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Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023 Statistical Release



May 2025

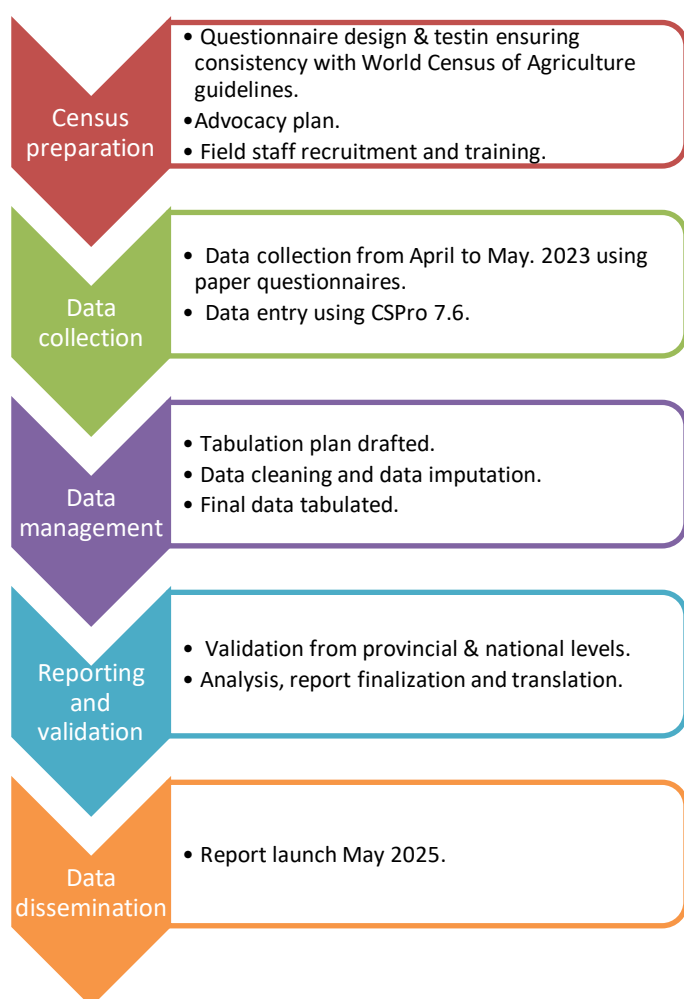
The data in this Statistical Release is sourced from the Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023 (CAC 2023), conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS), Ministry of Planning (MOP), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and with technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). As the primary data source for Cambodia's agricultural sector, CAC 2023 provides a comprehensive framework for assessing agricultural productivity. It presents statistical insights on crops, livestock, and other key agricultural activities, serving as a critical resource for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders.

1. Census Methodology

The main objective of the CAC 2023 is to provide up-to-date data on the country's agricultural situation for use by planners and policymakers. More specifically, the census data will be useful in:

- Providing data at the smallest administrative units across the country.
- Providing data on the current structure of agricultural holdings, covering areas such as cropping, raising livestock and poultry.
- Providing a sampling frame for agricultural surveys.

Figure 1: Methodological overview



Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

The broad strategy for the CAC was to identify and approach all households across the provinces in Cambodia, except for villages in the urban area of Phnom Penh which had reported less than 5 agricultural holdings in the General Population Census, 2019.

The CAC 2023 utilized four paper questionnaires for enumeration: (1) the village enumeration form, which entailed interviewing the village chief of every village within the target area, (2) the listing form, which

involved interviewing every household to determine which households are agricultural holdings, (3) the household holding form, which is designed to collect comprehensive information about the households which exceed the minimum threshold to be determined as an agricultural holding, (4) the establishment form, which collects detailed holding information from larger agricultural holdings (non-household).

Out of 3.4 million households within the census target area, 1.85 million households were identified as agricultural holdings according to the pre-requisite conditions that required a minimum cropping area of 0.03 ha, and/or having at least two large livestock, and/or three small livestock, and/or a minimum of 25 poultry.

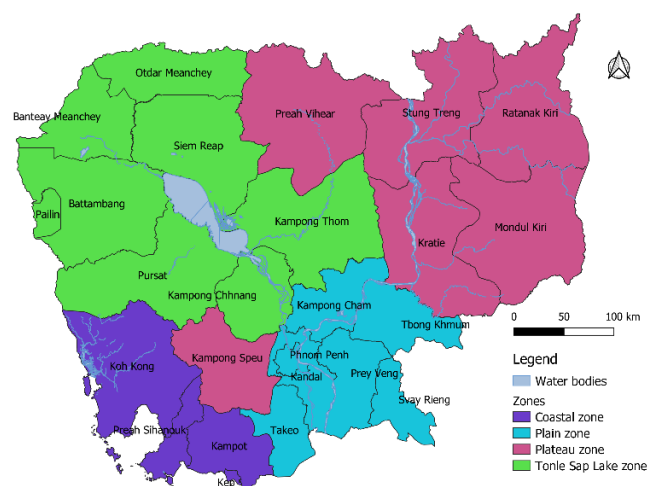
The households provided essential information on the household composition, the nature of their holdings, and their agricultural activities, resulting in a comprehensive data set for selected key questions.

The data collection period spanned from 1st April 2023 to 15th May 2023. A team of more than 6,000 enumerators and supervisors were involved in the field operations. Data validation commenced at the documentation stage and continued throughout the data entry and processing phases, with the data entry package (CSPro 7.6) embedded with consistency checks. This validation process was further supplemented by manual scrutiny, and finally, computer editing.

This Statistical Release presents the selected CAC 2023 findings, for the household agricultural holdings only.

2. Villages of Cambodia

Figure 2: Socio-geographic zones in Cambodia

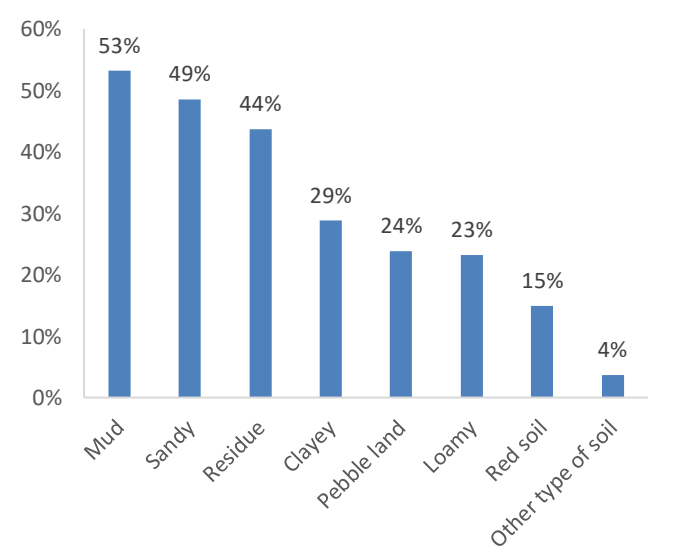


Cambodia is bordered by Thailand to the west, Laos to

the north, and Vietnam to the east. The country features four main topographical regions: expansive plains, the Tonle Sap Lake region, coastal areas abutting the Gulf of Thailand, as well as mountains, hills and highland plateaus. These distinct zones along with the divergent soil types significantly influence the types of crops cultivated in Cambodian villages. Out of a total of 14,577 villages in the country, 14,021 village heads were interviewed nationwide for the census.

The most common types of soil in Cambodia are muddy, sandy, and residue soils. Just over 50 percent of villages are situated on muddy soil, while nearly 50 percent are located in areas with fine sandy soil.

Figure 3: Presence of different soil types within the villages of Cambodia, total percent of villages nationally.



Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

Cambodia experiences heavy rains and floods during the wet season and drought during the dry season. In the five years prior to the census, 39 percent of villages in the country experienced flooding, while 48 percent faced drought. The most severe flooding primarily impacted villages in the Tonle Sap Lake Zone.

At the national level, farmers in more than 90 percent of villages were involved in growing crops and raising livestock and poultry, which are the primary activities of agricultural households. Nationwide, only 11 percent of villages engaged in gathering forest products. However, in the hilly uplands and plateau areas of Mondul Kiri province, 63 percent of villages still collected natural products from local forests.

In Cambodia, single cropping is the most common agricultural practice. Nationally, about 63 percent of villages cultivated only one crop per year. Villages producing two crops annually made up around 30

percent, while just 6 percent grew three or more crops.

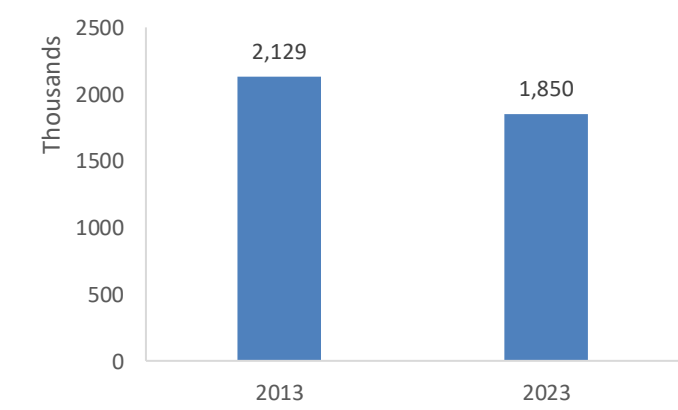
Nationwide, approximately 58 percent of villages reported having rice mills, whereas threshers and harvesters were available in about 35 percent of villages. Irrigation systems were reported available in only 20 percent of villages.

Road accessibility, particularly through motorable roads, is crucial for agricultural households to access markets and commuting. 61 percent of villages are located within four kilometres of the nearest national road. Additionally, 14 percent of villages are situated between five and nine kilometres away, while 25 percent are more than ten kilometres from the nearest national road. In total only 9 percent of villages reported presence of a public market.

3. Household Agricultural Holdings

The CAC 2023 recorded a total of 1,849,804 agricultural holdings in Cambodia, operating 3,181,906 hectares of agricultural land. In the 2013 agricultural census, there were 2,129,149 holdings cultivating 3,304,738 hectares of agricultural land. This reflects a decline of 279,345 holdings over the past decade.

Figure 4: Number of household agricultural holdings, Cambodia

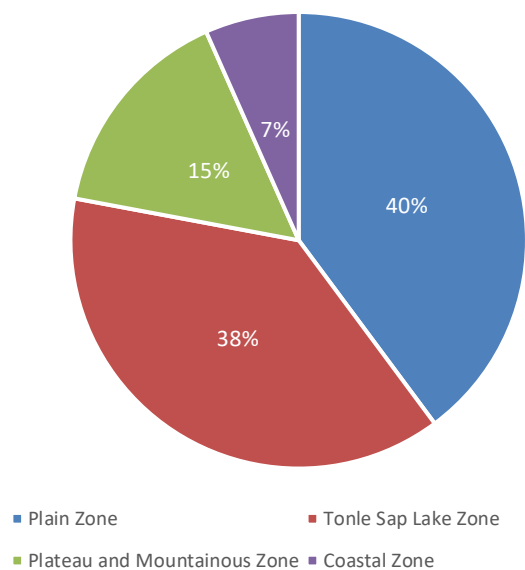


Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

Based on the Cambodia Intercensal Population Survey 2023, it is estimated that there are 3,735,659 households in the country and therefore an estimated 50 percent of all households are involved in agricultural production.

These 1.85 million household agricultural holdings were unevenly distributed across the country’s socio-geographic zones: the Plain Zone has the largest number of agricultural holdings (40%), followed by the Tonle Sap Lake Zone (38%), the Plateau Zone (15%), and finally the Coastal Zone (7%).

Figure 5: Percentage of household agricultural holdings by socio-geographic zone



Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

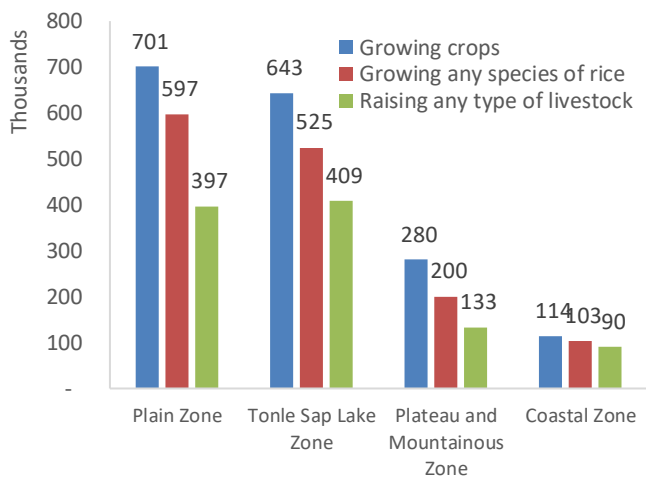
Whilst the number of holdings has reduced, the average holding size has increased from 1.54 ha in 2013 to 1.72 ha in 2023. Among the 1.85 million agricultural households in the country, 48 percent have a holding size of less than one hectare. This is followed by 23 percent of households with holding sizes between 1 and 1.9 hectares, 22 percent ranging from 2 to 4.9 hectares, and 6 percent with a holding size of 5 to 9.9 hectares. Only 2 percent of households have holding sizes exceeding 10 hectares. Overall, approximately 71 percent of agricultural households operate on less than 2 hectares of land in Cambodia.

Agricultural holdings in Cambodia are generally composed of several partitioned pieces of land referred to as ‘parcels.’ Among all household holdings, approximately 1.7 million households have separate agricultural land. In total there are 2.4 million separate parcels of land used for agricultural purposes in addition to a further 1.2 million homelots used for agricultural purposes. The average parcel size, excluding the homelot, is 1.3 hectares. However, it decreases to 0.9 hectares when homelot parcels are included.

4. Crop Production

The primary activities undertaken by household agricultural holdings in Cambodia were the planting and harvesting of temporary and permanent crops. In total, temporary crops had a gross area planted of 2.7 million hectares. In total, including both compact and scattered plantation, permanent crops had a gross area planted of 626,000 hectares.

Figure 6: Number of household holdings engaged in select agricultural activities, by zone



Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

Three types of rice were grown: non-aromatic, aromatic, and glutinous (sticky) rice. Of the three types of rice, non-aromatic varieties were the most common by far, planted on a total area of around 1,650,000 hectares by 1,154,000 household holdings. Aromatic rice was planted on around 465,000 hectares and sticky rice on 3,000 hectares.

Table 1: Number of household agricultural holdings and area planted of rice crops, Cambodia.

Rice Type	# Holdings ('000)	Area planted ('000 ha)	Area harvested ('000 ha)	Production ('000 t)	Yield (t/ha)
Non-aromatic	1,154	1,650	1,641	5,575	3.4
Aromatic	308	465	462	1,366	3.0
Sticky	4	3	3	10	2.8

Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

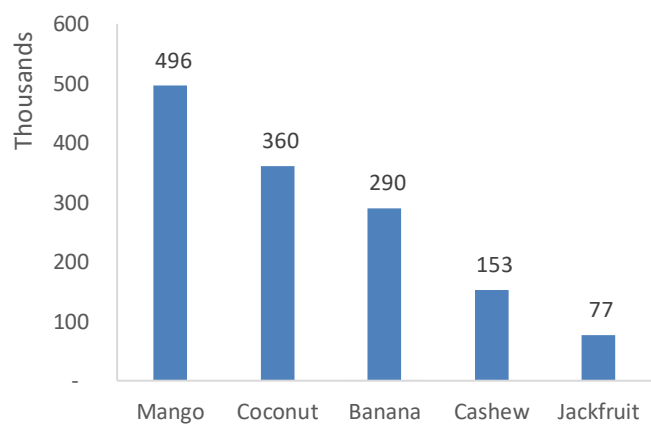
The census revealed that Cambodia cultivates a wide variety of permanent crops, both in scattered plots and compact plantations. Based on the number of households engaged in cultivation, mango is the most widely grown permanent crop, followed by coconut, banana, cashew, and jackfruit.

In both the Plain Zone and the Tonle Sap Lake Zone, this pattern holds, with mango as the most commonly grown crop. In the Plain Zone, banana ranks second, while in the Tonle Sap Lake Zone, coconut takes the second position.

The Coastal Zone presents a different trend: coconut is grown by significantly more households than any other permanent crop. Similarly, in the Plateau and Mountainous Zone, cashew nuts are cultivated by a notably larger number of holdings compared to other

permanent crops.

Figure 7: Number of household holdings reporting crops, top 5 permanent crops.



Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

Overall, a shift of agricultural production towards cash crops between 2013 and 2023 is evident. For instance, cashew nut area planted increased from 71,000 ha to 370,000 ha; cassava area planted increased from 294,000 ha to 420,000 ha and aromatic rice area planted increased from 280,000 ha to 465,000 ha.

5. Livestock & Poultry Raising

Raising livestock and/or poultry is an important agricultural activity in Cambodia, supporting livelihoods and providing income to an estimated 1,083,000 household agricultural holdings in the country. The largest number of households raising livestock and poultry was recorded in the Tonle Sap Lake Zone (430,200 households), yet the largest percent of agricultural households raising livestock or poultry was recorded in the Coastal Zone where 77 percent (95,400 out of 124,200) of agricultural households raised livestock or poultry.

Table 2: Number of household holdings reporting raising livestock, poultry and insects.

Total holdings ('000)	Large livestock ('000)	Small livestock ('000)	Poultry ('000)	Insect ('000)
1,083	690	95	727	2

Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

Thirty-eight percent of household agricultural holdings nationwide reported raising large livestock (cattle, buffalo, and horse), 39 percent reported raising poultry, and 5 percent reported raising small livestock. The preference of households for raising large livestock over small livestock (pig, sheep and goat) was evident from the results of the census, and many households kept a mix of both livestock and poultry.

Livestock were raised using a grazing system in 93.5

percent of households, with 1,013,000 households reporting this method. Seventy thousand (6.5 percent) reported using a mixed system and only 262 households reported raising livestock with an industrial system. Among households raising large livestock, 83 percent of holdings keep only 2-9 large animals.

Figure 8: A typical Cambodian homestead. Source: NIS photograph, 2023



6. Input Use

Mineral fertilizers are the most commonly used, with 73% of holdings reporting their application. Many holdings also use other types of fertilizers, often in combination. Manure was reported by 32% of holdings, while organo-mineral fertilizers (a mix of organic and mineral inputs) were used by 18%. The adoption of organic fertilizers was relatively low, at 7%, indicating a limited shift toward organic practices. Biofertilizers had the lowest uptake, with only 4% of holdings using them.

Among pesticide types, herbicides are the most widely applied, with approximately 1,220,700 households using them. Insecticides follow closely, used by 1,015,200 households. The use of fungicides, rodenticides, and other pesticides is considerably lower, reflecting specific crop protection needs and pest prevalence. As multiple pesticide types may be applied on the same holding, these figures are not mutually exclusive.

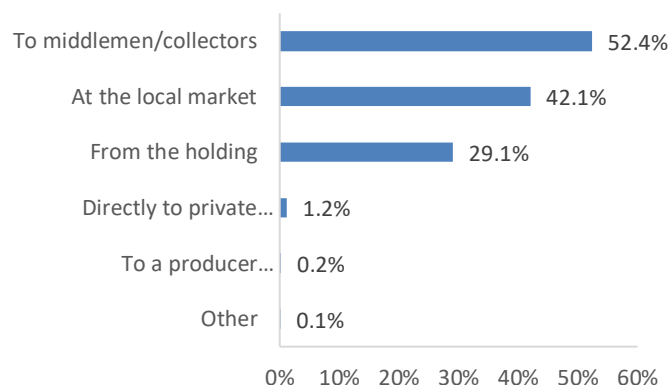
Twenty one percent of agricultural households reported using irrigation which accounted for only 15 percent of agricultural land.

7. Produce Sales Channel

Middlemen or collectors were the main sales channels for agricultural produce. Around 968,500 of the household holdings sold their produce to the middlemen or collectors. The local market was the

second most common sales channel for agricultural produce with this method being used by 777,900 holdings, the third most common sales channel was directly from the holding with 537,700 holdings reporting it. The other methods, directly to private companies (contracts) and to a producer group/farmers association were mentioned in relatively low numbers with only 21,400 holdings and 3,900 holdings reporting these channels, respectively.

Figure 9: Place of agricultural product sold, percent of holdings reporting each destination (multiple choice)



Source: Census of Agriculture Cambodia 2023.

8. Supplemental Economic Activity

Of the total number of agricultural households engaged in forestry-related activities (361,313), gathering firewood and cutting bamboo was the most frequent activity with nearly 330,000 agricultural households reporting it. Meanwhile, gathering wild fruits and other edible food was the second most frequent with 139,000 agricultural households. The number of households which reported having any forest and/or other wooded lands as part of their holdings was low, with only 0.5 percent (9,559 holdings) reporting such land. Almost half of the holdings which had forest and/or wooded lands (roughly 4,800) were in the Plateau and Mountainous region.

Around 65 percent of all agricultural household members aged 5 years and older were involved in agricultural activities within their holdings in the past 12 months. This was around 3 percent higher for men (67 percent) than women (64 percent). Approximately 22 percent of agricultural household members over the age of 5 were engaged in economic activities outside of agriculture. Again, this was roughly 3 percent higher among men (24 percent) than women (21 percent).

9. Agricultural Households

A slightly higher number of females than males were recorded in agricultural households. Females accounted for 50.4 percent of the agricultural household population, compared to 49.6 percent for males resulting in a sex ratio of 98.4. However, male-headed households outnumbered female-headed households, with only 16 percent of agricultural households headed by women.

With approximately 1.39 million persons, the age group of 10-19 was the largest in Cambodia among those living within agricultural households. It accounts for about 19 percent of the agricultural population. This was followed by 30-39 years old (1.23 million) and 20-29 years old (1.19 million). Females outnumber males in each of the age groups from 20-29 up to 60 years and older. However, the 10-19 years age group and less than 10 years age group have more males than females. Overall, the average age of the agricultural population was 31.8.

Annex

The CAC 2023 is produced by the National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, with technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. The full report, data tabulations, questionnaires and this brief can be found on the National Institute of Statistics website.



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