



Analysis from the  
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### OBSERVATION

The potential of Iraq's spring grain crop are promising and the outlook is good for food security in the near-term. However, this positive outlook is tempered by several dependencies: 1) continued favorable weather conditions; 2) concern over the ability to provide basic services needed to support harvest and distribution; 3) the reality that only a fraction of Iraq's nutritional requirements will be met by domestic production; and 4) the successful restoration of the United Nations Oil for Food Program (OFF). Until some semblance of normalcy, modernization, and institutions of civil society are injected into Iraq's political and social infrastructure, it will be difficult to ascertain Iraq's food security outlook beyond this current period of readjustment and dependency on the OFF program. Iraq's economic history, and its internal production capacity (barring weather disruptions) point to a nation ultimately capable of economic self-sufficiency and food security.

### DISCUSSION

Iraq's food production system appears resilient to impacts of war, and is on pace to meet or exceed last year's production levels as weather cooperates. However, success will depend on a stable rural labor force and access to infrastructure and services required for a bountiful harvest. This is drawing the close attention of the international community as nations reach out to shore up basic governmental services. However, domestic product provides for only a fraction of Iraq's total caloric consumption requirement. Accordingly substantial imports are required.

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) has indicated that weather conditions have been favorable for development of Iraq's grain crop. About 2.5 million acres typical for recent years, were sown prior to the outbreak of the Gulf War and were largely unaffected by military operations. Satellite observations indicate that vegetation density in the productive northern regions meet or exceed historical averages and appear to match the historical average in central and southern regions. The satellite derived index has been found to be a reliable indicator of yield potential.



As depicted inside, entry points for humanitarian aid supplies exist in the southern, western, and northern border areas of Iraq. (Source: ISciences.)

- Harvesting of the grain crop occurs in May and June. However, dislocation of rural labor force and the uncertainty of services normally provided by Iraq's food ministry threaten harvest. The Food and Agriculture Organization has mounted a campaign to insure basic harvest services are in place to reap the expected bountiful crop.
- Successful production of 1.5 million to 1.7 million metric tons of grain will satisfy only 25-30% of Iraq's need in coming months.

While the United Nations Oil for Food Program was re-launched on June 3, 2003, it faces critical hurdles as a result of disruption of Iraq's transportation network and general lawlessness. Initial food distribution efforts have already reached 10 million Iraqis. However, it is only a temporary fix, because the OFF Program is expected to be terminated by UN Resolution 1483 (adopted 22 May 2003) in six months time. In the meantime, Iraq's citizens are coping with available food stocks while OFF re-stabilizes and the spring crop is reaped.

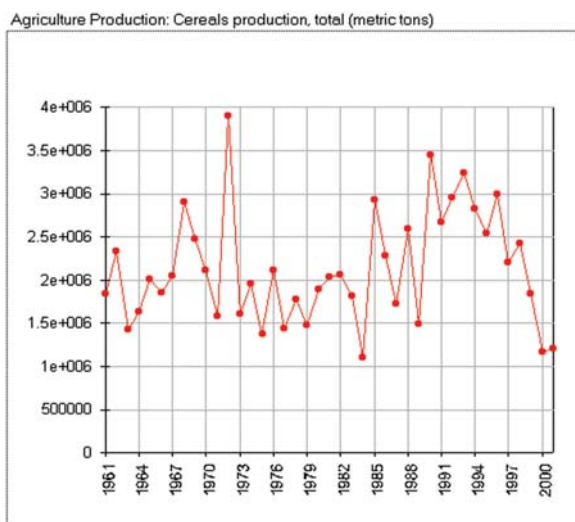
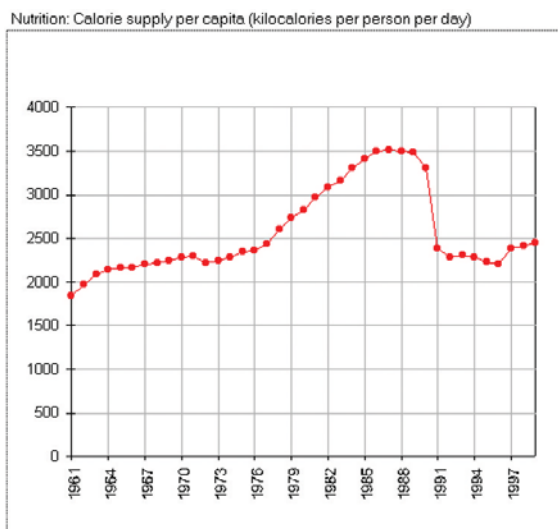
Ultimately food security will depend upon restoring normalized trade relationships and reliance on market forces. OFF is programmed to terminate by the end of 2003. Whether six months is adequate to restore a viable market-based agricultural infrastructure merits concern and scrutiny.

- In the near term, food stocks do not appear at issue, however, it is uncertain whether basic infrastructure can be restored to pre-war conditions that enabled the U.N.'s largest food-aid

distribution network to insure basic food security for the vast majority of Iraq's citizens. More than 800 million metric tons of food have been dispatched to Iraq by OFF since March, and in the first weeks, food baskets have reached 19 million Iraqis.

- The U.N. on June 23 appealed to the international community for an additional US\$259 million to support relief efforts for the next six months. The majority of these funds are needed to restore essential services - water, sanitation, infrastructure rehabilitation, and education. While the U.N. does not foresee any major humanitarian crisis looming, the desire to get Iraq on its own feet as soon as possible lends urgency to the desire to restore essential services.
- The World Food Program has designated Bandar Imam Khomeini in Iran as a staging area for export of food to Iraq, an unprecedented gesture of cooperation by Iran, handling 72,000 Metric Tons of cargo per month.

*Food security in Iraq will depend entirely on foreign supply for the foreseeable future*



Figures 1 and 2 depict calorie supply per capita and cereals production since 1961.

Prior to the first Gulf War in 1991, Iraq's per capita caloric supply reached 3500 calories per day. After the war, the supply dramatically decreased by one-third. The situation was acute for all, with the poorest Iraqis suffering the most. After the first war, aggressive attempts to expand cultivated land buoyed domestic supply to replace lost food trade. Land area sown to grain in 1993 doubled the historical average. However, the result was not reflected in production numbers, and the gains were not sustained. Recent harvests have fallen below historical

averages. UN Resolution 986, adopted in 1995, led to the Oil-for-Food (OFF) Program. OFF succeeded in stabilizing the domestic supply to close to 2500 calories per day by the beginning of 2003. The program succeeded in establishing a sophisticated distribution program, employing 55,000 "corner stores" to deliver food baskets containing nutritional daily value of 2200 calories to most of Iraq's 27 million citizens. Over 60 per cent of Iraq's were entirely dependent on this supply in days leading up to the second Gulf War.

## SOURCES

### What They Say

#### USDA Foreign Agriculture Service

*Iraq: Crop Condition Update*, Production Estimates and Crop Assessment Division Foreign Agricultural Service, June 13, 2003 Provides an assessment of agricultural crop conditions and production in Iraq.

#### Food and Agriculture Organization

*(FAO) Inter-Agency Humanitarian Appeal for Iraq*,

FAO Agricultural Relief Component Amount: US \$46 million "Recent and ongoing rapid assessments show that widespread insecurity and looting, the complete collapse of Ministries and state agencies (sole providers of essential farming inputs and services), together with significant damages to power supply and communication infrastructure have negatively affected the agricultural sector."

#### *Food Outlook, No 3, June 2003*

"Iraq, despite favourable weather conditions this year, harvest prospects are generally uncertain due to insecurity following the recent war. A serious shortage of inputs and spare parts for agricultural machinery continues to constrain food production."

*Land area sown to grain in 1993 doubled the historical average.*

FAO - Foodcrops and Shortages  
No.2, June 2003

"In 2002, production of cereals (mainly wheat and barley) was estimated at about 1.7 million tonnes, about 7 percent higher than the previous year due to improved weather. Weather conditions in the current cropping season were also favourable. Iraq's total cereal production has averaged below 2 million tonnes in the last five years, less than half the level in 1990. Agricultural productivity, particularly in the major producing regions of central and southern Iraq, has continued to suffer from limited investment, shortage of inputs and deteriorating irrigation infrastructure. Three consecutive years of severe drought (1999-2001) have also devastated agricultural production. In 2002, improved weather resulted in increased cereal production.

*"They are, nevertheless, almost entirely dependent on the UN and international aid agencies for food supplies."*

**"World Resources Institute:**

*World Resources Database*, World Resources Institute, 2003 Edition.

Provides historical records of various socioeconomic and environmental data including key food production factors.

**BBC News**

*Fresh UN appeal for Iraq aid*, BBC News, 23 June, 2003, 08:31 GMT 09:31 UK,

"They are, nevertheless, almost entirely dependent on the UN and international aid agencies for food supplies...The UN says it is satisfied with its funding for food stocks and says this new appeal is designed to cover other requirements - such as healthcare and basic repairs to the country's shattered infrastructure."

**Campaign Against Sanctions on Iraq**  
*CASI Report on OFF*

"Routine distribution of food on this scale is in itself a massive logistic operation that appears to work flawlessly. Some 24 million

people (20.5 million in the south/center and 3.5 million in northern Iraq), or roughly 3.7 million families currently receive and average of 2,230 kcal per person per day..."

**Oxfam**

*Iraq: Oxfam's relief program*

"Oxfam also has grave concerns about the humanitarian situation in the region. Access to food and clean water continues to be difficult. Many families are surviving on bread and milk as the monthly food rations, which used to be distributed under the Oil-for-Food program, have stopped.

Some people have received irregular rations from Oil-for-Food since the end of the war but food prices have risen hugely and doctors say most mothers complain their children are not getting enough to eat. The price of a kilo of meat has doubled in recent weeks."

**US Department of Agriculture**

*USDA Release No. 0209.03*, USDA Tele-News Conference with USDA Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, Dr. J.B. Penn and U.S. Senior Ministry Advisor for Agriculture Dan Amstutz, Washington D.C. "OFF, oil-for-food program, distribution of food aid goes on, employing some 44,000 Asians, as they call them, from the Ministry of Trade, making deliveries of these food baskets to families throughout Iraq. There again I would be surprised if there weren't some isolated instances where deliveries were hampered because of the security situation, but overall we are pleased with what we hear about the success of those deliveries."

**USAID**

*USAID and Iraq Coalition Provisional Authority Announce* Opening of the Umm Qasr Port to Commercial Traffic, WASHINGTON, DC 20523, 2003-053,

June 16, 2003,  
 "Opening this port to commercial traffic is just one step in helping the Iraqi people on the road to economic recovery. The port is an important commercial gateway to Iraq's integration into the global community," said USAID Administrator Andrew S. Natsios

### **United Nations General Assembly**

#### **Security Council Resolutions**

(Related to the Oil-for-Food Programme)

"Resolution 1483, of 22 May 2003 lifted civilian sanctions and provided for termination of the Oil-for-Food Programme within six months, transferring responsibility for the administration of any remaining activity to The Authority representing the occupying powers."

#### **Text of appeal**

Full text of call to United Nations appealing for US\$ 259 million in funds to support reconstruction efforts to avert humanitarian crisis.

### **Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance**

#### **Iraq Crisis Report**

Food: Distribution on track with 280,000 MT distributed with minimal problems to 19 million recipients in first 2 ½ weeks of June goal is 480,000 MT per month; Good crops of wheat and barley currently being harvested and paid for by Oil-for-Food funds.

### **Humanitarian Information Center for Iraq**

#### **United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (UNOHCI) Sitreps**

Weekly situation reports. June 10-17 documents the UN's determination to transition OFF to Iraq by November.

### **International Crisis Group**

#### **War in Iraq: Managing Humanitarian Relief**

A view of critical needs to address in Iraq as of March 27, 2003.

### **Arabic News.com**

#### **US official on the future of Iraq**

"... water in Baghdad is back at 75% of pre-war levels; power is being gradually restored; mail delivery has begun around parts of the country; the Ministry of Health has been re-established and there is currently no major health crisis; primary schools re-opened May 4; oil production is increasing; the agricultural sector is reviving; and shops are open and the retail sector is increasingly active."

### **Office of the Iraq Programme Oil-for-Food**

#### **Oil-for-Food Programme Background**

Background Brief - Food "Under resolution 986 (1995) all Iraqi residents were entitled to receive the monthly Oil-for-Food basket and it was estimated that 60 per cent of the population were totally dependent on it. The nutritional value of the food basket almost doubled between 1996 and 2002 from 1200 to 2200 kcal/person/day. The supply of food commodities generally kept pace with national demand and contributed significantly towards price stability in the markets."

### **Relief Web**

#### **Iraq - Inter-Agency Flash Appeal**

"The cereal harvest in May/June 2003 is expected to provide some 1.5 - 1.7 million tonnes of grain (or 25-30 percent of total grain requirements). The current conflict in Iraq, however, may generate considerable population displacement, loss of assets, damage to infrastructure, breakdown of communication networks and trade, as well as disruption of food production activities. To mitigate the impact of the crisis on the population, it will be essential to ensure timely provision of support to the agricultural sector, so as to allow for the

***"...water in Baghdad is back at 75% of pre-war levels..."***

continuation/restart of current food production activities and decrease the dependency on imported food. "

*UN agencies appeal for \$259 million in emergency assistance for Iraq*

IHA/784 "The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Kenzo Oshima, said the food sector remained the largest component of overall requirements but was fully funded thanks to "generous donor support" and more than \$1 billion in resources from the Oil-for-Food programme, under which the ousted regime was allowed to sell oil for humanitarian supplies."

**World Food Program**

*Iraq Crisis*

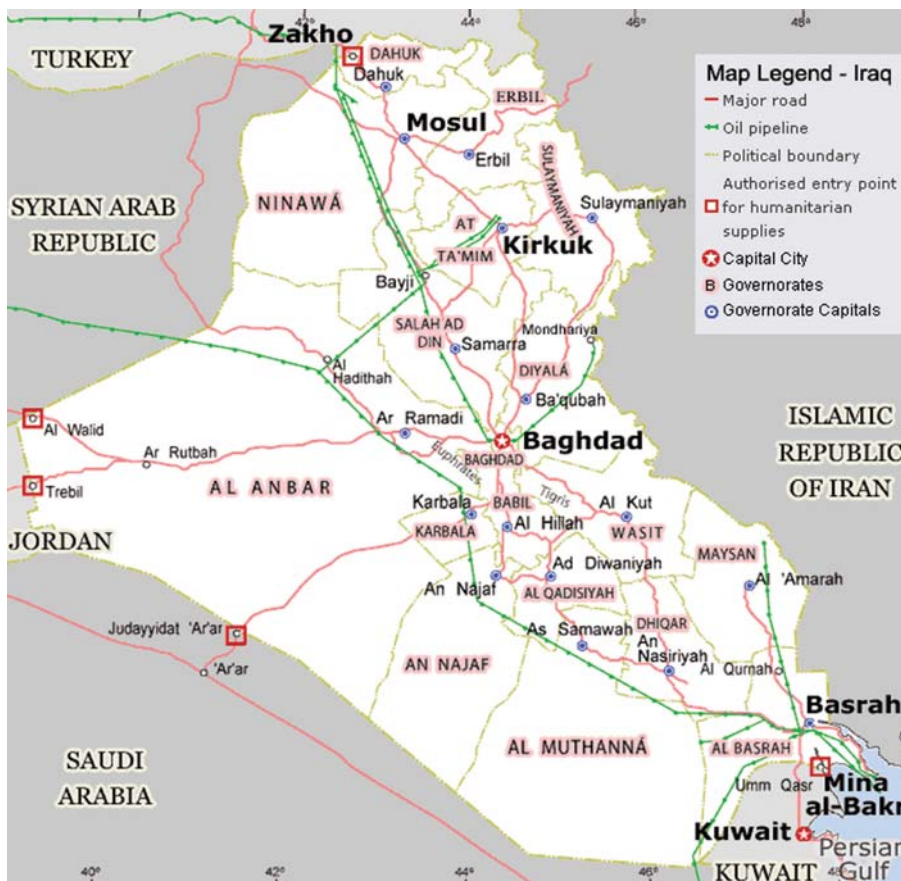
"Security is the main obstacle to food

distribution," said executive director, Baghdad, 12 May 2003. WFP Executive Director James T. Morris this weekend warned that security is the key concern as the Agency prepares to revive Iraq's food aid distribution system by the beginning of June. "It is the overwhelming issue - security for our warehouses, for the mills, security for the convoys, and security for our offices," said Mr. Morris "...There is no widespread hunger," he said, "most families have enough food for three to five weeks."

*Bandar Imam Khomeini: A Beacon Of Hope*

"WFP's massive logistics operation at Iran's Bandar Imam Khomeini port, or BIK, is not only playing an integral part in getting urgent food aid to post-war Iraq. It is also rebuilding relations between two nations." June 13 2003.

**"Security is the main obstacle to food distribution," World Food Program Executive Director**



*Center for International Disaster Information (CIDI)*

*IRAQ: Food distribution proceeding well - WFP - 03-Jun-03*

"Following a two-month period of disruption, distribution by the Iraqi trade ministry was proceeding well two days after the programme resumed on Sunday, a World Food Programme (WFP) source said. About 27 million Iraqis nationwide are expected to receive their food rations from thousands of distribution agents this month.

Figure 3: Map of Iraq showing political boundaries and entry points for humanitarian aid supplies. (Source: ISciences.)