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Agricultural Production on the rise

Forecast Grain production up by 18% and good practices demonstrated to increase rice production by 45%.

Timor-Leste is receiving good news on agricultural production on several fronts. The Food and Agricultural Organization [FAO] announced at the end of October that the aggregate cereal output of Timor-Leste in 2014 is forecast to increase by 18% on 2013 figures. Rice output is forecast to be 24% higher and maize 12% higher. Both rice and maize have a primary and secondary harvest through out the year and the FAO said “the increase reflects an expansion in the planted area and higher yields for the two seasons, following generally favorable weather conditions as well as increased use of high quality seeds, adequate supplies of fertilizers and the adoption of new technologies.”

In it's Food Security Snapshot of the 29 October the FAO also noted that cereal imports are forecast to decline in the 2014/15 marketing year and that overall food security conditions are improving.

Other good news revealing potential in the sector was a recent presentation of results from demonstration plots for rice production where Good Agricultural Practices [GAP] have been implemented in 2014. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Rural Development Program IV presented results showing an average increase of rice production of 45% for farmers implementing GAP with some outputs exploding by as much as 300%. More widespread use of these good practices, with appropriate support, will have a huge impact on harvest output and rural development.

Agriculture is one of the three “strategic sectors” of the Strategic Development Plan of Timor-Leste and vital for job creation, improved nutrition and economic diversification.

Government spokesperson, Minister Agio Pereira, congratulated the farmers, Ministry of Agriculture and Development Partners on their important achievements this year and urged all to “continue in collaboration to realize the full potential of Timor-Leste’s agricultural sector.” **ENDS**



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