

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Taiwan Confident of Basic Food Supply Amid Second Wave of COVID Infection

Country: Taiwan

Post: Taipei

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the News, Climate Change/Global Warming/Food Security, Grain and Feed, Avocado, Canned Deciduous Fruit, Dried Fruit, Fresh Deciduous Fruit, Fresh Fruit, Kiwifruit, Raisins, Stone Fruit, Strawberries, Livestock and Products, Oilseeds and Products, Poultry and Products, Vegetables, Dairy and Products

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Report Highlights:

Concern over the recent spike in domestic COVID cases prompted Taiwan's public to stock up on food and essential items. In response, Taiwan reviewed the standing inventory and near-term production/import plans for key agricultural commodities and food materials. Taiwan authorities are confident that the basic food supply will be sufficient for the next six months.

General Information:

Taiwan's initial COVID containment was successful during the first wave of the pandemic which peaked in April 2020. As of April 25, 2020, Taiwan's Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported a total of 429 active cases island-wide, with the majority imported, and a total of seven deaths. Taiwan maintained effective control for a one-year period. As of May 1, 2021, CDC posted a cumulative total of 1,132 infected cases and 12 deaths.

However, the situation deteriorated beginning in late April 2021. Several airline crews were diagnosed with the more transmissible variants of the coronavirus. Additional clusters have since been found and community transmission has steadily increased, leading to a sharp surge in domestic cases. On May 15, 2021, CDC posted an unprecedented 180 cases in one day, concentrated in Taipei and New Taipei Cities. On the same day, Taiwan raised the epidemic alert in the two cities to Level 3, one step below a full lockdown. The Level 3 alert expanded to the entire island on May 19, 2021, due to the increasing level of community transmission, with many cases of unknown source of infection as well as cluster infections. In the past two weeks, the daily total of new cases has remained in the range of 290 to 530. The island-wide Level 3 alert is effective through June 14, 2021 and subject to further extension and/or more restrictive measures.

The sudden spike in domestic COVID cases prompted Taiwan's public to stock up on food and other essential items. To calm concerns over food security, Taiwan's Council of Agriculture (COA) reviewed standing inventory and near-term production and import plans for key agriculture commodities and food materials to determine if Taiwan has enough food on hand to cover its needs for the next six months. This is the second time since the COVID pandemic began that COA has conducted such a survey. The previous survey from April 2020 was prompted by food export controls in some countries and continued uncertainty related to the COVID pandemic's impact on global supply chains (see [GAIN TW2020-0023](#)).

Taiwan's government was once again encouraged by the results of the new survey, which determined that a sufficient supply of food and agricultural commodities is available for at least the next six months. In addition, the government is releasing the second round of COVID relief funds, the agriculture portion of which aims to support and protect domestic agricultural producers so that they can continue the planting and harvesting of 2021 crops. The funded schemes include relaxed terms of farm loans, interest subsidies for farm loans, living allowances for farmers, etc.

The stock and supply levels of key agricultural products released in COA's second survey are as follows:

Rice: Current publicly held stocks are 753,000 MT; privately held stocks are 200,000 MT. In addition, the first rice crop of 2021 began harvest in late April. Altogether, the total volume of rice will be sufficient for 18 months.

Soybeans, Corn, Wheat, and Other Row Crops: Inventory plus shipments on order are sufficient for the next six months, with an estimated 3.8 MMT of supply.

Vegetables: Total supply is anticipated to reach 1.54 MMT over the next six months, exceeding what Taiwan authorities consider the necessary safety threshold.

Fruits: Total supply is anticipated to reach 1.71 MMT over the next six months, also exceeding the safety threshold.

Livestock Products: Sufficient supply is available for the next six months. Short-term production estimates are: 525,000 MT of pork; 510,000 MT of poultry; 230,000 MT of milk; and 24 million eggs per day.

Fishery Products: Sufficient supply is available for the next six months, estimated at 579,000 MT.

Seedlings: Sufficient supply is available for the next six months. The annual volumes needed are estimated at 400,000 MT for vegetable seedlings (carrot, lettuce, cabbage, onion, sweet corn, tomato, etc.) and 930,000 MT for grain seeds (field corn, sorghum, wheat, soybean, etc.).

Fertilizers: Sufficient supply of key ingredients is available for the next six months, including liquid nitrogen, urea, potassium chloride, phosphate ore, phosphoric acid, sulfuric acid, peat, etc.

Pesticides: Sufficient supply of technical grade and finished products is available for the next six months.

Note that this is a general accounting of food and supply availability and may not capture local shortages of certain specialty or imported products due to supply chain disruptions.

Sources (in Chinese):

<https://www.coa.gov.tw/index.php>

<https://www.cdc.gov.tw/>

Attachments:

No Attachments.