

North Korea food production could drop 14%: FAO

October 9 2015



Undated photo North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (C) visiting Rason City to inspect recovery work in the area hit by floods in August

North Korea's staple food production could plummet by 14 percent this year because of bad weather, sparking fears of exacerbating chronic food shortages in the impoverished nation, according to the UN agricultural agency.

The gloomy forecast from the Food and Agriculture Organization comes as the reclusive communist country prepares for a lavish military parade Saturday to mark the 70th anniversary of the ruling Workers' Party.

The North is expected to produce 3.7 million tonnes of rice and corn this year, down from 4.3 million tonnes last year, according to a report from the FAO early warning system.

Pyongyang plans to import 500,000 tonnes of rice and corn from abroad, the FAO said, but it will not be enough to feed its 25 million people.

The country, plagued by regular droughts, will face a total shortfall of 1.2 million tonnes of its staples.

State media reported in early June the country's main rice-growing areas had been badly hit by the "worst drought in 100 years".

North Korea saw significant rainfall later, but analysts said the prospects for this year were still grim.

North Korea has suffered regular food shortages—hundreds of thousands are believed to have died during a famine in the mid-to-late 1990s—with the situation exacerbated by floods, droughts and mismanagement.

In July, it asked for urgent humanitarian aid from its historic ally Iran to combat what it said was its worst drought in a century.

International food aid, especially from South Korea and the United States, has been drastically cut amid tensions over the communist state's nuclear and missile programmes.

UN figures show up to 70 percent of the country remains [food](#) insecure

and 28 percent of children under the age of five have suffered stunted growth due to malnutrition.

© 2015 AFP

Citation: North Korea food production could drop 14%: FAO (2015, October 9) retrieved 9 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-10-north-korea-food-production-fao.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.