



Pakistan Agriculture Crisis

Locust Outbreak & Rising Food Insecurity

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Pakistan's agriculture faced a desert locust attack in 2019-20. Agricultural crops in two provinces (Balochistan and Sindh) were badly affected. The presence of prolonged locust swarms since March 2108 was quite worrisome. The event has been declared as national emergency on February 1st,2020. In past years Locust swarms attack were also seen in the 1950s, 1960s and 1990s have caused immense losses to Pakistan's agriculture. Current attack has also brought Pakistan at the brim of food security risk and agriculture crop damage. According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Pakistan is under threat of an intense second-wave of invasion of locust. If the situation is not controlled, it will spread in the west of the country. Locust infestation may cause a loss of Rs 600 billion to Pakistani economy as added by FAO. The locusts swarms entrance routes in Pakistan:

- Iran to Balochistan
- Indian Rajasthan to Cholistan
- Tharparkar desert area

Initially the swarms entered in Balochistan and spread fastly by June 2019 into the Sindh and Punjab provinces. The locusts migrated to Indian Rajasthan deserts in July but re-entered in Tarparkar (Sindh) in October 2019. The locust outbreak turned serious and agriculture losses were reported to main crop production areas in Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh provinces. Over 115,000 hectares of crops including wheat, oil seed crops, cotton, gram, fruits and vegetables, as well as grazing field losses are also observed. Infact the Locust outbreak has damaged Agriculture more than COVID-19.

