



Commodity Intelligence Report

April 30, 2020

Guyana Continues to Improve Rice Quality and Increase Production

After an excellent 2019/20 harvest, rice farmers in Guyana will have access in the coming season to better seed cleaning through an improved facility at the Burma Rice Research Station in Region V (Figure 1). This improvement to Guyana's rice industry is in addition to recent advances in water management, pest spray programs, variety selection, and fertilizer application backed by good soil sampling. During the recent harvest, Guyana farmers reaped 1.05 million metric tons of paddy rice, nearly equal to their highest production in 2015/16 (Figure 2). The 2019/20 season only had 1 percent less production than the 2015/16 season with milled production topping 683,000 metric tons, greater than 9 percent above the 2018/19 season. The harvested area was 178,000 hectares, 7 percent more than the 2018/19 season. Estimated paddy yield for 2019/20 was 5.90 tons per hectare, which is 2 percent higher than the previous season when fertilizer improvements (more precise fertilizer use based on specific nutrient needs from soil sampling) were heavily implemented. This is expected to continue into the 2020/21 growing season.

A combination of timely actions to control pests using experienced field scouts, corrective insecticide use strategies, and improved canal system operation for precise irrigation and drainage operations have aided farmers in improving the rice crop. Beneficial rainfall and improved water management for both the first and second rice crops boosted yields for the 2019/20 season. Better rice varieties have also contributed to improved yields. Region VI was the top rice producing area this past season, and it was the yields in the second crop of rice, which occur later in the season, that increased overall rice output (Figure 3).

The second rice crop yields surpassed those of the first crop for all production regions except one (Figure 1). Region II was the only area where the second rice crop did not have higher yields than the first crop. Usually the second crop has more pest problems with lower yields. However, the launch of their recent pest spray program, and utilizing crop specialists to help monitor and diagnose rice field problems throughout the second season, enabled farmers to improve yields.

For the upcoming 2020/21 rice season, a state-of-the-art seed cleaning facility (Superbrix) will be utilized in Region V. The Superbrix equipment can process 10 tons of seed quickly and will help improve seed quality while lessening seed loss. The hope is that this new equipment will save time and increase profits. The equipment should be able to increase seed output by 10 to 15 percent, without losses such as broken kernels seen in older equipment. Rice seeds will be cleaned at a faster rate with the new equipment, rather than forcing cleaners to run 24 hours-a-day for weeks at a time, as currently required by the older equipment.

Aside from enhancements to cleaning, processing, and bagging operations for the upcoming season, improvements are expected to continue in water management, variety selection, fertilizer use, and soil sampling to determine nutrient needs. Preventative pest spray programs should also continue to improve Guyana's rice yields and production for the upcoming 2020/21 season.

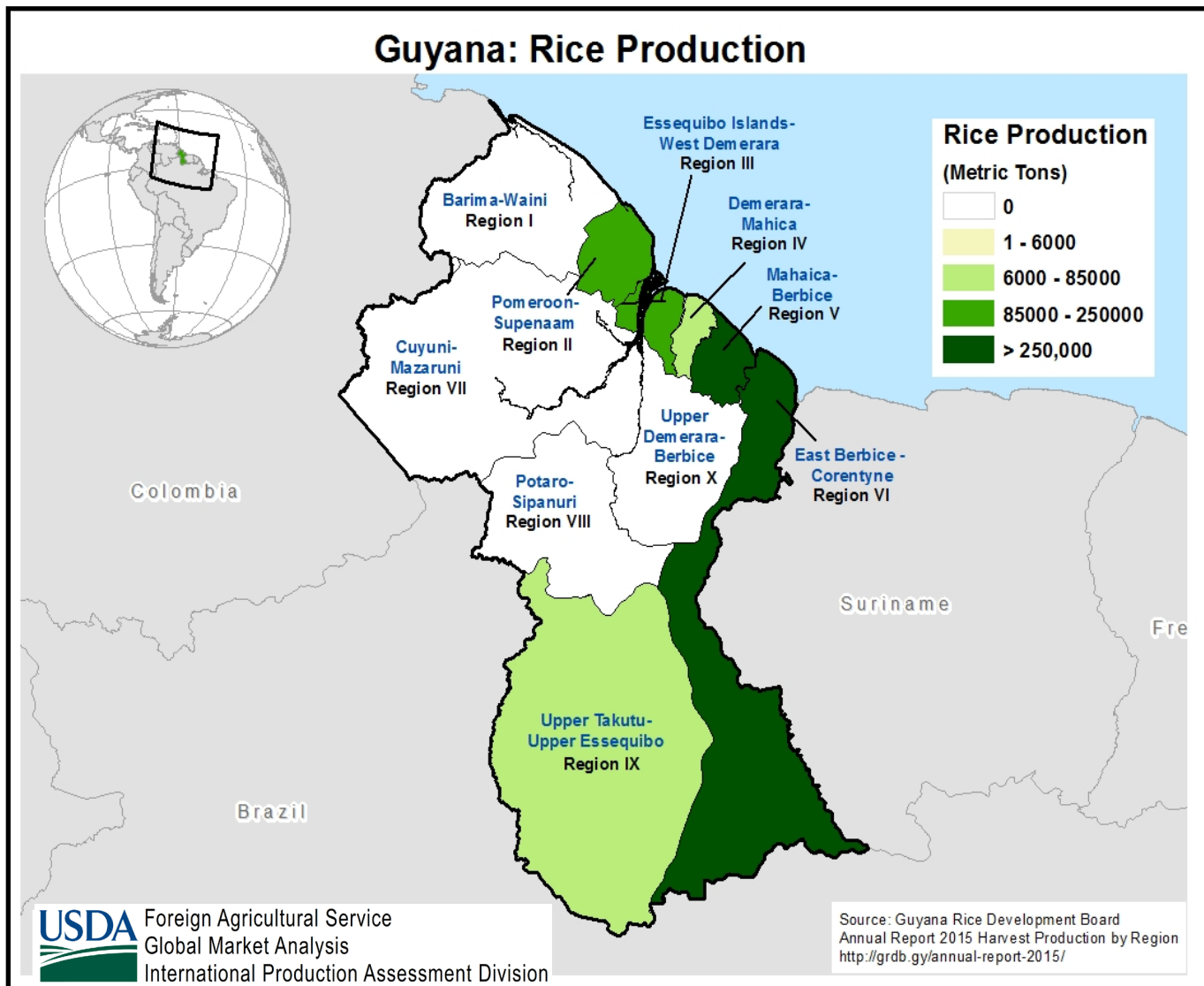


Figure 1: The nine regions of rice production in Guyana.

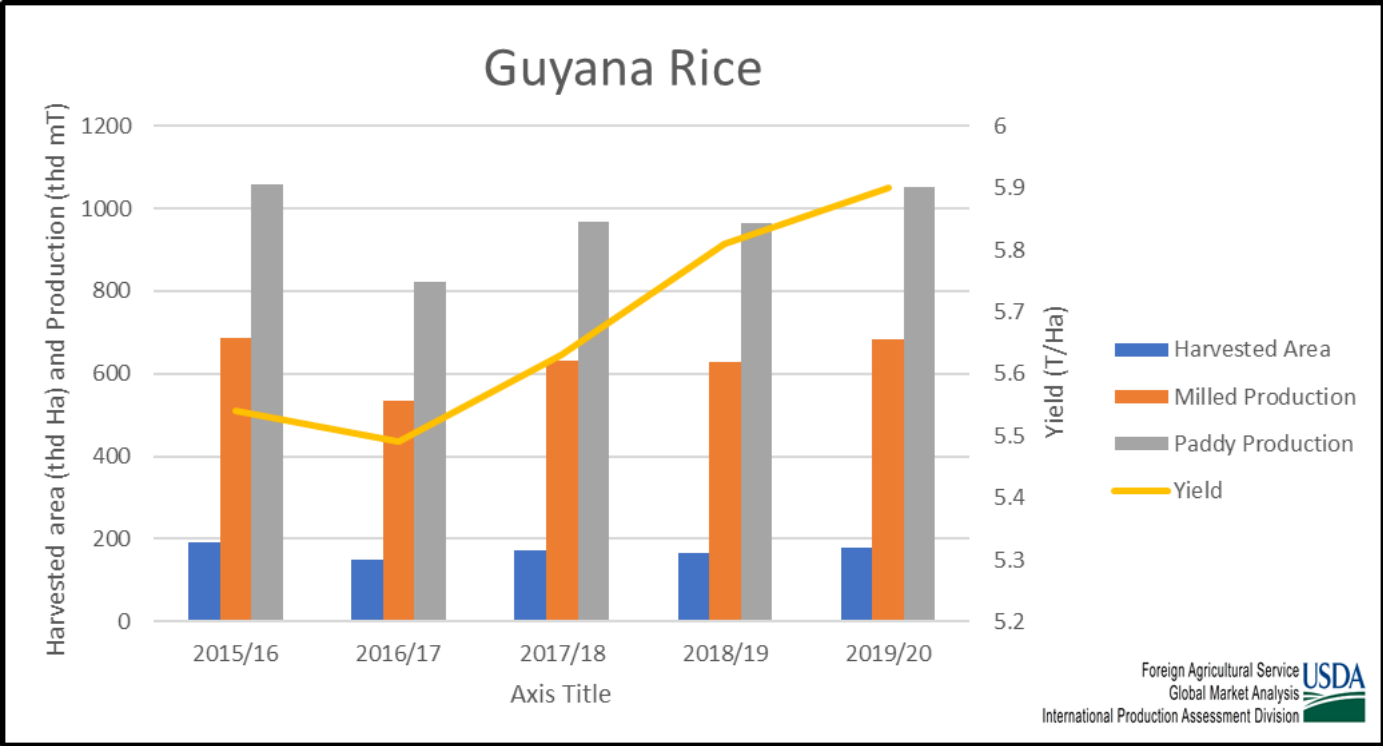


Figure 2: Guyana’s harvested area, milled production, paddy production, and national average yields over the last five seasons.

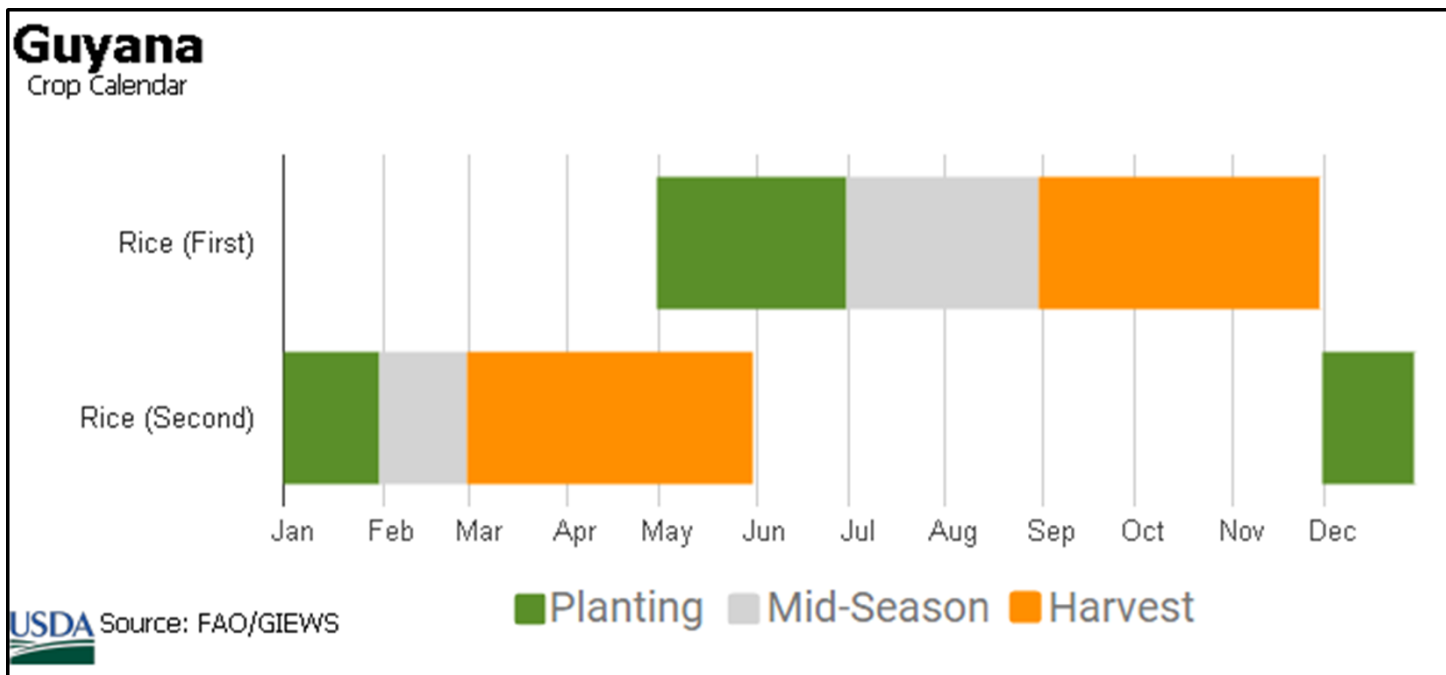


Figure 3: The crop calendar for Guyana’s first and second crops of rice. Due to the semi-tropical weather in Guyana, cropping occurs throughout the year.

For additional information please contact Dr. Denise McWilliams | Denise.McWilliams@usda.gov | 202-720-0107. Current area and production estimates for grains and other agricultural commodities are available on IPAD's Agricultural Production page: [Crop Explorer https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/](https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/) or

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