

**Foreign Agricultural Service**

Global Market Analysis

International Production Assessment Division

Web: <https://ipad.fas.usda.gov>

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# Commodity Intelligence Report

## **Panama Rice and Corn Outlook for MY 2022/23**

### **Panama Rice**

With rice being grown throughout the country, Panama is the second largest rice producer in Central America. Panama is also a market for rice exports from the United States.

Panama's rough rice production for marketing year (MY) 2022/23 is estimated at 345,000 metric tons (mt), down 35,000 mt (about 9 percent) from last year. Milled production is estimated at 224,000 mt. Harvested area is estimated at 90,000 hectares (ha), down 4,000 ha (about 4 percent) from last year. Rough yield is estimated at 3.83 mt per hectare (t/ha), down about 5 percent from last year (see Figure 1).

The main rice producing provinces in Panama include Chiriquí, Panamá, Veraguas, Coclé, Los Santos, and Darién. Approximately 92 percent of the crop is rainfed. Irrigated rice is mainly found in the provinces of Chiriquí, Coclé, and Herrera. The main rice crop is planted from July to September and harvested from November to January. The minor rice crop is planted in April and May and harvested from August to October (see Figure 2).

FAS/Washington production analysts traveled with FAS/Panama City representatives to assess Panama rice areas in mid-November 2022 (see Figure 3). Rice fields were visited in Los Santos and Coclé (see Figure 4). Some rice farmers stated that their farms were impacted by pests, such as the white leaf rice virus, and have used biotechnology and microorganisms to limit damage from pests. In addition, some rice farmers have also invested in agricultural technology to manage their rice crops such as seed drilling, soil sampling, satellite imagery, and drones.

High costs of agricultural inputs such as fertilizer and fuel have led to lower planted rice area this year. Yields are also lower than last year due to both excessive rains and drought conditions. During the major rice season, rice farmers reported experiencing excessive rains in parts of Panamá and Darién provinces (see Figure 5). In Los Santos, rice farmers also struggled with both drought and wet conditions throughout the season (see Figure 6).

As of November 2022, the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA) has reported that 34,500 ha of rice have been harvested (see Figure 7).

## Panama Corn

Panama's corn production for MY 2022/23 is estimated at 120,000 mt, unchanged from last year. Harvested area is estimated at 50,000 ha, unchanged from last year. Yield is estimated at 2.40 t/ha, also unchanged from last year (see Figure 8).

The top corn producing provinces in Panama include Los Santos, Herrera, and Chiriquí. The main Panama corn crop is typically planted in August and September and harvested from December to February. The minor Panama corn crop is planted in May and June and harvested in August and September (see Figure 2). The Panama corn crop is rainfed. Most of the corn produced in Panama is yellow corn.

FAS/Washington production analysts traveled with FAS/Panama City representatives to assess Panama corn areas in mid-November 2022 (see Figure 3). Corn fields were visited in Los Santos and Herrera (see Figure 9).

Discussions with corn farmers provided insights into management practices that are used in Panama. For example, soil preparation is typically done from July 1 to July 15 to assist with weed control. To help with improving production, corn farmers in Los Santos and Herrera used hybrid seeds. With this particular hybrid, there is only one corn ear per plant, but it is typically larger than previous corn types used. Some producers also used machinery and global position system (GPS) precision agriculture technology to assist with corn planting. Throughout the season, fertilizers, insect control, and foliage control were applied as needed to support the corn crop.

Despite excessive rains in Tonosi, Los Santos during October 2022, corn crop conditions were reported as healthy overall for the main crop in Los Santos (see Figure 10). As harvest started in December, the winds helped to dry out the main corn crop.

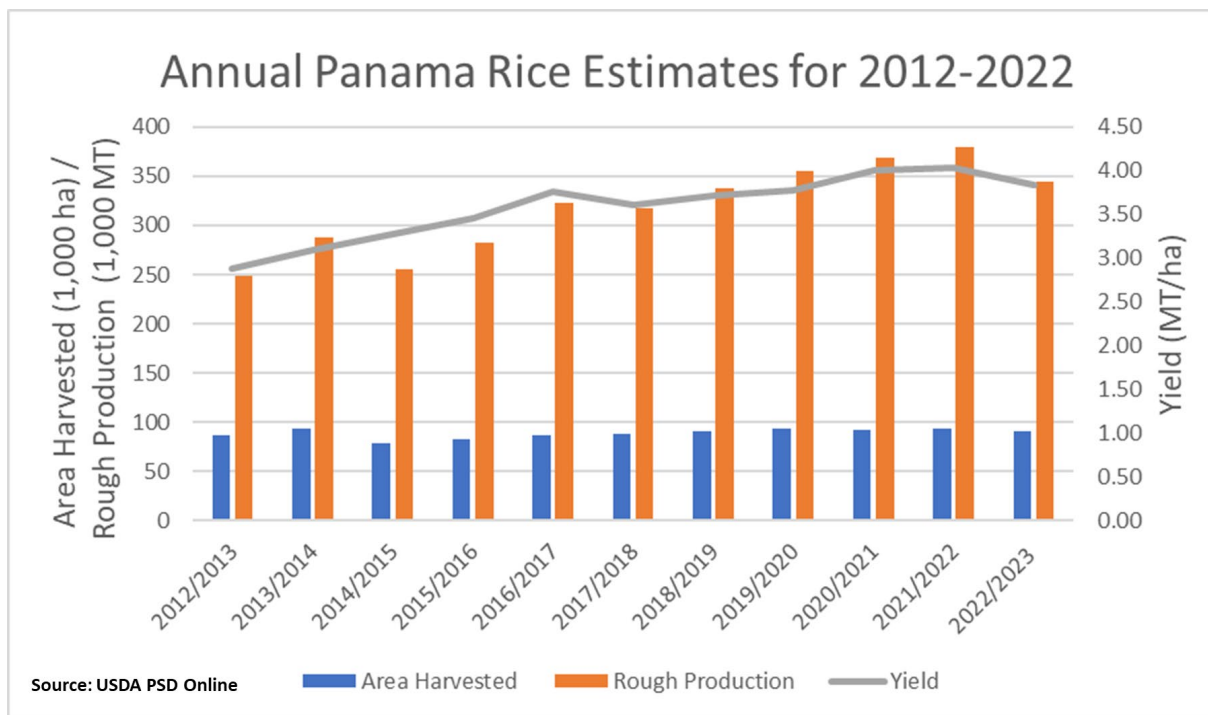


Figure 1. Panama Rice Area, Yield, and Production Estimates from 2012-2022. Source: USDA PSD Online.

### Panama – Crop Calendar

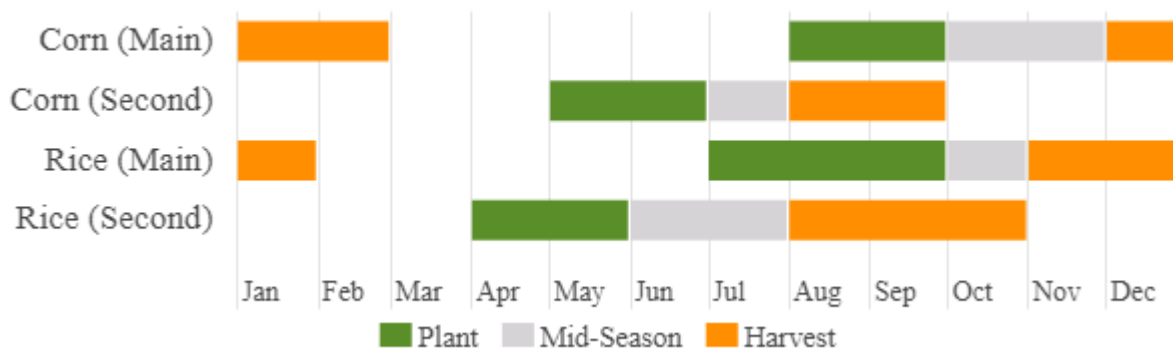


Figure 2. Crop Calendar for Panama Corn and Panama Rice.

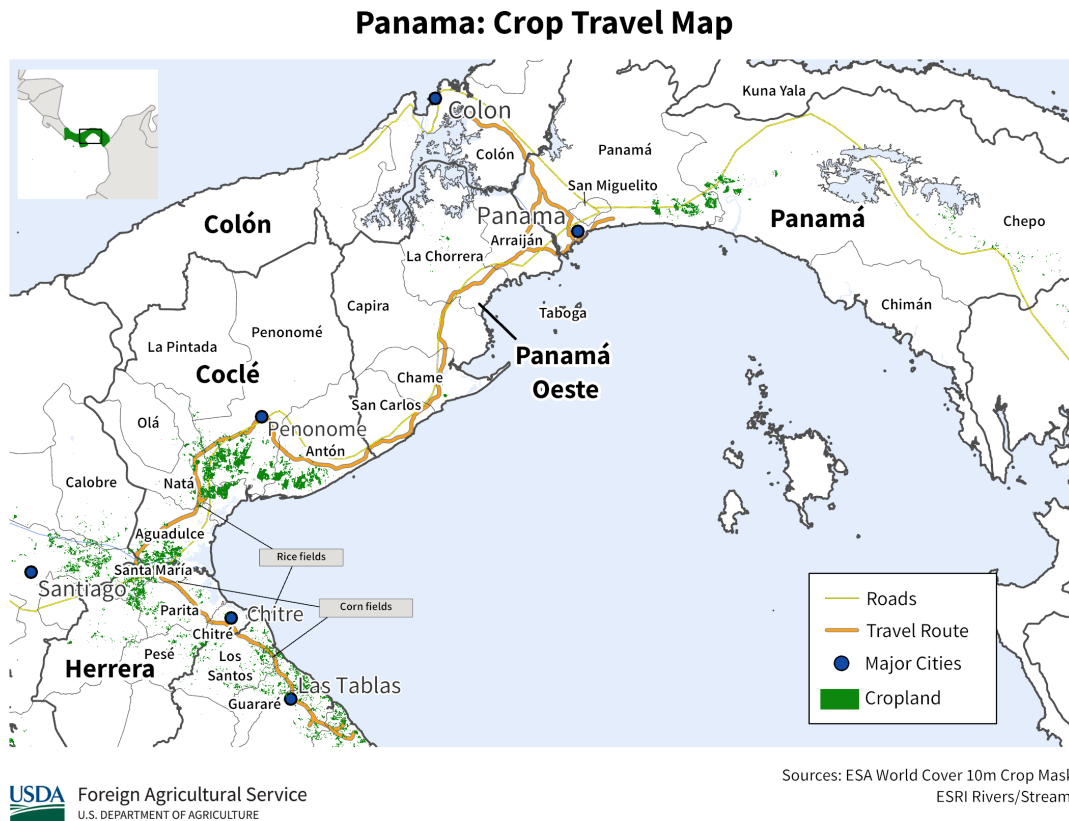


Figure 3. Travel Route FAS Analysts Took to Visit Panama Rice and Corn Farms in Los Santos, Coclé, and Herrera during November 2022. Sources: USDA FAS, ESA World Cover 10m Crop Mask; ESRI Rivers/Streams.

## Panama Rice Farm Travel Photos



Rice crop in Los Santos



Rice field in Coclé

Figure 4. Photos from Panama Rice Farm Visits in Los Santos (Left) and Coclé (right) during November 2022. Source: USDA FAS.

Rainfall Conditions in Panamá and Darién Provinces

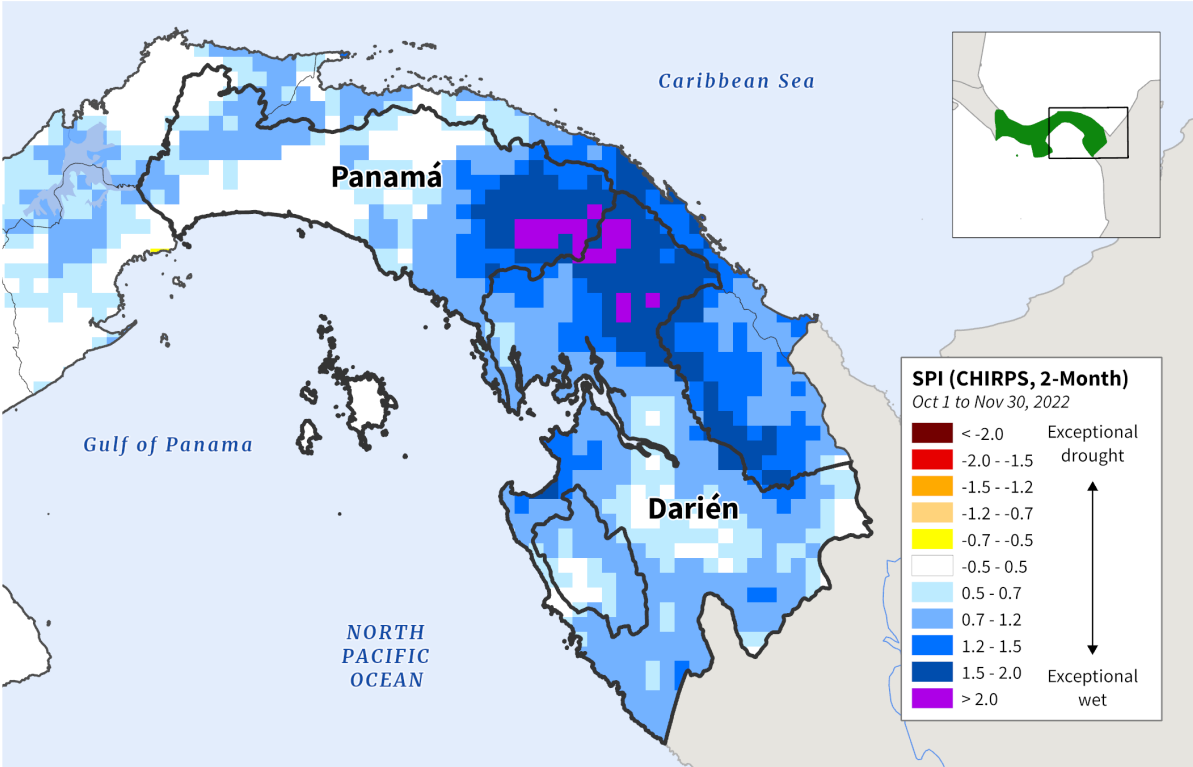


Figure 5. Excessive Rains Impacting Rice Crop in Panamá and Darién Provinces during October and November 2022. Source: CHIRPS Standard Precipitation Index (SPI) 2-Month.



## Los Santos Drought and Rainfall Conditions

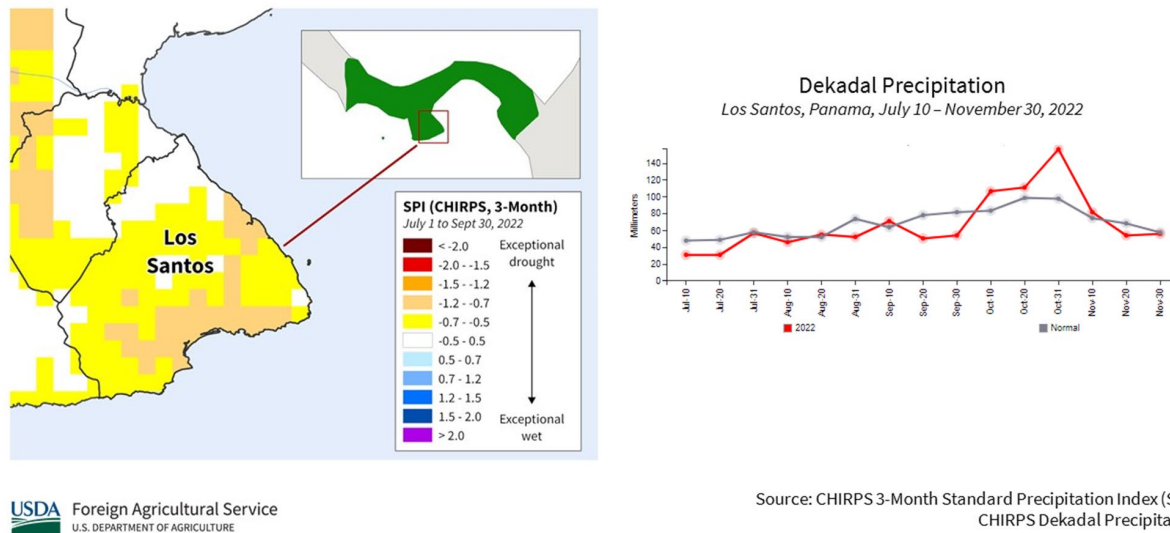


Figure 6. Map Shows Drought Conditions in Los Santos during July 1 – September 30, 2022 (left). Graph shows Dekadal Precipitation in Los Santos throughout the rice season from July – November 2022. Rainfall was above normal during late October 2022 (right). Sources: CHIRPS SPI 3-Month (left) and CHIRPS Dekadal Precipitation (right).



Rice being harvested in Los Santos

Figure 7. Farmers Harvesting Rice in Los Santos, Panama during November 2022. Source: USDA FAS.



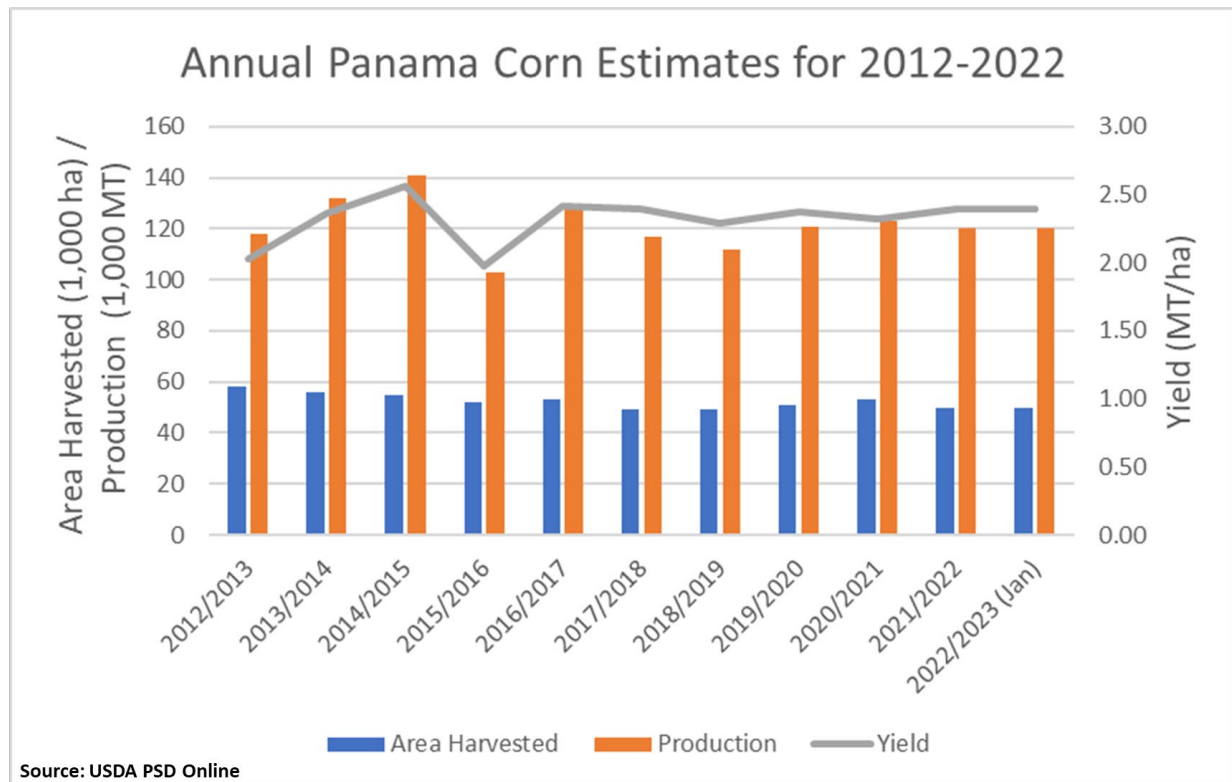
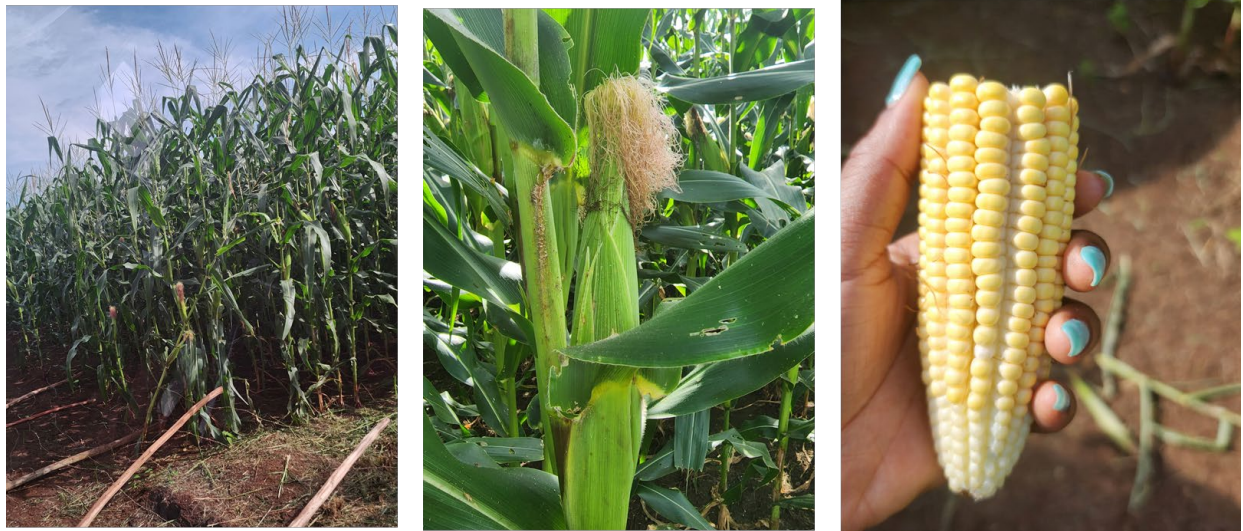


Figure 8. Panama Corn Area, Yield, and Production Estimates from 2012-2022. Source: USDA PSD Online.

## Panama Corn Farm Travel Photos



Corn crop in Los Santos

Figure 9. Photos from Panama Corn Farm Visits in Los Santos during November 2022. Source: USDA FAS.

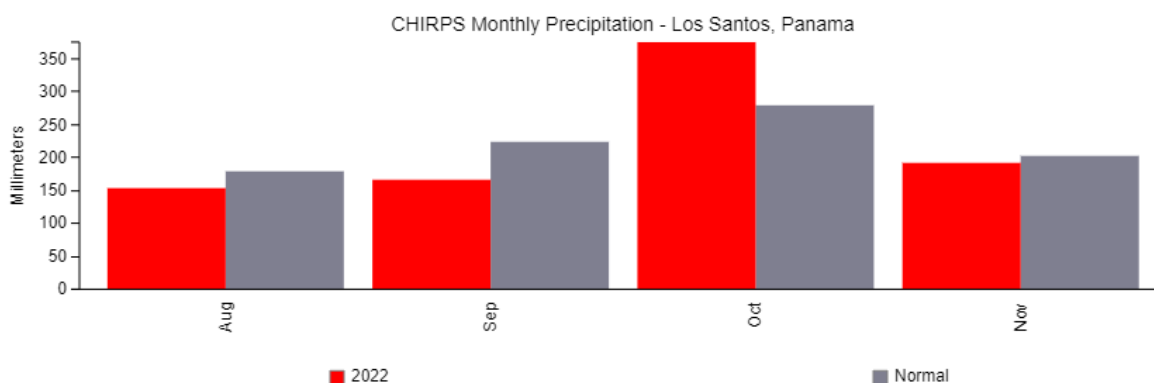


Figure 10. Graph Showing Monthly Rainfall in Los Santos, Panama during August 2022 – November 2022 and Showing Average Monthly Amounts during the Main Corn Planting and Growing Periods. Source: CHIRPS Monthly Precipitation.

#### Author contact information:

Ifeoma Collins  
[ifeoma.collins@usda.gov](mailto:ifeoma.collins@usda.gov)

#### For more information and to access FAS databases and reports please visit:

Current World Agricultural Production Reports  
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Production, Supply and Distribution Database (PSD Online)  
<https://apps.fas.usda.gov/psdonline/app/index.html#/app/home>

Global Agricultural Information Network (Agricultural Attaché Reports)  
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