

FAO Statistical Yearbook

2014



Europe and Central Asia
food and agriculture



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Food and Agriculture

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

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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 track the progress of development and the impact of measures implemented, they can also serve to help design appropriate policies and interventions to improve past performance and ensure continuing progress.

Employing data from a variety of global statistical sources, including mainly data gathered by FAO itself, this publication provides a detailed view of the latest trends and factors governing food and agriculture in Europe and Central Asia - a region whose challenge is to reduce its continuing wide disparities in farm productivity and incomes.

Being the largest user of natural resources such as land and water, agriculture is one of the human activities that has a significant impact on the environment. Thus a significant part of the data contained here relates not only to agriculture, livestock raising, forestry and fisheries but also to these sectors' interplay with the natural environment.

The question is of fundamental importance because we have come to recognize that in order to feed more than 9 billion people in 2050 - and 902 million of them in Europe and Central Asia - we must not only produce more food, but produce, process, distribute and consume it more sustainably.

This publication strives to serve as a reference point on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of agriculture for policymakers, donor agencies, researchers and analysts as well as the general public. Much of the data 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 weaknesses in basic data in developing countries as well as emerging statistical needs.

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.

This represents a ground-breaking effort to halt the decline in the content and quality of agricultural production statistics by restoring sustainable systems to produce them and making use of new methods and technologies. It is also designed to meet emerging data requirements, not only to support decisions regarding the linkage of agriculture to poverty and the environment, but also to monitor how a decision in one area affects the others.

FAO, in Europe and Central Asia, as in the rest of the world, will continue to support the collection and dissemination of statistical data, and to assist in capacity-building in order to improve data relating to agriculture, food security and the environment, and, in so doing, to fight hunger and poverty more effectively.

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