

FAO Statistical Yearbook 2014



Asia and the Pacific
food and agriculture



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Food and Agriculture

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**

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Foreword

Timely and reliable statistics are of fundamental importance in economic development and in the fight against hunger and poverty.

Not only can good data help to keep track of development progress and the impact of measures implemented, they can also serve to help in designing appropriate policies and interventions to improve past performance and ensure continuing progress.

Employing data from a variety of global statistical sources, including data gathered by FAO itself, this publication provides a detailed view of the latest trends and factors governing the performance of the food and agriculture sector in the Asia and Pacific Region (APR), the world's largest and most populous region.

Being the largest user of natural resources such as land and water, agriculture is the human activity that has the greatest impact on the environment. A significant part of the data contained in this publication thus relates not only to agriculture, livestock raising, forestry and fisheries but also to these sectors' interplay with the natural environment and the resulting social outcomes.

We have come to recognize that in order to feed more than 9 billion people in 2050 – and 5 billion of them in the APR alone – we must not only produce more food, but produce, process, distribute and consume it more sustainably while reducing food waste for meeting the Zero Hunger Challenge.

This publication strives to serve as a reference point on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of agriculture for policy-makers, donor agencies, researchers and analysts as well as the general public. The data presented here can be accessed electronically through the FAOSTAT data platform.

FAO is deeply committed to helping countries strengthen their statistical systems. Together with international partners, FAO is implementing a Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics to address emerging statistical needs as well as existing weaknesses in basic data in many developing countries.

This long-term project builds on three pillars: producing a minimum set of core data and determining national priorities; integrating agricultural statistics into national statistical systems; and fostering the sustainability of agricultural statistics through governance and capacity development.

In this context, FAO and its partners have prepared a Regional Action Plan (2013-2017) for the APR. This represents a groundbreaking effort to halt the decline in the content and quality of agricultural statistics production by restoring sustainable systems to produce them by making use of new methods and technologies. It is also designed to meet emerging data requirements not only to support decision-making regarding the linkage of agriculture to the environment but also to monitor how a decision in one area affects others.

The plan establishes a regional governance structure that will support statistical capacity-building efforts at the country level by providing technical assistance, training and research.

In order to fight hunger and poverty more effectively, FAO, in Asia and the Pacific as in the rest of the world, will continue to support the collection and dissemination of reliable data on agriculture and rural sectors, and to assist member countries in building capacity to improve the quality of data related to agriculture, food security and the environment.

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