

The United States lost its dominance in the local corn market between 2008 - 2009, due to persistent complaints from local consumers concerning dust levels, grain cracking, mycotoxins, lack of yellow color, and milling yields. At the same time, South American suppliers, mainly from Brazil and Argentina, offered a more visibly attractive product with a more consistent quality.

In MY 2023/24, U.S. market share declined by 36.6 percent year-over-year, primarily due to price differentials making U.S.-sourced corn less competitive. Brazil remained the strongest U.S. competitor, supplying 78 percent of total Dominican imports.

During the same period, the United States accounted for 16 percent of the market, while Argentina expanded its presence, increasing its market share by 89 percent to reach 7 percent. From October 2023 to January 2024, Brazil continued to dominate the Dominican corn market, supplying over 78 percent of total imports.

**Figure 3.**

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC CORN GRAIN IMPORTS BY PARTNER  
MY 2019-2024 (MT)\***

Country	MY 19/20	MY 20/21	MY 21/22	MY 22/23	MY 23/24
Brazil	762,948	716,880	796,358	989,733	1,296,286
United States	487,537	467,655	493,242	337,718	256,441
Argentina	103,376	307,775	66,165	60,375	113,951
Others	56	271	5	4	15
<b>Reporting Total</b>	<b>1,353,917</b>	<b>1,492,581</b>	<b>1,355,770</b>	<b>1,387,830</b>	<b>1,666,693</b>

\*HS 1005

Source: Tabulation from GATS/USDA and Trade Data Monitor (TDM)

Official exports of corn from the Dominican Republic are limited. According to Dominican Customs (DGA), approximately 4.5MT of corn were exported during MY 2023/2024 with 94 percent destined for Puerto Rico and the remainder for Haiti. Post sources indicate that informal exports of cornmeal and grits to Haiti experienced a slight decline. Nevertheless, strong demand for the product still exists, despite logistical challenges.

Unused imported yellow corn destined for animal feed production is utilized to produce cornmeal and corn grits for both domestic consumption and exports. A number of Dominican companies export these products to Haiti (through both formal and informal channels) and other markets in the region.

Similarly, small amounts of corn-based animal feed products are exported to Cuba and other islands in the Caribbean.

**2.6. Prices**

Wholesale price reports from the Ministry of Agriculture show that corn prices surged in the first five months of CY 2024. However, the overall wholesale price for the year dropped by 5 percent compared to CY 2023. In the first two months of 2025, strong demand from the poultry industry and international commodity futures led to a 9 percent decrease in wholesale prices.



## 2.7. Policy

As corn –along with soybean meal –constitutes one of the primary inputs in feed formulations, it is exempt from import duties to reduce costs to producers. Additionally, corn imports are not subject to the 18 percent VAT.

As part of the DR’s commitments under the World Trade Organization (WTO), the country included corn among the agricultural products comprising the Technical Rectification (TR). Specifically, as part of its WTO commitments, the Government of the DR established an initial tariff-rate quota (TRQ) of 703,000 MT for corn that increased gradually to 1,091,000 MT by 2004. Although the DR has an out-of-bound tariff-rate of 40 percent, the tariff is not applied.

As per Decree 553-22, corn is in the Automatic License System for the adjudication of the quota, streamlining the import process for importers.

In August 2023, the Government of the DR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of Guyana. Under this agreement, the GoDR will lease land in Guyana to cultivate corn and soybeans. The primary aim is to enhance corn production for animal consumption, which would reduce costs for livestock and poultry producers. It is anticipated that the agreement will lead to an 18-percent increase in the planted area for corn, although a specific start date has not yet been provided.

At present, Dominican law requires every corn importer to purchase locally produced sorghum. Specifically, the National Corn and Sorghum Commission (CNMS) requires the purchase of five percent of national sorghum production in exchange for the importation of corn. According to officials at the Ministry of Agriculture, the 5-percent figure applies regardless of the amount of corn imported.

Additionally, it is worth noting that the DR does not currently restrict imports of genetically engineered commodities. For imports of corn used as propagation material, the DR has a requirement that the phytosanitary certificate accompanying the shipment state that such product “does not contain GMO material.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on Biotechnology products in the Dominican Republic, please review our latest [Biotechnology Annual Report](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Agricultural%20Biotechnology%20Annual_SantoDomingo_Dominican%20Republic_DR2024-0016).  
[https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Agricultural%20Biotechnology%20Annual\\_SantoDomingo\\_Dominican%20Republic\\_DR2024-0016](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=Agricultural%20Biotechnology%20Annual_SantoDomingo_Dominican%20Republic_DR2024-0016)

### 3. RICE

#### 3.1. Statistics for Production, Supply and Distribution Table

Rice, Milled	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
Market Year Begins	Jul 2023		Jul 2024		Jul 2025	
Dominican Republic	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
<b>Area Harvested</b> (1000 HA)	200	180	200	202	0	200
<b>Beginning Stocks</b> (1000 MT)	336	336	417	304	0	353
<b>Milled Production</b> (1000 MT)	680	577	680	684	0	687
<b>Rough Production</b> (1000 MT)	1015	861	1015	1021	0	1025
<b>Milling Rate (.9999)</b> (1000 MT)	6700	6700	6700	6700	0	6700
<b>MY Imports</b> (1000 MT)	106	106	150	95	0	45
<b>TY Imports</b> (1000 MT)	178	178	150	95	0	45
<b>TY Imp. from U.S.</b> (1000 MT)	57	57	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Supply</b> (1000 MT)	1122	1019	1247	1083	0	1085
<b>MY Exports</b> (1000 MT)	10	10	10	10	0	10
<b>TY Exports</b> (1000 MT)	10	10	10	10	0	10
<b>Consumption and Residual</b> (1000 MT)	695	705	730	720	0	730
<b>Ending Stocks</b> (1000 MT)	417	304	507	353	0	345
<b>Total Distribution</b> (1000 MT)	1122	1019	1247	1083	0	1085
<b>Yield (Rough)</b> (MT/HA)	5.075	4.7833	5.075	5.0545	0	5.125
(1000 HA), (1000 MT), (MT/HA)						
MY = Marketing Year, begins with the month listed at the top of each column						
TY = Trade Year, which for Rice, Milled begins in January for all countries. TY 2025/2026 = January 2026 - December 2026						

#### 3.2. Production

For MY 2025/26, "rough" rice production is forecast to reach 1,025 million metric tons (MMT), with milled production projected at 687,000 MT.

Increased optimizations in land preparation, the use of mechanization in targeted regions, as well as improving efficiency of tasks previously done manually, such as wall construction and field edging, have driven this growth. The integration of drones for herbicide application and sowing has further reduced costs and enhanced the precision of inputs distribution, though only a handful of large-scale producers use these technologies.

Harvested rice area is expected to remain stable at approximately 200,000 hectares (HA) in MY 2025/26 (July 2025–June 2026), consistent with the previous MY.

The Dominican government does not plan to expand rice production areas due to limited availability of suitable land. However, the mechanization program piloted in La Cruz de Manzanillo (Montecristi), located in the northwest region of the country, has yielded positive results, leading to its continuation, though no expansion details have been provided.

Although rice is grown across the entire country, six provinces account for 86 percent of production: Duarte, Montecristi, La Vega, Sanchez Ramirez, Maria Trinidad Sanchez and Valverde.

Rice is normally produced in two cycles during the year: 1) spring cycle where rice is planted between December-February and harvested between April-June; and 2) winter cycle where rice is planted between mid-April-July and is harvested between August-November.

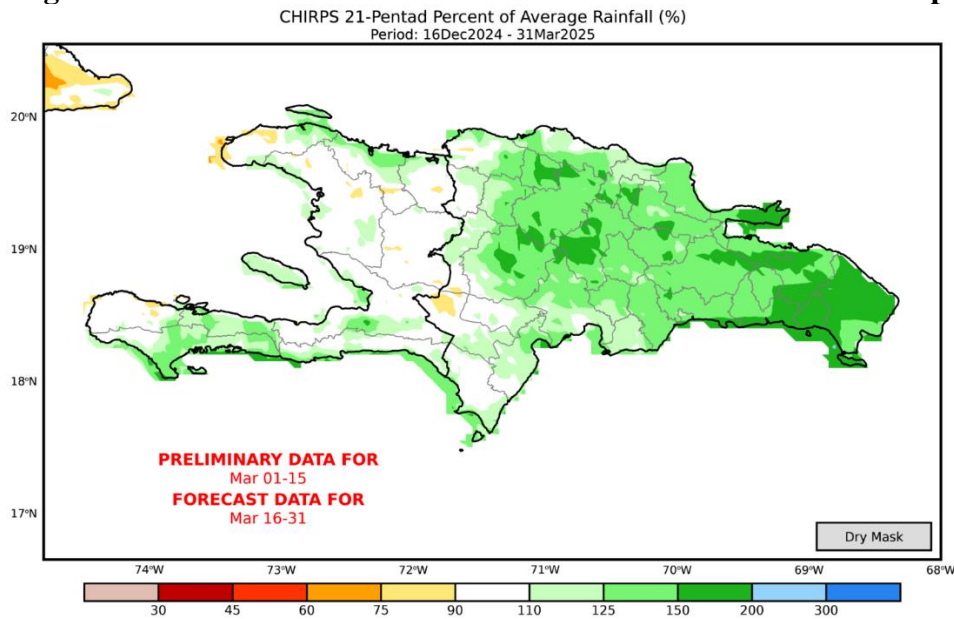
**Figure 1.**



Source: Bio-Arroz, National Rice Research Institute

Favorable weather conditions in major production areas (see Figure 2) support this forecast, as indicated by preliminary data from the Climate Hazard Center (CHC) and weather predictions. Additionally, reservoirs remain at capacity, which could mitigate potential adverse climate conditions during the spring planting season.

**Figure 2.**  
**Percent of Average Rainfall from December 2024 to March 2025 in Dominican Republic and Haiti**



Source: Climate Hazards Center (CHC) UC Santa Barbara

**Figure 3.**



Source: Bio-Arroz, National Rice Research Institute

Rice represents one of the most important agricultural products in the DR due to its political, economic, and social impact on Dominican society. It is also a key component of the typical Dominican diet.

Based on national estimates, the country has approximately 30,000 rice producers, with approximately 250,000 individuals engaged in the production, processing, and marketing. The sector contributes approximately 5 percent annually to the Agricultural Gross Domestic Product.

**Figure 4.**



Source: Bio-Arroz, National Rice Research Institute

Most rice is grown in the Cibao Valley Region, under irrigation provided by systems located in the river basins of Rio Yaque del Norte and Rio Yuna. According to Post sources, irrigated rice accounts for 99 percent of total area.

The average yield has varied between 4-5 MT/HA over the last ten years. Post sources expect yields to remain in this range in the coming years, due to lack of access to resources and newer production technologies.

### ***3.3. Consumption***

For MY 2025/26, local rice consumption is forecast to reach 730,000 MT, boosted by strong demand in the HRI sector and expected annual population growth. The HRI sector has seen a surge of tourists over the past year, marked by a record level 11 million visitors in CY 2024. The Ministry of Tourism projects a 9 percent increase in international visitors for CY 2025. There are no indications that the foreign tourism growth will cool over the next two years.

### ***3.4. Stocks***

Stocks are projected to reach 345,000 MT in MY 2025/26. Heavy rainfall in Duarte province, which post sources now state affected production last MY and increased informal trade in early 2024, lowered stock levels during CY 2024. To address this, the Government of the Dominican Republic (GoDR) authorized additional rice imports to replenish supplies. According to Post sources, stock levels have now returned to normal.



Private processors (i.e. mills) and the GoDR own storage facilities, leading to generally elevated stock levels due to the GoDR *Pignoración* Program<sup>4</sup>. According to Post sources, this program manages approximately 80 percent of stocks.

### **3.5. Trade**

For MY 2025/26, imports are forecast to reach 45,000 MT, down from the last MY due to expected expansion of local rice production and new restrictive trade policies established by the Dominican Republic to limit imports. For MY 2024/25, the import estimate was adjusted up to 95,000 MT. The trend of greater than usual imports allowed by the Dominican Government continued throughout most of the year. However, Post sources indicate that a portion of these imports were destined for the Haitian market, where rice was purchased at a premium. The expectation is that the pace of exports to Haiti will cool as importers find alternative, more reliable channels to receive and distribute product to operate uninterrupted as usual and trade between Haiti's exports partners continue.

Although both imports and exports by the DR are limited due to the country's claimed self-sufficiency in rice over the last several years, the Government opened access to rice imports during CY 2024 due to lower stocks. As a result, imports during MY 2023/2024 increased by 245 percent. Historically, most of the DR's rice imports come from the United States, due to a tariff-rate quota (TRQ) established under CAFTA DR. During MY 2023/24 the United States continued to lead the import market, capturing 60 percent, followed by Brazil with 14 percent and Guyana with 12 percent. Pakistan, Uruguay, Thailand, and Paraguay collectively accounted for approximately 14 percent.

Given that rice is classified under Basket V<sup>5</sup> of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), U.S. rice imports should no longer be subject to a tariff-rate quota and should face a 0 percent tariff starting in CY 2025. However, in December 2024 the Dominican Republic issued [Decree 693-24](#)<sup>6</sup>, which imposes restrictions on rice imports into the country.

Dominican rice is exported in limited quantities, mainly to Haiti in the form of broken rice. For MY 2025/26, Post sources indicate that informal exports to Haiti are estimated to decrease slightly year on year reaching 50,000 MT, as the food security crisis continues.

### **3.6. Prices**

Retail reports from the Ministry of Agriculture indicate a notable increase in premium rice prices in the local market during CY 2024. The average wholesale price of premium rice rose to US\$0.57 per pound, reflecting a 20-percent increase from CY 2023, while supermarket prices climbed to US\$0.67 per pound, up 15 percent from the previous year. In January and February 2025, the average wholesale and retail premium rice prices increased by 2 percent, with supermarket prices rising by an additional 5 percent.

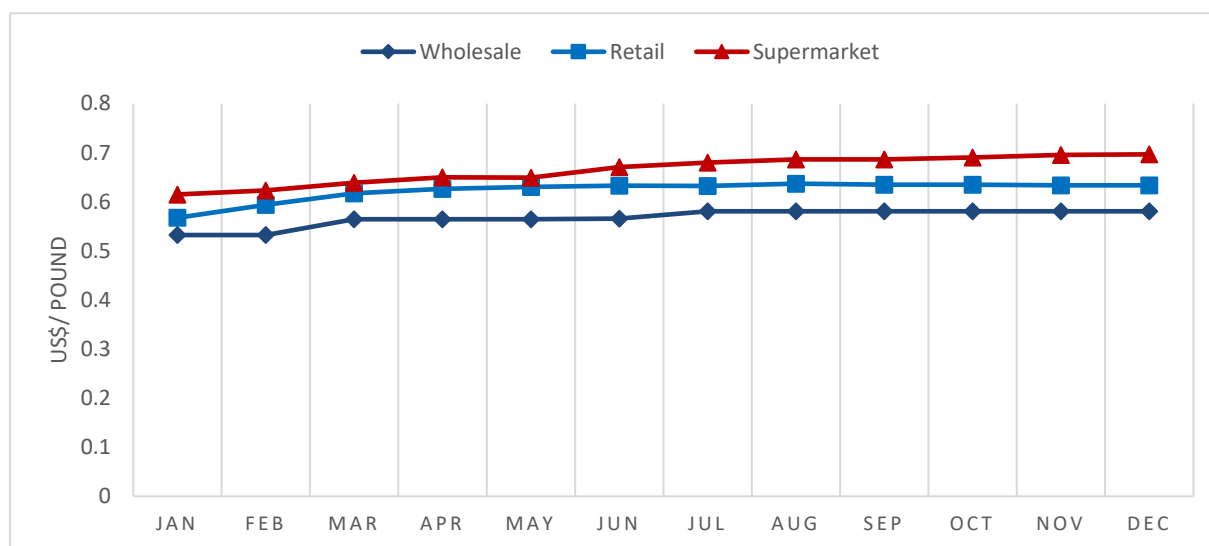
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<sup>4</sup> *Pignoración* Program provides financial assistance to farmers by offering loans secured by their rice harvests. The program aims to stabilize rice prices, ensure a steady supply of rice in the market, and provide farmers with the necessary liquidity to continue operations.

<sup>5</sup> Basket V, which provides a longer-term tariff reduction period (20 years) as well as establishing an initial 99 percent out-of-quota tariff rate. This out-of-quota tariff rate remained unchanged during the first 10 years of the agreement, until CY 2015. From CY 2016 to CY 2020, the out-of-quota tariff rate was reduced by 8 percent annually, and from CY 2021 to CY 2025, by 12 percent annually.

<sup>6</sup> <https://presidencia.gob.do/decretos/693-24>

**Graph 2. Average Retail Price for Rice in DR 2024**



Source: Built with data from monthly retail price reports from Ministry of Agriculture, consulted on 03/14/24. Prices reported in RD\$. Exchange rate used 1US\$=62.66 RD\$.

### 3.7. Policy

Under CAFTA-DR, Dominican authorities successfully negotiated to place rice in Basket V, which provided a longer-term tariff reduction period of 20 years and established an initial 99 percent out-of-quota tariff rate. The Agreement set tariff rate quotas (TRQs) for U.S. rice, allowing duty-free imports within the quota. Beginning in 2006, the FTA set TRQs at 8,560 metric tons (MT) for milled rice and 2,140 MT for brown rice, gradually increasing to 18,640 MT and 4,660 MT, respectively, by 2024. U.S. rice was set to gain full duty-free access on January 1, 2025.

However, concerns from the Dominican rice industry over potential market share losses led President Luis Abinader to create a commission, comprised of government officials, producer group leaders, and industry representatives, with the goal of protecting the country’s food security regarding rice imports.

As a result, in December 2024 the Dominican Republic issued [Decree 693-24](#)<sup>7</sup>, restricting rice imports. The decree establishes the following key provisions:

- A tariff structure aligned with [List XXIII](#)<sup>8</sup> of the Dominican Republic’s World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments for rice products (HS codes 1006.10.00, 1006.20.00, 1006.30.00, and 1006.40.00) that include a general import quota of 17,810 MT at a 20 percent ad valorem tariff and a 99 percent ad valorem tariff in excess of the quota.
- A 0 percent preferential quota of 23,300 MT for U.S. rice; however, imports in excess will face a 99 percent duty, which is set at the Most Favored Nation (MF) rate.,
- A 99 percent MFN tariff on all rice imports from Nicaragua.

<sup>7</sup> <https://presidencia.gob.do/decretos/693-24>

<sup>8</sup> <https://goods-schedules.wto.org/member/dominican-republic>

The decree grants the National Council for Food Sovereignty and Nutritional Security (CONASSAN in Spanish) authority to regulate imports of sensitive products for national security purposes. For further details on this policy, please refer to this [report](#)<sup>9</sup>.

## **Pignoración Program**

The *Pignoración* Program<sup>10</sup> establishes price controls, which operate eight months out of the year. The National Rice Commission (CONA) establishes a yearly price band for paddy rice freight on board (FOB). CONA is composed of the Ministry of Agriculture officials, producers, processors, retailers, and other public institutions. Price bands are established both annually and for each of the two harvest periods, based on historic prices, varietals, and production estimates. For millers, purchasing according to CONA price bands is not obligatory, but it is a requirement for participation in the *Pignoración* Program.

In general terms, *Pignoración* is a financial services program designed to assist rice producers and processors. Under the program, processors (e.g., factories, cooperatives, etc.) or producers buy or produce rice, which is then milled. Subsequently, they may choose to either market or store the rice. If stored, rice can be pledged as collateral to secure loans from commercial or public lending institutions, this year Banco de Reservas has allocated \$190 million, at a preferential rate of 7 percent to finance the 2025-2026 rice harvest, 20 percent more than last year. The Ministry of Agriculture covers the expenses associated with storage, interest, and insurance for participants in the program.

As rice constitutes one of the primary food sources for the population, it is exempt from the 18 percent VAT.

## **Attachments:**

No Attachments

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[https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=The%20Dominican%20Republic%20Moves%20Ahead%20with%20Measures%20to%20Protect%20Its%20Rice%20Industry%20from%20US%20Competition%20under%20CAFTA-DR\\_Santo%20Domingo\\_Dominican%20Republic\\_DR2025-0001](https://apps.fas.usda.gov/newgainapi/api/Report/DownloadReportByFileName?fileName=The%20Dominican%20Republic%20Moves%20Ahead%20with%20Measures%20to%20Protect%20Its%20Rice%20Industry%20from%20US%20Competition%20under%20CAFTA-DR_Santo%20Domingo_Dominican%20Republic_DR2025-0001)

<sup>10</sup> For more information on the *Pignoración* Program, please review our 2014 Report: [“Dominican Republic Governmental Support for the Rice Sector”](#).