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## **Nicaragua: Food Crop Harvest Severely Affected By Drought**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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Damage caused by Hurricane Joan last October, and months of drought followed by abrupt downpours have cut the Nicaragua's harvest to a fraction of its expected size. Food shortages are expected. The most recent estimates of losses provided by the Ministry of Agricultural-Livestock Development and Agrarian Reform were compiled in mid-June, before a full assessment of drought damage was possible. The ministry's estimates indicated 10% of corn plantings were lost; 25% of rice; 26% of beans; and, 44% of sorghum used for food and livestock forage. Statistics released on June 30 by the pro-government National Union of Farmers and Livestock Growers show shortfalls of 31% for corn; 50%, beans; 53%, rice; and, 71% for the type of sorghum used for human consumption. (Basic data from New York Times, 08/13/89)

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