

Summary

Food security is satisfactory overall. The agricultural campaign of the 2000/01 rainy season is approaching its end in most parts of the Sahelian zone of Chad.

In contrast to the third dekad (10-day period) of September, in which rainfall was below normal in a number of stations, rains were generally good in the first dekad of October. The most significant cumulative rainfall deficits from the beginning of the cropping season to the first dekad of October were recorded in Biltine Department and part of Kanem Department.

Rainfed crops are at different phases of development. For the most part, finger millet is between maturity and harvest while sorghum is nearing maturity. Water-recession sorghum (*berbéré*) will not be cultivated in production areas where there was no flood. Pests were still causing localized damage to crops as of early October, as described last month, especially in the Sahelian zone.

Livestock health is satisfactory. Pastures are plentiful except in Biltine Department and northern Kanem Department where grazing land is very sparse or even missing in places. Water points are not filled up and many herders and their livestock continue to return from the north in a steady flow that had already started by mid-August.

Cereal prices are unusually high in some markets in the Sahelian zone compared to prices last year and, as of mid-October, were almost double the level of prices in August, making it difficult for low income households, in particular, to find affordable supplies. In the Sudanian zone, prices are normal in most markets, especially at Sarh and Moundou.

Throughout the first dekad in October, the Chari and Logone River levels were essentially unchanged, as registered at the major stations.

1. Agroclimatic Conditions

1.1. Weather and Rainfall Situation

During the third dekad of September, the Inter-tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) hovered around 16° N. Few rains fell in the Sahelian zone. By the end of September, cumulative rainfall was below last year's levels and normal levels (based on the 1961-1990 average) at the same time in most Sahelian zone stations (Table 1). For example, cumulative rainfall in Abéché through September was 239.4 mm, compared to 502.0 mm through September 1999 and 430.2 mm normally (1961-1990).

In the Sudanian zone, cumulative rainfall from the beginning of the season until the end of September was quite substantial. In some stations the cumulative rainfall was close to that of last year and to normal levels. For example, Deli recorded 1,055.5 mm through the end of September compared to 1,183.0 mm last year and 999.2 mm normal rainfall. However, the spatial distribution of rainfall was quite poor in some places, especially in the rice growing areas and the *berbéré* sites at Fianga.

Table 1. Comparison of Cumulative Rainfall as of September 30 in 2000, 1999 and Normal (1961-90) Rainfall

Sahelian Zone	Cumulative Rainfall as of September 30 (mm)			Cumulative 2000 Rainfall as percent of Normal
	2000	1999	Normal (1961-90)	
Abéché	239.4	502.0	430.2	55.6
Am-Dam	403.0	539.4	653.9	61.6
Baro	560.5	907.6	687.4	81.5
Biltine	175.8	394.0	297.6	59.1
Massenya	675.2	884.5	639.1	105.6
Moussoro	163.8	311.1	332.3	49.3
N'Gouri	234.4	417.1	326.3	71.8
Sudanian Zone				
Baïbokoum	1,050.0	1,084.5	1,196.4	87.8
Deli	1,055.5	1,183.0	999.2	105.6
Donia	930.5	N.A.	1,080.0	86.2
Fianga	970.0	844.8	811.6	119.5
Goundi	718.5	849.0	929.8	77.3
Léré	883.3	N.A.	839.2	105.3
Moundou	940.0	951.3	1,066.9	88.1
Pala	706.1	954.8	955.1	73.9
Sarh	891.8	985.7	970.5	91.9

N.A.: Not Available

Source: Directorate of Water Resources and Meteorology (DREM)

During the first dekad of October the ITCZ fluctuated and stabilized between the 15° N and 16° N. Generally significant rainfall was recorded countrywide, especially in the Sudanian zone, such as Moundou, Sarh and Fianga, and the Sahelian zone received reasonably good rainfall in several stations, such as Sarh and N'Djaména.

1.2. Crop Development

By mid-October, most of the millet had reached the maturity-harvest phase of development and sorghum was maturing. Groundnuts also reached maturity.

1.3. Status of Crop Diseases and Pests

Different species of grasshoppers, as reported last month, were still active in September and caused significant damage in some parts of the Ouaddaï, Batha and Biltine Departments. Damage by grasshoppers was particularly intense on late-planted and lowland crops. The density of grasshopper pests is a very worrying 20 to 25 individuals per square meter (Directorate of Plant Protection, DPV). Pest density was even worse in the nurseries growing seedlings for marshland agriculture in Abéché Rurale sub-prefecture where 60 insect pests, all species, were counted per square meter.

Other pest reports were received, as follows:

- Grain-eating birds caused significant damage in the Batha, Lake and Guéra Departments.
- Spanish flies (cantharrhides) were recorded on millet at the milky stage in Batha and Ouaddaï.
- At Oum-Hadjer, attacks by pachnoda beetles caused quite significant losses to millet.
- Rodents: rats, squirrels and porcupines caused some damage to maturing groundnuts in Batha and Amdam sub-prefecture, in Ouaddaï.
- Warthogs and monkeys destroyed several groundnut fields in Amdam, in Ouaddaï.

1.4. Livestock Health

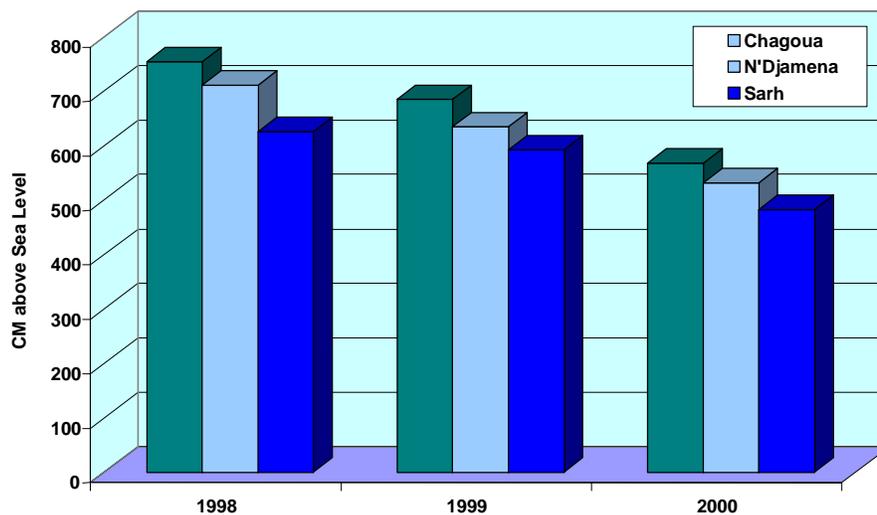
Pastures are generally good except for a sizeable part of Biltine and northern Kanem Departments where pastures are poor. The only limiting factor for herders in the north remains poorly recharged water points (*mares*). Some herders were compelled to return south ahead of the normal seasonal schedule, by mid-August, and others in September.

Animal health is excellent, except for some isolated cases of symptomatic and bacterial anthrax, pasteurellosis and gastrointestinal parasites.

1.5. Logone River Levels

The first dekad of October was characterized by a near stability of the water level at N'Djaména, Chagoua and Sarh on the Logone River, a condition that extended to October 13. As seen in Figure 1, river levels were significantly below the levels of the two previous years at the same time at all three stations. Low river levels make recession agriculture difficult because some fields do not get flooded, or flooded for a too short period, before the waters recede. Fishing is not very good either. This year's catch will be below that of 1998.

Figure 1. Comparison of Logone River Levels as of October 10: 1998, 1999 and 2000



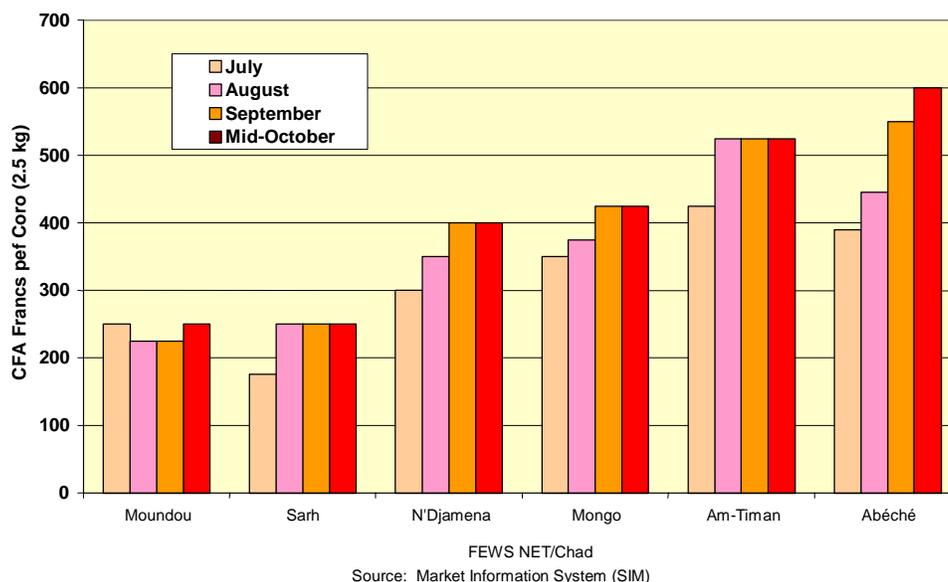
FEWS NET/Chad
Source: DREM

2. Food Access

2.1. Market Price Changes

Price changes reflect the poor millet harvests as well as the marketing strategies of traders holding stocks, the low level of producer-held stocks, and other factors. In the Sudanian zone, finger millet prices remained stable at Moundou and Sarh for the last three months until mid-October (as shown in Figure 2). Millet prices never exceeded 250 CFA francs per *coro* (around 2.5 kg).

**Figure 2. Millet Price Trends in Major Markets in Chad:
July - Mid-October 2000**

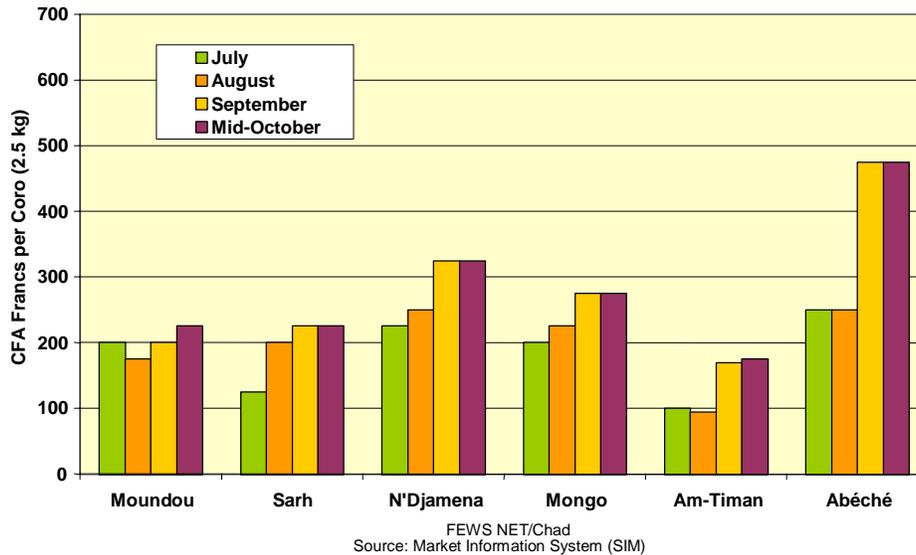


In the Sahelian zone, except for Am-Timan where the price of millet was unchanged since August and mid-October, slight price increases were recorded in N'Djaména, Abéché and Mongo during the three month period. The highest price was recorded at Abéché (600 CFA francs per *coro*) as of October 15, compared to 550 CFA francs per *coro* only one month before in September (a 20 % increase) and 390 CFA francs per *coro* in July, (a 54% increase). However, livestock prices are also higher than those of recent years, helping to offset any deterioration in livestock-millet terms of trade for herders. An average-size sheep cost 15,000 CFA francs at the end of September, equivalent to 25 *coro* of millet.

Sorghum prices did not increase in the Sudanian zone, where sorghum production is good this year. Prices have been stable in Moundou and Sarh during the last three months until mid-October (Figure 3, drawn to the same scale as Figure 2.). Sorghum prices have not risen above 225 CFA francs per *coro*.

In the Sahelian zone, sorghum price trends vary by markets. For instance, in N'Djaména, the price of sorghum rose from 225 CFA francs in July to 325 FCFA in September and the first two weeks of October (a 44% increase). Once again, Abéché recorded the highest price increase for sorghum: prices jumped from 250 CFA francs per *coro* at the end of July to 475 CFA francs by mid-October (a 90% increase).

Figure 3. Comparison of Sorghum Prices on Major Markets in Chad:
July - Mid-October 2000



2.2. Food Assistance

The World Food Program (WFP) distributed free food aid by in some Sahelian zone sub-prefectures totaling 1,175.5 MT, according to WFP. This food, mostly maize meals donated by the United States, was distributed to demographically vulnerable people, the aged, the infirm, and women heads of households.

Subsidized food sales in the Kanem area, classified by FEWS NET in March as a highly food insecure zone, have come to an end, with 2,001.8 MT of *berbéré* (recessional sorghum grown in Chad) having been sold since August.

2.3. Food Security Reserve

The national food security reserve is very low. According to the National Cereals Board (*Office nationale des céréales*, ONC) available stocks total 1,350 MT, broken down as follows:

- 500 MT *berbéré* at Am-Timan
- 600 MT sorghum at Moundou
- 250 MT sorghum at Kelo.

This reserve is insignificant compared with its target level of 25,000 MT. Its replenishment should be considered a priority. The donors and the Government of Chad should combine their efforts in order to assess this priority closely.