



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Foreign
Agricultural
Service

Commodity Intelligence Report

July 16, 2019

Benin Becomes Leading Cotton Producer in West Africa's Franc Zone

Franc Zone cotton production for marketing year (MY) 2019/20 is forecast at a record 6.0 million bales, up 0.6 million bales or 11 percent from last year. Harvested area is forecast a record 3.3 million hectares, up 0.3 million hectares or 10 percent from last year. Benin was the leading cotton producer for the region last year and is forecast to be the top producer again this year (Figure 1).

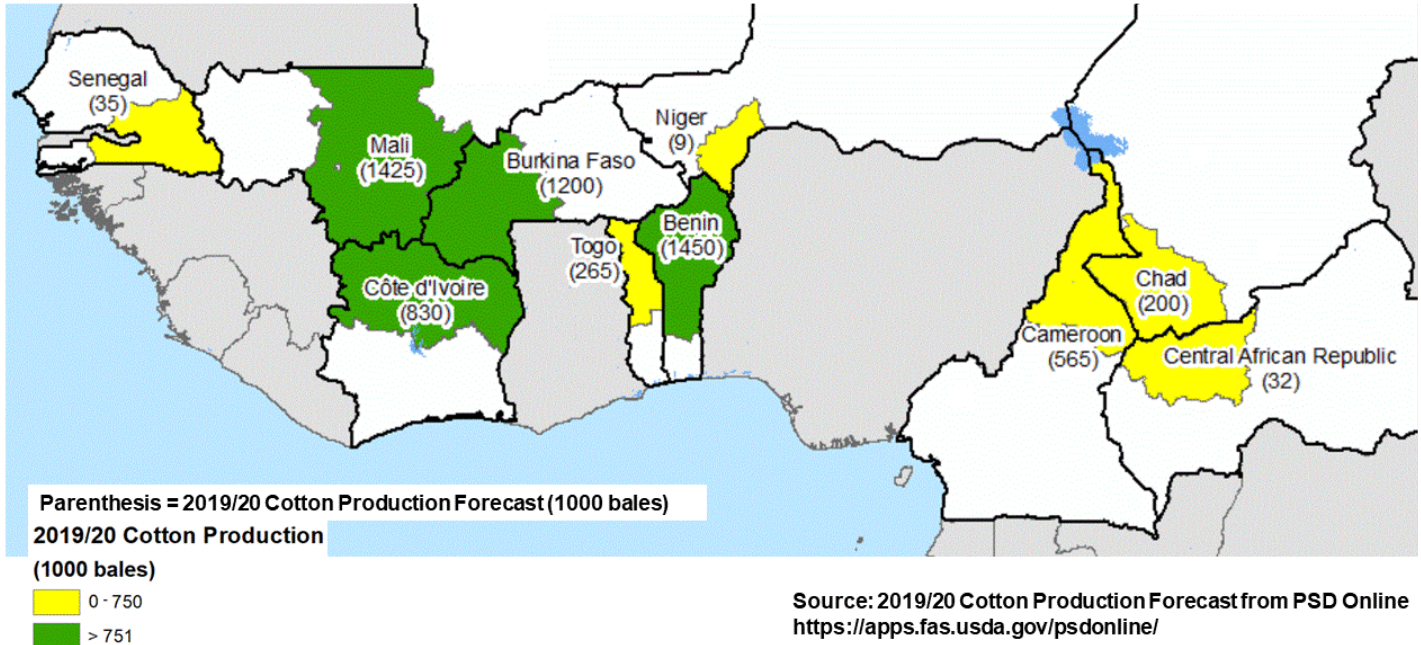
Cotton within the Franc Zone is typically planted from May through July and harvested from October through December. Planting began with a timely onset of seasonal rains from May 1 through July 14, 2019 and precipitation has been average to above-average (Figure 2).

USDA, in the monthly World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report, defines the Franc Zone as the following ten countries (in order of expected 2019/20 production): Benin (1,450 thousand bales), Mali (1,425), Burkina Faso (1,200), Cote d'Ivoire (830), Cameroon (565), Togo (265), Chad (200), Senegal (35), Central African Republic (32) and Niger (9).

Burkina Faso was the leading Franc Zone cotton producer from MY 2004/05 through MY 2010/11 and MY 2012/13 through MY 2016/17 (Figure 3). Burkina Faso yields declined in 2017 when fall armyworms arrived and extensively damaged cotton and other cereal crops. Fall armyworms feed on more than 80 different plant species, including cotton, corn, rice, sorghum, sugarcane, groundnuts and vegetable crops. Burkina cotton yields were also low in 2018 because farmers were faced with high pesticide costs to control fall armyworms and other common cotton pests such as the cotton bollworm and whitefly. Mali overtook Burkina Faso to become the leading Franc Zone cotton producer in MY 2017/18 and last year Benin became the lead cotton producer.

Benin's yield trend has increased in recent years after government and private industry invested in modernizing the entire cotton supply chain and provided more timely supply of seed and fertilizer inputs. Benin's five-year average yield is 435 kg/ha which is also well above the five-year average yield of 393 kg/ha for the Franc Zone region (Figure 4).

Franc Zone Cotton Production Forecast for MY 2019/20

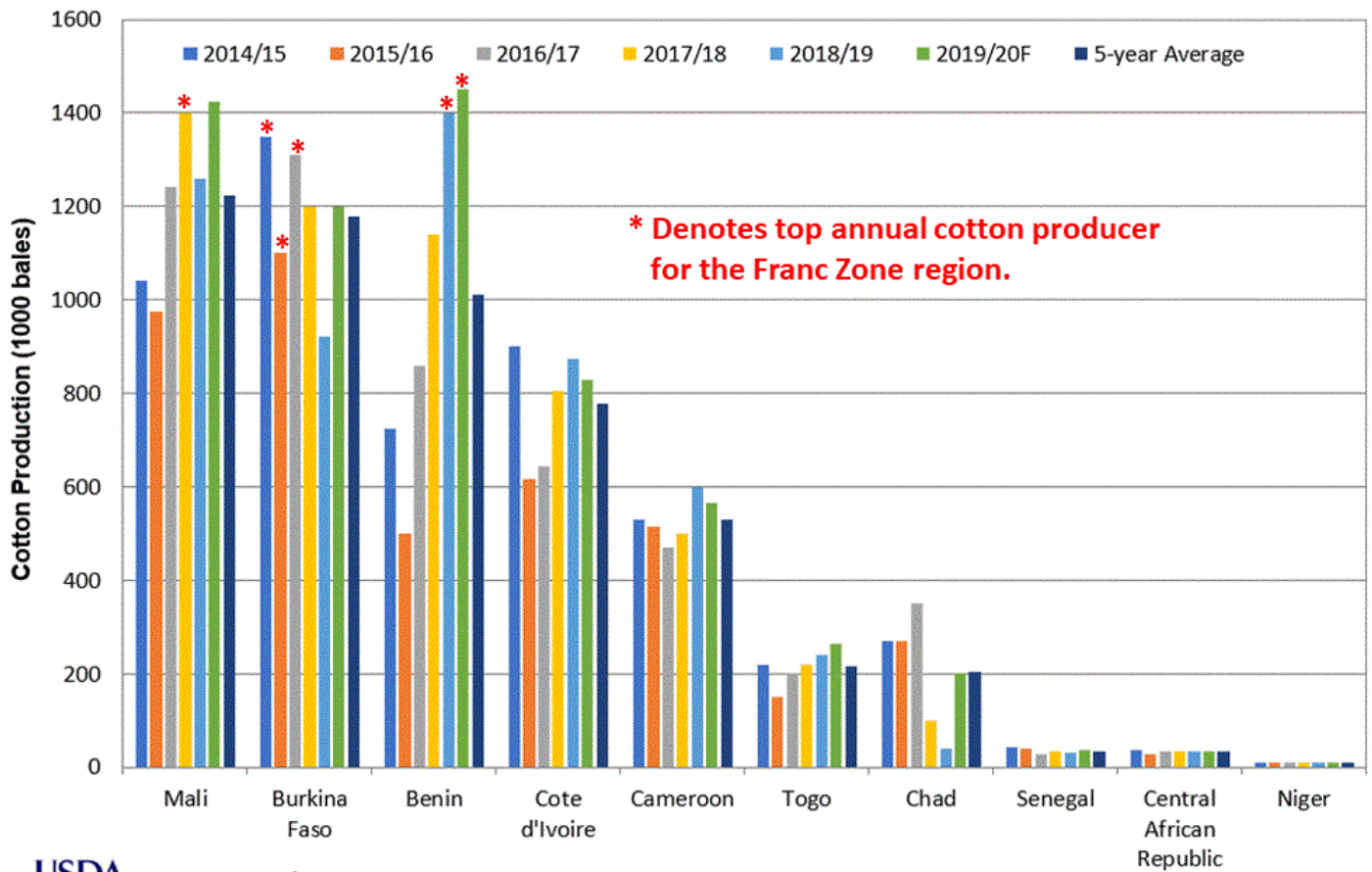


Foreign Agricultural Service
Office of Global Analysis
International Production Assessment Division

Figure 1: Cotton Production Forecast for MY 2019/20

Figure 2: Percent of Normal Precipitation from May 1 through July 14, 2019

Cotton Production for West Africa's Franc Zone



Source: PSD Online
<https://apps.fas.usda.gov/psdonline/>

Figure 3: Cotton Production in West Africa's Franc Zone

Cotton Yields for West Africa's Franc Zone

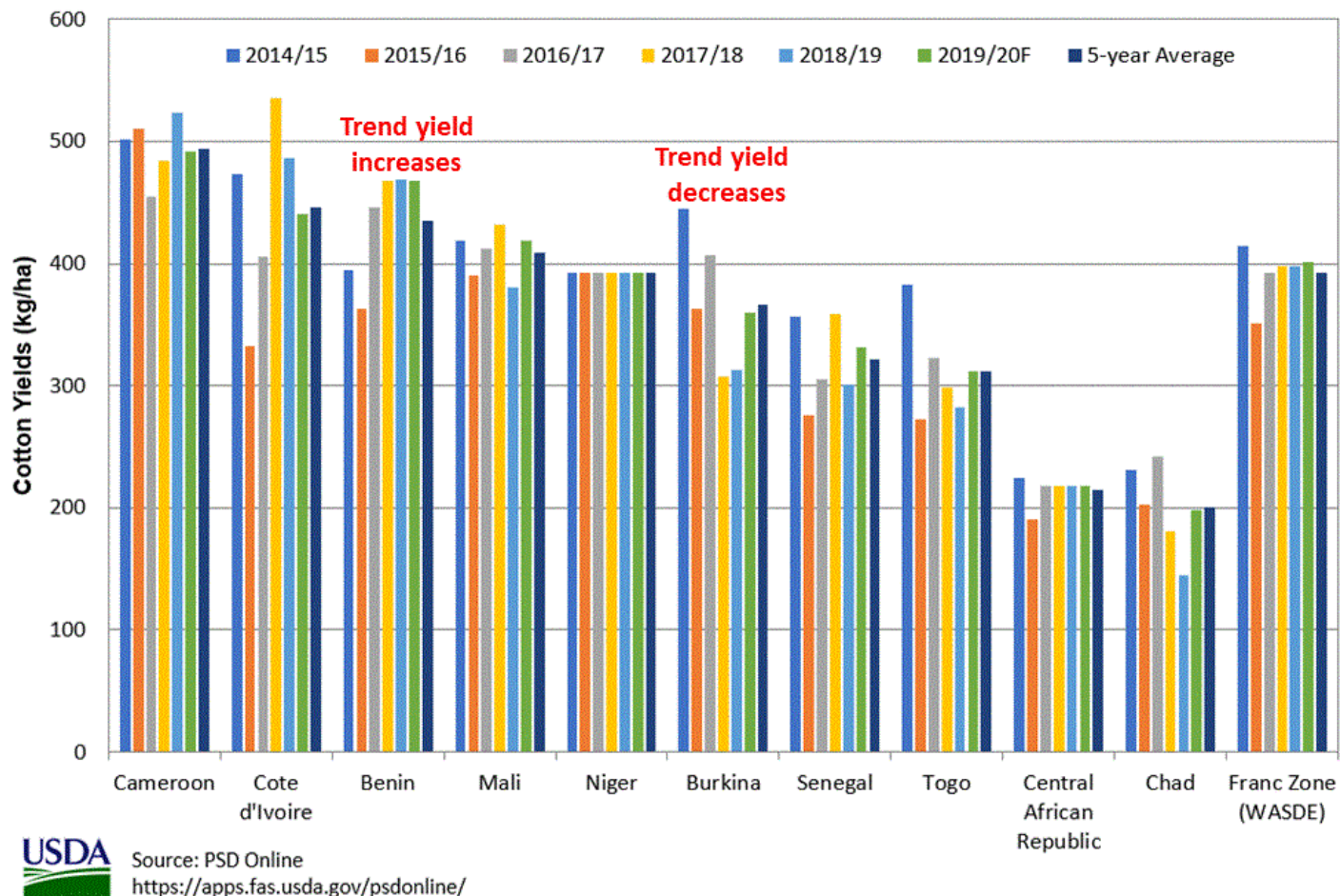


Figure 4: Cotton Yields in West Africa's Franc Zone

For additional information, please contact Curt Reynolds at Curt.Reynolds@usda.gov.

Current area and production estimates for grains and other agricultural commodities are available from:

[Production, Supply and Distribution Database \(PSD Online\)](#)

or

[Crop Explorer](#)

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service; Office of Global Analysis
International Production Assessment Division
USDA South Building, Ag Box 1051, Room 4630
Washington, DC 20250-1051
Telephone: (202) 720-1662; Fax: (202) 720-1158