

Agricultural production - Crops primary

Abstract

Crop areas:

Figures for crop areas generally refer to harvested areas, although for permanent crops data may refer to total planted area.

Yields per hectare:

All yields per hectare, for single countries as well as for continental and world totals, are computed from detailed area and production data expressed in hectares and tonnes. Data on yields of permanent crops are not as reliable as those for temporary crops either because most of the area information may correspond to planted area, as for grapes, or because of the scarcity and unreliability of the area figures reported by the countries, as for example for cocoa and coffee.

Cereals:

Area and production data on cereals relate to crops harvested for dry grain only. Cereal crops harvested for hay or harvested green for food, feed or silage or used for grazing are therefore excluded. Area data relate to harvested area. Some countries report sown or cultivated area only; however, in these countries the sown or cultivated area does not differ significantly in normal years from the area actually harvested, either because practically the whole area sown is harvested or because the area surveys are conducted around the harvest period.

Vegetables, total (including melons):

Data relate to vegetable crops grown mainly for human consumption. Crops such as cabbages, pumpkins and carrots, when explicitly cultivated for animal feed, are therefore excluded.

Statistics on vegetables are not available in many countries, and the coverage of the reported data differs from country to country. In general, it appears that the estimates refer to crops grown in field and market gardens mainly for sale, thus excluding crops cultivated in kitchen gardens or small family gardens mainly for household consumption. In Austria, for example, reported data refer to field crops only and in Cuba they refer to procurement from State and private farms. Production from family and other small gardens not included in current statistical surveys constitutes quite an important part of the estimated total production in certain countries: for example, Austria, France, Germany, Italy and the United States.

For the reasons mentioned above, continental and world totals are far from representative of the total area and production of the different kinds of vegetables. Production data include data on vegetables shown separately, as well as data on all other kinds of vegetables. They also include estimates for non-reporting countries and, when available, production of non-commercial crops for countries reporting only production for sale.

Fruit, total (excluding melons):

Data refer to total production of fresh fruit, whether finally used for direct consumption for food or feed, or processed into different products: dry fruit, juice, jam, alcohol, etc.

Statistics on fruit, especially tropical fruit, are unavailable in many countries, and where reported they often lack uniformity. Generally, production data relate to plantation crops or orchard crops grown mainly for sale. Data on production from scattered trees used mainly for home consumption are not usually collected. Production from wild plants, particularly berries, which is of some importance in certain countries, is generally disregarded by national statistical services. Therefore, the data for the various fruits and berries are rather incomplete, particularly for regions other than Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. The totals shown — although relating to the limited number of countries listed — are nevertheless believed to give a reliable indication of these crops insofar as they influence international trade. The totals, in any case, provide an indication of annual changes in the size of the crops.

Production data include data published on individual fruits and berries shown separately, as well as data on all other kinds of fruits and berries. Dates, plantains and total grapes are also included in the total fruit figures, while olives are excluded. Total figures are more complete than those published for the single commodities because they include estimates for most of the non-reporting countries as well as data for countries reporting total production of fruits in a single figure without specification by kind.

Bananas and plantains:

Figures on bananas refer, as far as possible, to all edible fruit-bearing species of the genus *Musa* except *Musa paradisiaca*, commonly known as plantain. Unfortunately, several countries make no distinction in their statistics between bananas and plantains and publish only overall estimates. When this occurs and there is some indication or assumption that the data reported refer mainly to bananas, the data are included. None of the countries excluded are significant exporters. The production data on bananas and plantains reported by the various countries are also difficult to compare because a number of countries report in terms of bunches, which generally means that the stalk is included in the weight.

Treenuts:

Production of nuts (including chestnuts) relates to nuts in the shell or in the husk. Statistics are very scanty and generally refer only to crops for sale.

In addition to the kind of nuts shown separately, production data include all other treenuts mainly used as dessert or table nuts, such as Pecan nuts, pili nuts, sapucaia nuts and macadamia nuts. Nuts mainly used for flavouring beverages are excluded as are masticatory and stimulant nuts and nuts used mainly for the extraction of oil or butter: areca/betel nuts, cola nuts, illipe nuts, karite nuts, coconuts, tung nuts, oilpalm nuts etc..

Metadata

Introduction:

This data domain contains production data for primary products. The compilation of the data domain has been made possible by the cooperation of governments, which have supplied most of the information in the form of replies to annual FAO questionnaires. FAO has continued to collaborate with various agencies in order to achieve conformity in the presentation of international figures. The assistance of governments and agencies is gratefully acknowledged.

Reference period - Area and crop production:

The time reference for statistics on area and crop production is based on a calendar year. That is to say, the data for any particular crop are reported under the calendar year in which the entire harvest or the bulk of it took place. This does not necessarily mean that for a given commodity the production data are aggregated month by month from January to December, although this is true for certain crops such as tea, sisal, palm kernels, palm oil, rubber, coconuts and, in certain countries, sugar cane and bananas, which are harvested almost uniformly throughout the year. The harvest of other crops, however, is generally limited to a few months and even, in certain cases, to a few weeks. Production of these crops is reported by the various countries in different ways: by calendar year, agricultural year, marketing year, etc. Whatever the statistical period used by the countries for presentation of area and production data, these data are allocated commodity by commodity to the calendar year in which the entire harvest or the bulk of it took place. Obviously, a crop that is harvested at the end of the calendar year will be utilized mostly during the year following the calendar year under which the production figures are reported.

It should be noted that the adoption of a calendar-year time reference period inevitably means that, in a number of cases, crops assigned by countries to a particular split year may appear under two different calendar years.

Totals:

Continental and world totals are given for all commodities. The totals include only data for the countries included in the data series in question.

Figures may not always add up to the totals because of independent rounding of country figures and of the totals themselves. In general, these totals adequately reflect the situation in the geographical areas they represent, except for certain vegetable and fruit crops.

Data sources and collection

In general, figures have been supplied by governments through national publications and FAO questionnaires (both paper or electronic). To make the coverage of this data collection as complete as possible, official data have sometimes been supplemented with data from unofficial sources. Use has also been made of information supplied by other national or international agencies or organizations.