

China's Agricultural Production and Trade in 2020

Yuelai Lu
(SAIN Secretariat, y.lu@uea.ac.uk)

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This issue of SAIN Information Sheet gives a snapshot of China's agricultural production and trade in 2020.

2020 was a difficult year for the whole world. China's agricultural production in the year faced multiple challenges, not only the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent disruption to production and international trade, but also the legacy impact of ASF, as well as the floods in Yangtze River Basin and Northern China which seriously hit the major grain production provinces of Heilongjiang, Anhui and Jiangxi Provinces.

Despite the challenges, China harvested 669.5 million ton of grain in 2020, 0.9% higher than in 2019; of which cereals were 616.74 million ton, 0.5% higher than previous year. This has shown the resilience of China's agricultural production system.







China's trade in agricultural products also reached record high in 2020, with the total value of 246.83 billion USD. The quantities of maize, wheat and pork import have more than doubled than last year, and soybean import surpassed 100 million ton.

Feeding its 1.4 billion people is a long term priority for the Chinese government. In the coming years, China will boost the seed industry and improve arable land quality, among other measures, to ensure food supply, meanwhile to promote green development to achieve long-term sustainability.

What Did China Grow in 2020

In 2020, China's grain crop sown area was 116.77 Mha, 700 thousand ha more than in 2019, increased by 0.6%. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the government increased the support and subsidies to rice planting. As the result, cereals sown area increased to 97.96 Mha, 0.12 Mha more than in 2019. Meanwhile, the sown area for pulses increased by 4.7% from 2019, reached 11.59 M ha.

Table 1. Crop grown area in 2020

Crops	Sown area in 2020 (M ha)	Comparing 2019 (%)
Total sown area	116.77	0.6 
Cereals	97.96	0.1 
In which: Maize	41.26	0.05 
Rice	30.08	1.3 
Wheat	23.38	1.5 
Pulses	11.59	4.7 
Root and Tuber	7.21	1.0 

How Much Did China Produce in 2020

The total grain output in 2020 was 669.49 million ton, 0.9% increase than the year before. The cereals output in 2020 was 616.74 million ton, 0.5% increase compared with 2019. There was a minor decrease in meat output, by 0.1% compared with 2019, in which pork output decreased by 3.3%, while beef, lamb and poultry output increased by 0.8%, 1.0% and 5.5% respectively.

Table 2. China Agricultural production in 2020

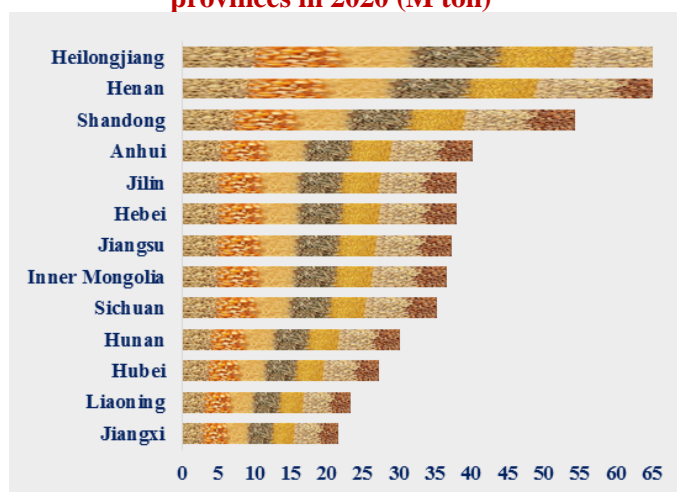
	Output in 2020 (M ton)	Comparing 2019 (%)
Grain	669.49	0.9 ↑
Cereals	616.74	0.5 ↑
In which: Maize	260.67	0.04 ↓
Rice	211.86	1.1 ↑
Wheat	134.25	0.5 ↑
Pulses	22.88	7.3 ↑
Root and Tuber	29.87	3.6 ↑
Cotton	5.91	0.4 ↑
Meat	76.39	0.1 ↓
In which: Pork	41.13	3.3 ↓
Beef	6.72	0.8 ↑
Lamb	4.92	1.0 ↑
Poultry	23.61	5.5 ↑
Eggs	34.68	4.8 ↑
Milk	34.40	7.5 ↑

Where Did China Produce Grain in 2020

In 2020, China's 13 major grain production provinces, namely Heilongjiang, Henan, Shandong, Anhui, Jilin, Hebei, Jiangsu, Inner Mongolia, Sichuan, Hunan, Hubei, Liaoning and Jiangxi, produced 78.6% of the nation's total grain.

The top three grain production provinces, Heilongjiang, Henan and Shandong accounted for 11.3%, 10.2% and 8.1% of the nation's total grain output respectively.

Fig 1. Grain output of 13 major production provinces in 2020 (M ton)



How Much Did China Trade Agricultural Products in 2020

In 2020, the total value of China's agricultural product trade was 246.83 billion USD, an increase of 8.0% compared with the previous year. Export was 76.03 billion USD, a 3.2% decline, while import was 170.8 billion USD, a 14.0% increase. The trade deficient in the year was 94.77 billion USD, increased by 32.9% compared with 2019. China became a net agricultural product import country since 2004.

There was a 99.8% increase in cereal imports, due to sharp increase in imports of maize, wheat, sorghum, and barley. Soy import in 2020 totalled 100.33 million ton, 13.3% more than in 2019. The value of livestock products import increased by 31.3%, reached 47.57 billion USD. There was a sharp increase in pork and significant increase in pig offal import, by 120% and 19.8% respectively, there was a strong increase in beef import, by 27.6%, but a decrease in lamb and milk powder import, by 7% and 4% respectively comparing with 2019. Both import and export of aquatic products decreased in 2020, by 16.8% and 7.8% respectively compared with 2019.

Table 3. Import and export of agricultural products in 2020

	Import	Comparing with 2019 (%)	Export	Comparing with 2019 (%)
Cereals (M ton)	35.79	99.8	2.59	19.9
Wheat	8.38	140	0.18	42.1
Maize	11.3	140	0.003	87.3
Rice	2.94	15.6	2.31	16.1
Barley	8.08	36.3		
Sorghum	4.81	480		
Cotton (M ton)	2.23	15.2		
Sugar (M ton)	5.27	55.5		
Edible oil seed (M ton)	110	13.8	1.04	10.1
Soy	100.33	13.3		
Rapeseed	3.11	13.8		
Edible oil (M ton)	11.70	1.5	0.17	35.8
Palm oil	6.46	14.4		
Rapeseed oil	1.93	19.6		
Vegetables (Bln USD)	1.04	8.2	14.93	3.6
Fruits (Bln USD)	11.04	6.5	8.35	12.1
Livestock (Bln USD)	47.57	31.3	5.43	16.5
Pork (M ton)	4.30	120		
Pig offal (M ton)	1.36	19.8		
Beef (M ton)	2.12	27.6		
Lamb (M ton)	0.37	7		
Milk Powder (M ton)	1.34	4		
Aquatic products (Bln USD)	15.56	16.8	19.04	7.8

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