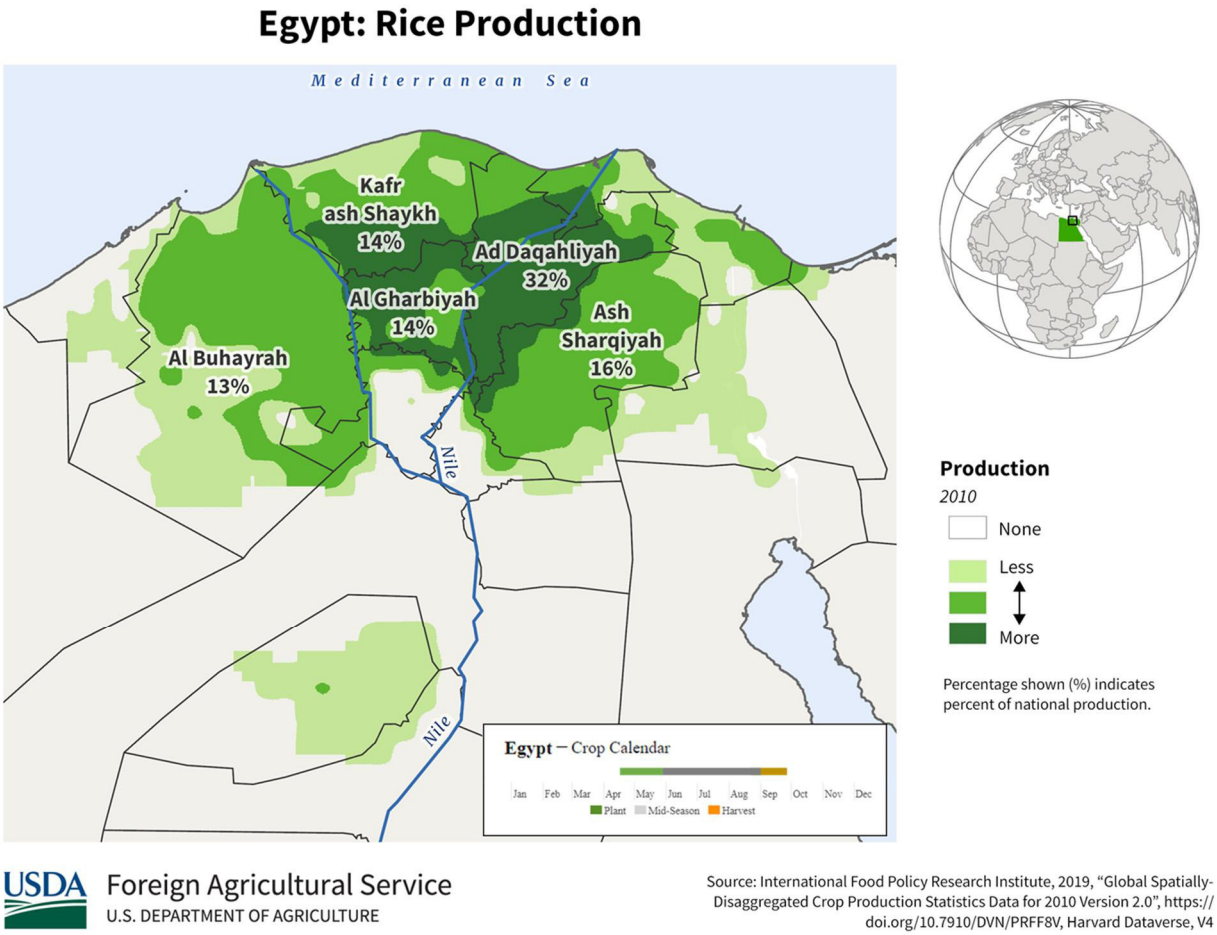
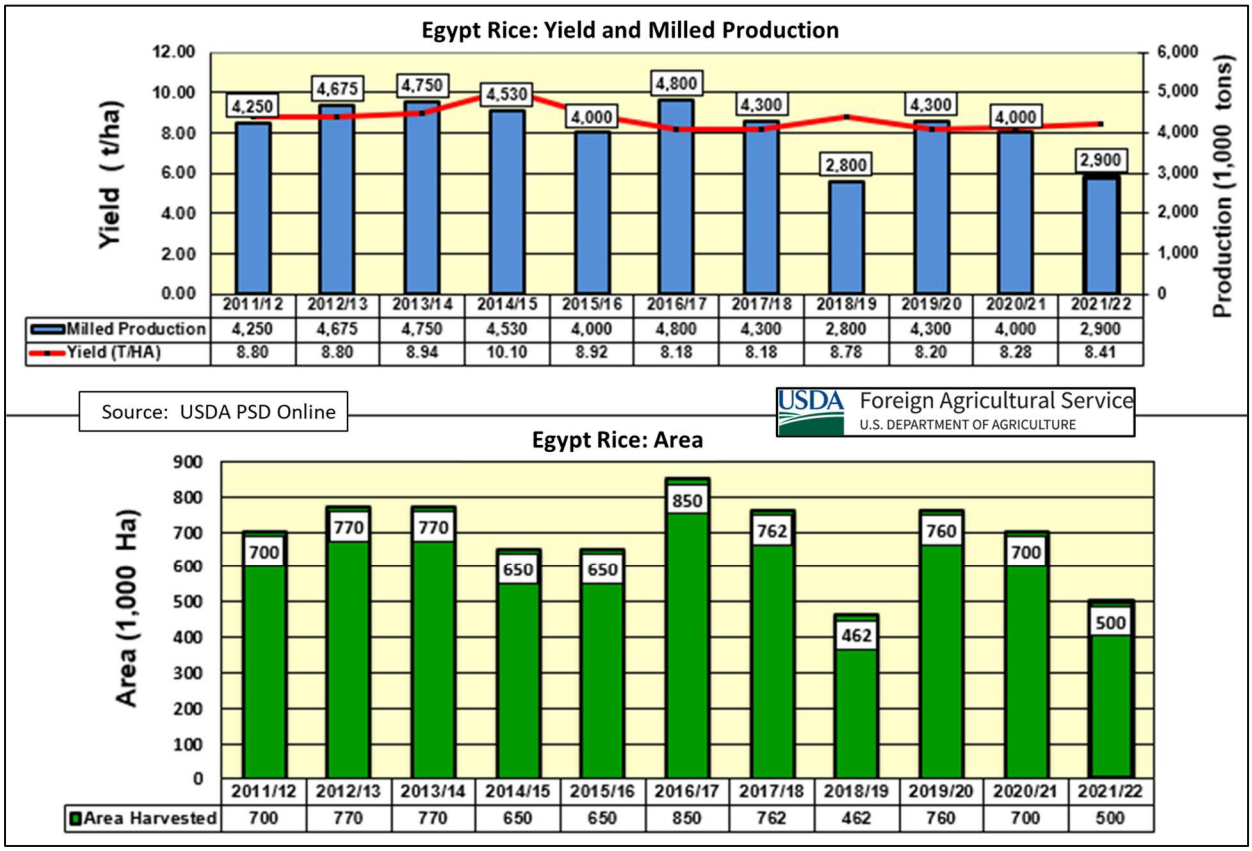
**Egypt Rice: Stricter Enforcement of Area Limit Reduces Rice Crop**




Marketing year (MY) 2021/2022 rice production in Egypt is estimated at 2.9 million tons (mmt), milled basis, 4.2 mmt rough. Milled production is estimated down 16 percent from last month, 28 percent from last year, and 28 percent from the 5-year average. Harvested area is estimated at 0.5 million hectares (mha), down 17 percent or 0.1 mha from last month, 29 percent or 0.2 mha from last year's 0.7 mha, and 29 percent below the 5-year average. Yield is estimated at 8.41 tons per hectare, up 1 percent from last month, 2 percent from last year, and 1 percent above the 5-year average.




Rice is planted in April and May and harvested in September. Due to reliable irrigation water from the Nile, rich alluvial soils, and high temperatures, rice production variability is primarily in response to area fluctuations. Rice is one of the most profitable crops for Egyptian farmers but water scarcity in Egypt is a constant pressure on the highly water-dependent crop. Restrictions for legally grown rice include geographical limits, where it is only permitted to be cultivated in specific areas of nine exclusive governorates of the Nile Delta. Total legal, national rice area is capped at about 451,000 hectares. These prohibitions have been in place for several years, but they have been largely ignored under usually lax enforcement, except for MY 2018/19. Earlier this year, the Government of Egypt (GOE) refocused its efforts on reducing illegal rice area by enacting a law that allows the levying of fines or prison sentences for planting rice illegally (See USDA GAIN Report EG2021-0011). This law, along with increased efforts to appeal to farmers about the tighter enforcement, has increased compliance, although area is still expected to be above the legal limit. Anxiety about water shortage has been rising as progress continues on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, upstream on the Nile. Future Nile water availability, particularly in dry years, has become a prominent concern to those downstream from the dam. *(For more information, please contact Bryan.Purcell@usda.gov.)*