

## IRAN IMPORTING MORE PULSES

One of the fastest growing importers of pulses in 2002 has been Iran. During the late 1990's, Iran was a net exporter of pulses through 1999. Iran may import between 55,000 and 75,000 tons of pulses in 2002. The imports this year include lentils and peas from the United States and Canada, beans from Asian suppliers, and chickpeas from Canada and Australia. High world petroleum prices and greater government expenditures for projects will bolster consumer purchasing power. Purchases of a wide range of pulse products by small Iranian boats visiting the Dubai trade center each day are seldom recorded in Iranian trade data. Even bean chips, bean dips, and canned beans purchased in Dubai are brought into Iran by small private traders. Iranians use chickpeas as a major source of protein in various ways. Lentils are used to spice up and decorate rice.

Three years of reduced pulse production in Iran to an annual average of about 444,000 tons annually during 1999-01, compared with an average of about 555,000 tons during 1996-98. Dry bean production in Iran increased from 139,000 tons in 1997 to an average of 182,000 tons annually during 1998-00. Use of irrigation for dry beans kept the reduction for their yields from declining to the extent recorded for chickpeas which were grown in significant areas without irrigation. Iran's chickpea production fell from 249,000 tons in 1998 to 165,000 tons in 1999 and a low of 158,000 tons by 2001. Despite some rebound for 2002 in areas of improved rainfall, consumer demand for chickpeas remains much higher than the supplies available.

U.S. exports of lentils to Iran rose to 6,953 tons during August-July of 2001/02, for a value of \$2.14 million. The average price of \$307.78 per metric ton was less than the price for U.S. lentils exported to some other countries. This was partly because shipments through food relief programs are usually the less costly grades of pulses. U.S. exports of dry peas to Iran reached 5,612 tons in 2001/02, valued at \$718,000, with an average price of \$127.94 per ton.

Reported imports of pulses into Iran were only 5,038 tons in 1999, although this did not include some food aid arrivals, and small deliveries by trucks coming from Turkey. Iran's imports of pulses rebounded to a range of 30,000 tons in 2000.

Canada's exports of lentils to Iran fell from 18,183 tons in 2000 to 578 tons in 2001. Canada's dry bean exports to Iran rose from 28 tons in 1999 to 198 tons in 2000. Iran should be a larger importer of dry beans in the coming year. China and Burma may be among major suppliers of dry beans for Iran in the future.

Iran's exports of pulses dropped from a peak of 117,563 tons valued at \$24.6 million in 1997 to only 37,277 tons in 1999 for \$8.4 million. Iran's exports of chickpeas and lentils to markets in the Middle East and South Asia dwindled as domestic supplies declined.

Turkey had been an important supplier of lentils for Iran during the 1980's and early 1990's. Then official statistics of Turkey showed only token exports of lentils to Iran in the late 1990's. Iran may import more lentils and chickpeas from Syria in the autumn from trucks passing through Turkey. More dry peas from Russia and Ukraine are likely to come into northern Iran in the coming year.

#### MOZAMBIQUE SCHEDULED TO BECOME MUCH LARGER DRY BEAN IMPORTER

U.S. exports of dry beans to Mozambique are scheduled to reach 23,000 metric tons in 2002.

This is likely to place Mozambique among the top ten customers for U.S. dry bean exports in 2002. Mozambique was not a market for U.S. dry bean exports in 2001, but had been a customer for 2,000 tons shipped through food aid in 2000.

The first food aid shipment of 9,500 tons of mostly pinto beans to Mozambique had already resulted in the shipment of 2,088 tons of dry beans in June 2002. The June bean shipments were valued at \$1.4 million, with an average price of \$669.54 per ton. In August, an additional food aid tender for Mozambique included financing for the purchase of 13,500 tons of red kidney beans.

Mozambique will not be able to buy many dry beans from neighboring countries in Africa, which had been significant suppliers in the past. Adverse weather and civil disturbances reduced commercial supplies of beans available for sale in Zimbabwe and Malawi. These countries have also received some U.S. dry beans through food aid programs.

China occasionally provided Mozambique with dry beans in the past. Canada exported 509 tons of dry peas to Mozambique in 2001. U.S. exports of dry peas to Mozambique might rise to about 2,000 tons in 2002.

Production of edible beans accounted for over 97 percent of pulse production in Mozambique in the recent decade. Mozambique's pulse production fell from a peak of about 231,000 tons in 1996 to 195,000 tons by 1999, Then pulse production dropped to 130,000 tons in 2001, which included about 125,000 tons. The reduction of about 65,000 tons for edible bean output between 1999 and 2001 left a large import need. Per capita use of edible beans might remain stable if supplies were available at reasonable prices.