

**TUNISIA**

Economic classification: Average Income economy		
Oil exporter or importer (net):	Exporter	
Annual per capita income:	US\$1,600	1988
Annual per capita GNP	US\$1,500	1988
Average annual growth	5.0%	1977-87
Annual inflation rate	7.1%	1977-87
Annual inflation rate	6.7%	1988
Volume of imports	2,567.3 million dinars	1988
Of which food	3,073 million dinars	1988
Principal foreign exchange earning export: oil-agro-food, tourism, textiles,		
Population	7.650 million	1988
Annual population growth	3.2%	1988

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Crop Situation and Outlook: Characteristics of the 1987-88 crop year

The crop year had been characterized by:

- delayed rainfall early in the season;
- an overall deficit in rainfall;
- poor distribution of the precipitation recorded;
- finally, excessive heat and violent winds in the grain ripening phase.

The beginning of the 1987-88 crop year was marked by a fairly long delay in rainfall, for the first substantial amount of rain did not come until January. This dry autumn was felt in the north, south and centre of the country.

The total volume of rain recorded from the beginning of the crop year until the end of April was no more than half the normal amount for that period. The shortfall was greater in central Tunisia. In Sidi Bouzid, Kairouan and Kasserine, 30%, 47% and 53% respectively of the normal rainfall was recorded, as shown in the table appendix.

In time as well as space, the rainfall distribution (from the beginning of the season to the end of April) was very unfavourable. The soil preparation and planting season (October, November and December) was practically dry. The tillering and shooting periods were also characterized by low precipitation in producing regions.

There was also great variation in rainfall between and within regions. For example, the governorates of Kef, Siliana and Bizerta received only 40%, 54% and 46% of the normal precipitation for the period (early September to late April), while the governorates of Béjà and Jendouba received nearly 70% of the normal precipitation for the same period.

The rainfall deficit was more marked in the south than the north of some governorates (such as Kef and Siliana).

High temperatures and strong winds in late April and early May were also noteworthy, occurring in nearly all producing regions.