

# Uganda Weekly Agriculture, Market, and Weather Report

## 25 APRIL – 02 MAY 2025

This comprehensive report covers the agricultural situation in Uganda from April 25 to May 2, 2025, including weather forecasts, crop conditions, livestock updates, market analysis, and recommendations for farmers. The first rainy season is well underway in bimodal regions, supporting crop growth despite forecasts of below-average rainfall in some areas. Food prices remain stable and generally lower than last year, while livestock conditions are improving with regenerating pastures.

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# Executive Summary

The first rainy season is progressing well in Uganda's bimodal regions, supporting crop growth despite forecasts of below-average rainfall in many areas this week. In Karamoja and northern areas, rains have started more erratically, with planting ongoing.

Major staple crops including maize, beans, millet, sorghum, and bananas are mostly in early to mid-growth stages. Farmers are actively weeding and fertilizing fields to boost yields, with harvests expected in June-July.

Pastures are regenerating with the rains, improving feed for livestock. However, disease vigilance remains crucial, particularly for tick-borne diseases in cattle and Newcastle disease in poultry. Vaccination and pest control efforts are being emphasized by veterinary authorities.

Food prices are relatively stable and generally lower than last year, owing to adequate stocks. Livestock prices remain firm, with goats selling for around UGX 250,000-350,000 and local cows for UGX 1.5-2.5 million.

Parts of Western Uganda may receive heavy downpours this week, potentially causing localized flooding, while Karamoja continues to experience food stress with humanitarian support active.

# Weather Forecast (April 25 – May 2, 2025)

Uganda's weather outlook features a mix of moderate rains in some regions and drier conditions in others. The Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) and ICPAC forecast the following:

## **Karamoja (Northeastern)**

Light rainfall totals (<30-40 mm) with spotty distribution, marking a delayed onset of the unimodal wet season. Communities should use any rains for planting but plan for dry spells.

## **Northern Region**

Scattered moderate showers, especially in northwestern districts. West Nile areas may receive 50-80 mm, while Acholi/Lango areas see lower amounts (~30-60 mm). Overall rainfall is slightly below the long-term average.

## **Eastern Region**

A relatively dry week with light rains (<50 mm) across much of eastern Uganda. This is less rainfall than usual for peak season. Farmers should conserve soil moisture through mulching.

## **Western Region**

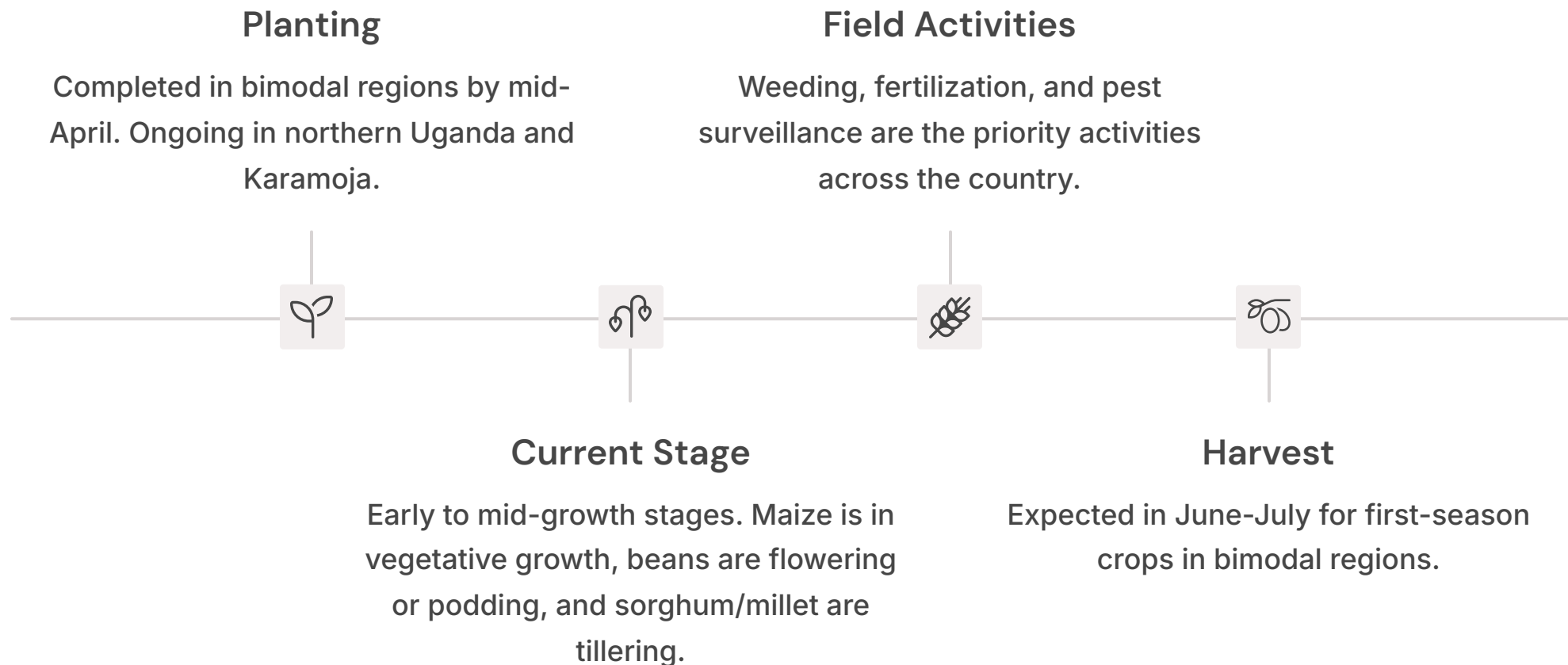
The heaviest rainfall this week, with moderate to locally heavy rains totaling 50-120 mm, particularly in the Rwenzori Mountains and south-western Uganda. These rains will benefit crops but may cause waterlogging in poorly drained fields.

## **Central & Lake Victoria**

Scattered thunderstorms with modest rainfall (~30-50 mm) in central districts. Areas around Lake Victoria can expect frequent isolated thunderstorms, especially in afternoons, with total weekly rainfall forecast around 40-60 mm.

# Crop Calendar & Growth Stages

Uganda's bimodal regions (Central, Eastern, Western, Lake Victoria Crescent) are in the heart of the first growing season. Planting was largely completed by mid-March through mid-April, and crops are now establishing and growing. In the unimodal north and Karamoja, the single rainy season has just begun, with farmers actively planting.



Bananas, as perennial crops, are responding well to April's rains with new suckers and developing fruit bunches. Farmers are advised to prune old leaves, remove excess suckers, and apply organic manure around the stools. Mulching is highly recommended to conserve soil moisture and add organic matter.

# Maize & Beans Development

## Maize Status

In central and western districts, first-season maize is in early vegetative growth (about 4-6 weeks after planting). Many plants are knee-high, with early-planted fields potentially beginning to tassel in late May. Farmers have finished planting and are now conducting first and second weeding.

This is the time for top-dressing fertilizer (e.g., applying urea) as maize enters its rapid growth phase. In Northern Uganda, maize planting is ongoing as part of the unimodal season.

## Beans Progress

Most common bean varieties planted in March are now flowering or podding. The first weeding has been completed, and a second weeding may be underway in fields planted early.

First-season beans are generally planted from March to mid-April and harvested in June-July. Farmers should watch for flowering-stage pests like flower thrips or aphids and consider a light top dressing of phosphorus or potassium if soil tests indicate deficiencies.

# Sorghum, Millet & Bananas

## Sorghum & Millet

In bimodal regions, sorghum and millet planted in March are in the vegetative stage. These cereals are more drought-tolerant, though early growth has been affected by patchy rains in some eastern areas.

Farmers have completed planting sorghum in Teso and Karamoja by April. Karamoja's sorghum and pearl millet are just emerging or being sown now due to the later onset of rains. Elsewhere, sorghum fields are being weeded, and plants are tillering. No harvesting of cereals will occur until late June or beyond.

## Bananas (Matooke)

April's rains have stimulated banana growth and fruiting. Many banana mats are now putting out new suckers and developing fruit bunches for harvest in a few months.

Farmers should intensify plantation management: prune old leaves, remove excess suckers (keeping the "mother, daughter, granddaughter" configuration), and apply organic manure. Mulching is highly recommended to conserve soil moisture and add organic matter. Vigilance against Banana Bacterial Wilt is essential, including sterilizing tools between plants.

# Input Recommendations & Technical Advisory



## Soil Fertility & Fertilizers

Apply top-dress fertilizers to maize and sorghum in their vegetative stage (e.g., urea at ~50 kg/ha when plants are knee-high). Place fertilizer a few inches from plant stems and lightly cover with soil. For bananas and perennial crops, incorporate well-rotted farmyard manure or compost around the base while soils are moist.



## Soil & Water Management

Enhance soil moisture retention through mulching fields with maize stover or dry grass. Implement measures to prevent soil erosion on slopes, such as trenches, swales, ridging, or contour bunding. Apply available manure or compost now so rains can leach nutrients into the soil slowly.



## Pest Management

Scout for Fall Armyworm (FAW) on maize, especially in the whorls. Use biopesticides like Bt or selective chemicals if detected early. Watch for bean foliage beetles and aphids on beans, considering insecticidal soap or neem extracts for control. Reduce pest pressure now for optimal yields later.



## Push-Pull Intercropping

Consider adopting "push-pull" technology in cereal fields. Intercrop cereals with desmodium legume between rows and plant Napier grass or Brachiaria as a border. This repels stemborers, suppresses Striga weed, and can double maize yields while providing quality fodder for livestock.

Use herbicides and pesticides judiciously, purchasing inputs from reputable dealers to avoid counterfeits. Practice Integrated Pest Management including crop rotation, pest-resistant varieties, and conservation of natural enemies like ants and ladybird beetles that control aphids.

# Livestock & Ranching

## Cattle Management

The rains have greatly improved pasture availability in grazing areas. Practice rotational grazing to allow pastures to recover. With increased moisture, tick populations are rising, elevating the risk of tick-borne diseases, especially East Coast Fever (ECF).

Spray or dip cattle every 1-2 weeks with an acaricide, rotating chemicals to prevent resistance. Watch for signs of tick fever: swollen lymph nodes, fever, loss of appetite. Keep pens clean and dry to prevent foot rot, and supplement with mineral licks as fast-growing grass can be mineral-deficient.

## Goats, Sheep & Poultry

Small ruminants are enjoying the flush of new browse and grasses. Current market prices for live goats are favorable (about UGX 7,400-11,000 per kg live weight). Focus on disease prevention, particularly Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) and Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP).

For poultry, Newcastle Disease is a major concern. Vaccinate chickens if not done recently, as outbreaks are common during changing weather. Watch for coccidiosis in chicks now that the ground is wet, and provide clean water to prevent disease spread.



# Market Analysis: Staple Food Prices

Region	Maize Grain (UGX/kg)	Beans (UGX/kg)	Sorghum (UGX/kg)	Millet (UGX/kg)	Bananas (UGX/kg)
Northern	~2,500	~6,000	~10,000	~9,000	~5,000
Eastern	~2,000	~5,500	~8,500	~8,000	~4,000
Western	~3,000	~7,000	~11,000	~10,000	~4,500
Central	~3,500	~8,000	~13,000	~11,000	~6,000

Staple food prices are relatively stable and generally lower than last year. Maize grain is cheapest in Eastern Uganda (~UGX 2,000/kg) due to surplus production, and priciest in urban centers (~UGX 3,500/kg in Central). According to FAO GIEWS, maize prices are approximately 35% lower and bean prices 15% lower than 2023, thanks to good stocks.

The Northern region, particularly Karamoja, tends to have the highest staple prices, with retail maize exceeding UGX 3,000/kg during lean times. Eastern Uganda enjoys the lowest prices for most crops due to decent second-season harvests and moderate cross-border demand.

# Livestock Prices & Market Trends

**UGX 1.8M**

**Average Bull**

Medium bull (350 kg) in Central region

**UGX 250K**

**Average Goat**

Full-grown goat price range

**UGX 30K**

**Local Chicken**

Price per bird in urban markets

**UGX 11K**

**Egg Tray**

Price for 30 eggs in Kampala

Livestock prices remain firm across Uganda. Live cattle prices in Kampala and Jinja translate to UGX 7,558-18,894 per kg (live weight), with the lower end for local Zebu cattle and higher end for improved breeds. Western Uganda (e.g., Kiruhura) has the best prices for cattle sellers, with large Ankole bulls exceeding UGX 2.5 million.

Goat prices are strong countrywide, with retail ranges of UGX 7,350-11,000 per kg live weight. Sheep trade similarly to goats, while local chickens sell for UGX 25,000-35,000 each in Kampala. The overall market trend is relatively stable, with adequate supplies and affordable staple prices for most consumers.

# Government Initiatives



## Parish Development Model (PDM)

The government continues to roll out the PDM, which includes agricultural grants at the parish level. Many parishes have formed cooperatives to bulk purchase fertilizers at subsidized rates. There's emphasis on equipping smallholder farmers with quality inputs, especially improved, drought-tolerant seed varieties.



## Crop Disease and Pest Control

MAAIF's Crop Protection Department has issued alerts about possible rise of fall armyworm and Quelea birds. They're working with local governments in Eastern Uganda to implement community-based monitoring, with farmer sensitization workshops held in Iganga and Bugiri this week.



## Livestock Health Campaigns

Nationwide vaccination drives are underway, including Newcastle Disease vaccination for poultry and FMD vaccination in high-risk cattle corridor districts. Quarantine restrictions remain in effect in some sub-counties of southwestern Uganda due to FMD.



## Extension Services

NAADS and local extension offices have ramped up field visits. The government recently launched an "e-Extension" platform that sends timed agronomic advice to farmers' phones, including messages about weeding and pest recognition.

# NGO & International Support Efforts



## World Food Programme (WFP)

WFP is actively supporting Karamoja's food security, with approximately 30% of the population in Crisis or worse food insecurity. They've scaled up both food distributions and cash-for-food programs in districts like Kaabong, Moroto, and Kotido, while procuring surplus maize and beans from farmers' groups in Eastern Uganda.



## Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

FAO Uganda is focusing on promoting climate-smart agriculture, delivering drought-tolerant seed kits plus hand tools to 6,000 smallholder farmers in Karamoja and parts of Acholi region. Their agronomists are training farmer field schools on practices like zai pits and mulching.



## USAID and Other Donors

USAID's Feed the Future initiative is working to improve market linkages for staples. They recently held a cluster workshop in Mbale bringing together grain traders and farmer cooperatives to negotiate forward contracts, helping stabilize prices for farmers and ensure supply for buyers.

# Relevant Publications & Resources

## Weather Resources

- Uganda Weekly Weather Forecast (22-29 April 2025) - ICPAC Regional Climate Centre
- Africa Hazards Outlook (24-30 April 2025) - NOAA Climate Prediction Center
- UNMA Seasonal Rainfall Outlook (Mar-May 2025) - Uganda National Meteorological Authority

## Agricultural Guidance

- Beans Farming Handbook for Extension Workers (2019, MAAIF)
- Research Article - "Maize growing season in Uganda" (Epule et al., 2021)
- "Push-Pull Farming System" - Upscale Project Blog (Global Plant Council, 2023)
- MAAIF/NAADS Extension Advisory (April 2025)

## Market & Food Security

- FAO GIEWS Country Brief - Uganda (Sep 2024)
- Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Analysis - Karamoja (Aug 2024)
- Selina Wamucii - Uganda Market Price Portal (real-time commodity prices)
- ReliefWeb Disaster Reports - Uganda Floods Update (April 2025)

These resources offer valuable information for those who want to delve deeper into weather forecasts, agricultural practices, market dynamics, and food security interventions in Uganda. Stakeholders are encouraged to consult them for planning and decision-making support.

# Looking Ahead & Reminders

## Weather Outlook

Early indications for early May suggest areas that were drier (central, eastern) may start receiving more regular showers, while the southwest could see a tapering of heavy rains. Monitor updated forecasts from UNMA for any changes in rainfall distribution.

## Crop Management To-Do List

- Complete second weeding in the next 1-2 weeks
- Apply top dress fertilizer by early May for cereals
- Stake climbing beans before they start twining heavily
- Scout for pests after each rain, especially armyworms

## Livestock Management

- Consider cutting and conserving fodder as pastures flourish
- Schedule routine health interventions for June
- Improve water storage to capture rain for dry seasons

## Harvest Preparation

Start procuring or repairing post-harvest equipment: sacks, tarpaulins for drying, maize cribs, and hermetic storage bags. Good post-harvest handling will ensure you can store grain without quality loss or aflatoxin issues.

## Upcoming Events

The National Food Security Outlook for mid-year is expected in May, and an Agricultural Show/Expo in Jinja is planned for early June.

# Call to Action

Uganda's agriculture sector is the backbone of our communities' well-being. As we navigate this crucial period, we call on all stakeholders to commit to sustainable and strategic practices that will boost productivity and ensure food security.

## Farmers

Take charge of your fields and flocks by applying recommended practices. Work together in groups to share labor and knowledge. Embrace climate-smart techniques and prioritize family nutrition.

## All Stakeholders

Collaborate effectively: offer fair prices, pool resources, align interventions with the seasonal calendar, and share innovative solutions for scaling.



## Extension Agents

Provide timely information and hands-on assistance to farming communities. Organize demonstration sessions and monitor for abnormal situations that require rapid response.

## Government

Strengthen support programs, coordinate swift responses to identified gaps, and invest in rural infrastructure as a long-term measure for agricultural resilience.

The challenges of climate change and market volatility are real, but we can overcome them by working smarter and together. Conserve soil and water, diversify farming activities, and support farmers in need. Every seed we plant and every decision we make is a step toward both immediate harvests and the future of farming for the next generation.

Ensuring food for all – today and tomorrow – is in our hands. Let's cultivate sustainably, market smartly, and prosper together.



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