

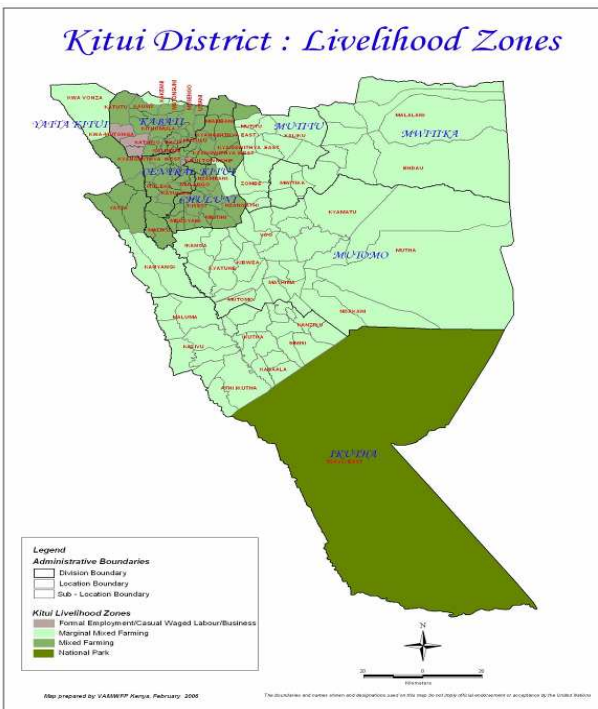


**OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
MINISTRY OF STATE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN KENYA AND OTHER ARID LANDS
ARID LANDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT II**

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, JULY 2008

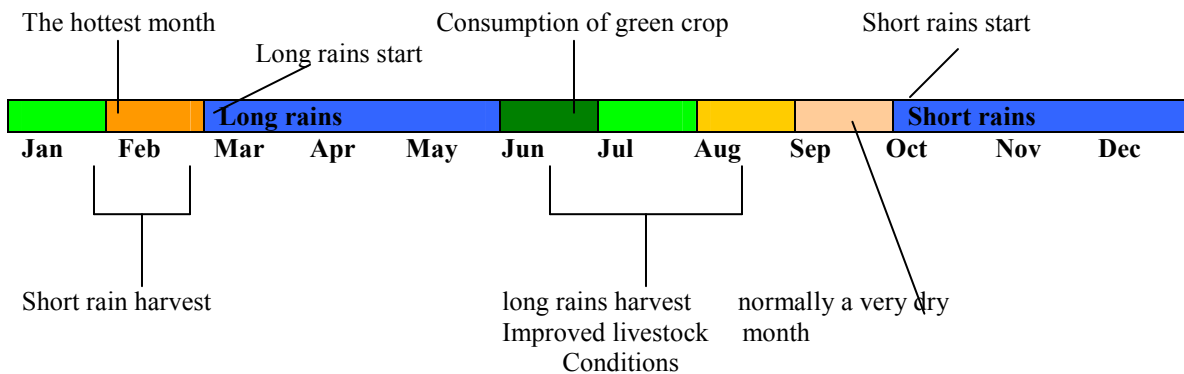
Kitui District

Warning Stages



Livelihood Zone	Warning stage	Trend
Mixed farming	Alert	Improving
Marginal mixed farming	Alert	Stable
Formal Employment	Normal	Stable

Timeline Activities



Situation overview

- The month was very cold, with no precipitation reported.
- Plants shed leaves, while grass withered in most parts of the district but Mutomo and Ikutha divisions were worst hit, with most grazing fields remaining bare.
- Quality and quantity of pasture and browse declined.
- Traditional river wells remained the main sources of water in the district and the percentage of households relying on them rose from 50 to 53 per cent. Most open water sources, including pans and rock catchments, dried up.
- Communities in the mixed farming livelihood zone turned to shallow wells for water.
- The return distances to water points in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone ranged from 10 -15 km, with communities in Mutha along the border with Tana River district walking 15 km to Mutha town in search of water. Distances ranged from 3 to 7 km in the mixed-farming livelihood zone.
- The body conditions of cattle ranged from fair to good, while condition of shoats remained good.
- Cattle and goats prices went up due to the prevailing body conditions and access to markets. However, cattle sales dropped from 2 per cent the previous month to one per cent, while goats remained stable at 2 per cent.
- There was total crop failure in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone but a few farmers in the mixed farming livelihood zone harvested pigeon peas and maize.
- The situation led to a sharp rise in prices of maize and beans.
- Farmers along river banks grew vegetables through small-scale irrigation and the crops are at various stages of development.
- Milk consumption in the district dropped compared to the previous month.
- The trend is attributed to the decline in domestic supplies, poor performance of the crop in the field and escalating fuel prices in the country.
- The nutrition levels of children under the age of five dropped slightly.

Current Interventions

Food aid

- EMOP Food For Assets distribution in 9 divisions.
- General food distribution in non-EMOP areas.
- Regular school feeding programme.
- Distribution of food to vulnerable groups in Yatta and Ikutha divisions by ADRA.

Non-food interventions

- Sinking of shallow wells and water trucking, particularly to institutions.
- Construction, repair, servicing and pipeline extension of boreholes and dams.
- Construction, tarmacking and gravelling of roads.
- Upgrading of goats for meat, distribution of dairy goats and restocking with high quality goats.
- Community-based demand driven initiatives (CBDDI) community grants

- Vaccination campaigns.
- Hay bailing in mixed farming livelihood zone and capacity building for farmers.
- Promotion of soil and water conservation through food for assets.
- Human disease control especially malaria, TB and HIV/Aids
- Emphasis on mother and child nutrition and intensifying immunisation coverage.

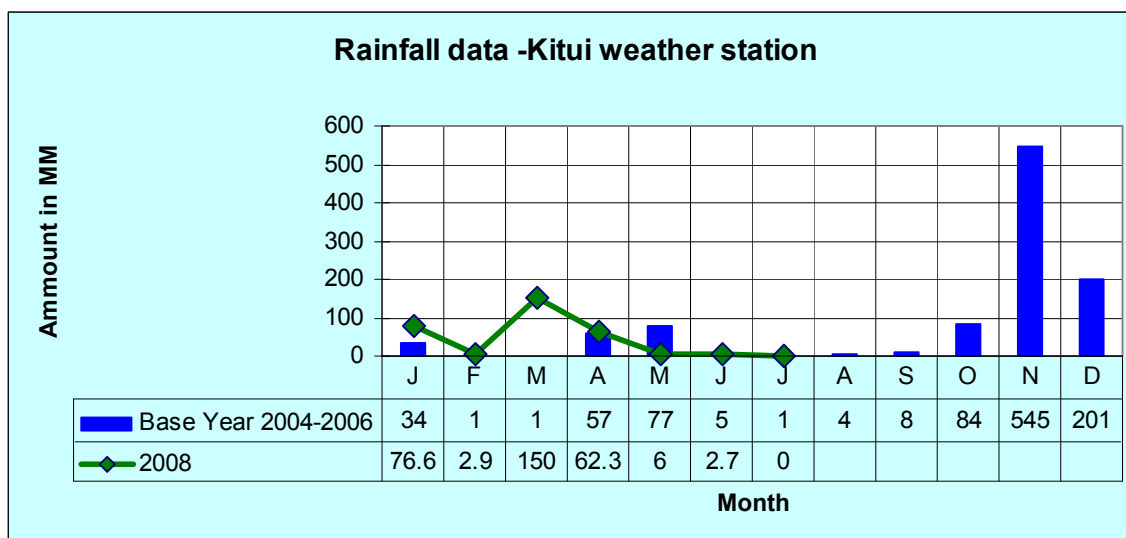
Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

- Need to conduct baseline survey to ascertain the state of water facilities in the region.
- Rehabilitation of existing boreholes and extension of pipelines from existing water facilities/ boreholes.
- Construction of more water storage tanks for rock catchments and springs.
- Fuel supplementation.
- Timely provision of certified seeds before the onset of rains and capacity building for farmers.
- Intensify promotion of drought-tolerant crops, emerging crops (aloe, jatropha) and promotion of irrigation.
- Intensify aflatoxin surveillance to curb food contamination.
- Promotion of emerging livestock breeds and encouraging farmers to form livestock marketing groups.
- Intensify vaccination campaigns and disease surveillance.
- Develop livestock water structures and intensify water trucking.
- Increase coverage of the school feeding programme.
- Reducing distances to health facilities by conducting mobile clinics and outreaches
- Nutritional surveys in various age groups.
- Intensify routine de-worming and promote environmental sanitation.

1.0 Environmental Indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall

- The month remained cold and no precipitation was reported.



1.2 Natural vegetation and pastures

- Natural vegetation continued to deteriorate, with most plants shedding their leaves and grass starting to wither.
- The quantities range from fair to good but the situation in the marginal mixed farming areas of Kyamatu, Ikutha and Mutomo is poor.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- Traditional river wells remained the main sources of water after most earth pans and rock catchments dried up, especially in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone.
- However, piped water was available from the Masinga pipeline and a number of boreholes in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- The quality of water in the mixed farming livelihood zone was relatively better compared to the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, where people shared same water points with livestock.
- Distances to water points varied from one livelihood zone to the other and even within the livelihood zones.
- The return distance in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone ranged from 10-15kms, with communities in Mutha walking 15 kilometers in search of water.
- Average distance in the mixed farming livelihood zone was 5 kms.

The table below shows the water sources in use and the % number of households accessing them during the month of June as compared with July

Source	Traditional river wells	Pans/Dams	Shallow wells	Rock catchments	Natural ponds	Natural rivers
May 2008	49%	25%	6%	6%	2%	2%
June 2008	50%	16%	13%	2%	4%	8%
July	53%	6%	21%	2%	2%	6%

1.4 Implication on food security

- Decline in pasture and natural vegetation undermined livestock body conditions, particularly in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone.
- Water scarcity forced people and livestock to trek long distances and spend a lot of time in search of the commodity.
- The situation impacted negatively on livestock body conditions.
- The cost of water was too high in Mutomo (Ksh 20 per 20 litre jerrican), eroding the purchasing power of most households.
- The water is usually untreated, increasing risk of contamination and outbreak of water borne diseases.

2.0 Rural economy indicators (food availability)

2.1 Livestock body conditions

- Livestock body conditions remained fairly good despite the decline in pasture and water shortage.
- Body condition of shoats was good while cattle ranged from fair to good.

2.2 Livestock diseases

- Isolated cases of CCPP were reported in Kyamatu location and LSD in Kyambusya village in Kitui Central.
- There were unconfirmed cases of NCD and sporadic cases of rabies in donkeys and dogs in Mutitu division.
- There was high mortality rate in poultry due to suspected cases of NCD. The outbreaks were attributed to illegal livestock movement and low vaccination coverage.

2.3 Crop production

2.3.1 Timeliness and crop situation

- All crops in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone withered while crops in the mixed farming livelihood zone were in various stages of development.
- A few farmers in the mixed farming livelihood zone harvested maize.
- Maize under irrigation in sections of Central, Chuluni and Matinyani divisions, where farmers have access to water along streams, was at various stages of development.
- Pigeon peas were harvested in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- Paw paws, oranges, and bananas are the commonly available fruits in the district and are normally available in the mixed farming livelihood zone.
- There was a lot of vegetable farming along rivers Athi, Tiva and Thua.

2.3.2 Crop pests and diseases

- No major crop pest & disease outbreak was reported in the district.

2.4 Implications on food security

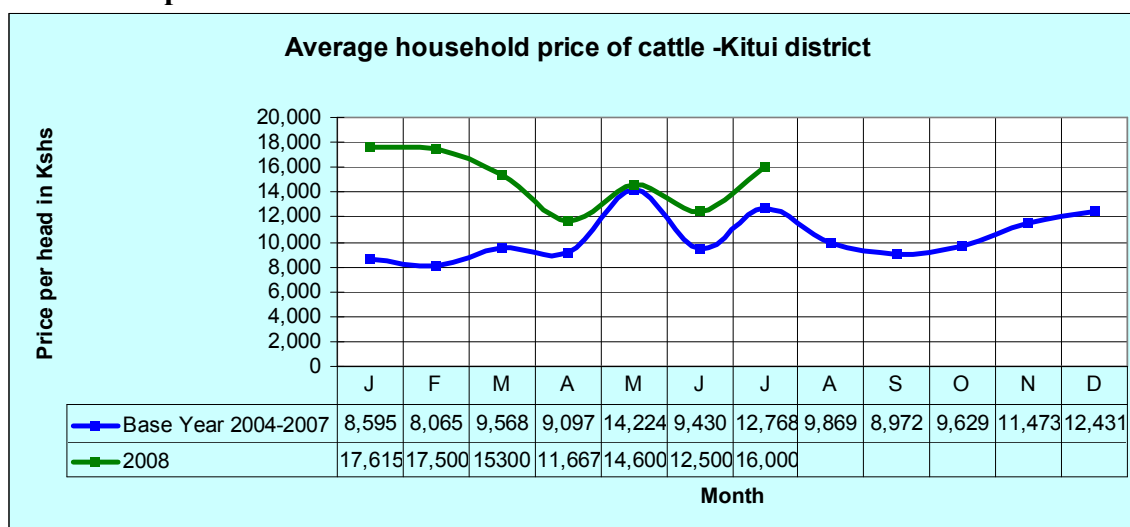
- The unconfirmed NCD deaths in poultry deprived farmers of a very vital source of livelihood.

- The poor performance of various crops led to shortage of food at the household levels, leaving most relying on purchases.
- The reported upsurge of CCPP and LSD might lead to massive deaths and losses if not properly managed.

3.0 Access to food

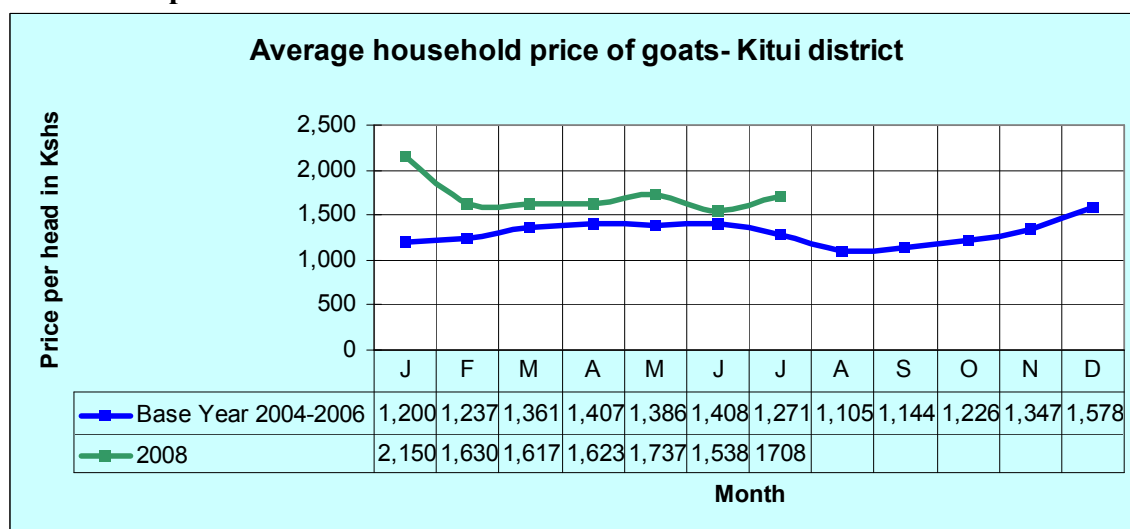
3.1 Livestock marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices



- Prices of cattle went up slightly due to prevailing good body conditions.
- The prices were also as a result of fully operational markets since there was no restriction on livestock movement. This opened the market to buyers from various regions, enabling farmers to get fair prices for their livestock.

3.1.2 Goats prices



- Goat prices went up due to the prevailing good body conditions.

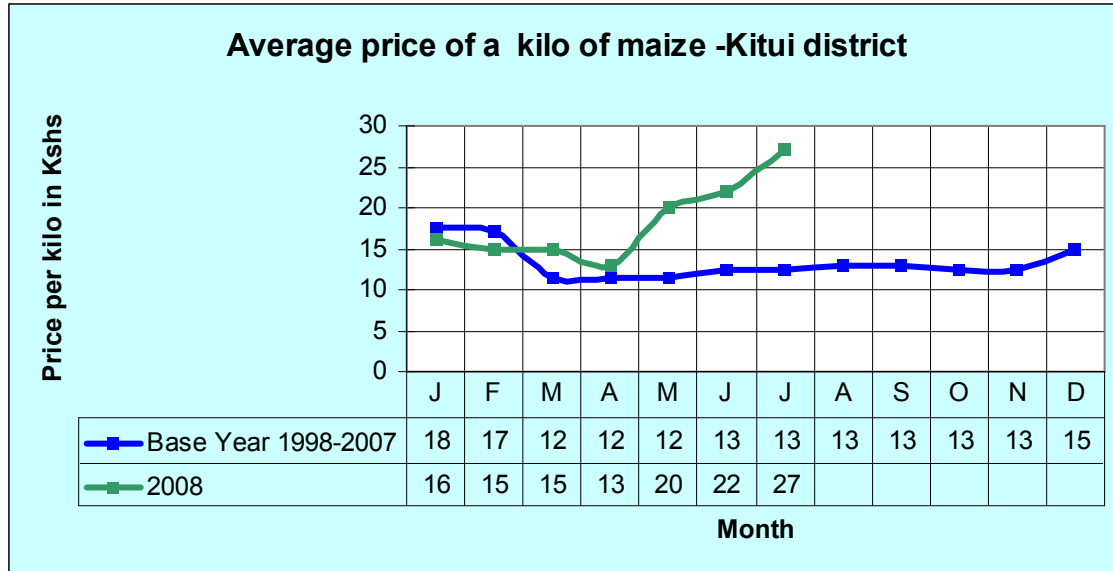
- The trend is not normal compared to the long term average.

3.1.3 Milk consumption

There was decline in milk consumption in the district. Consumption dropped from an average of 33 (750 MM) bottles per sampled households last month to the current 9 (750MM) bottles. This drop is attributed to decline in productivity due to scarcity of water and decline in forage amounts.

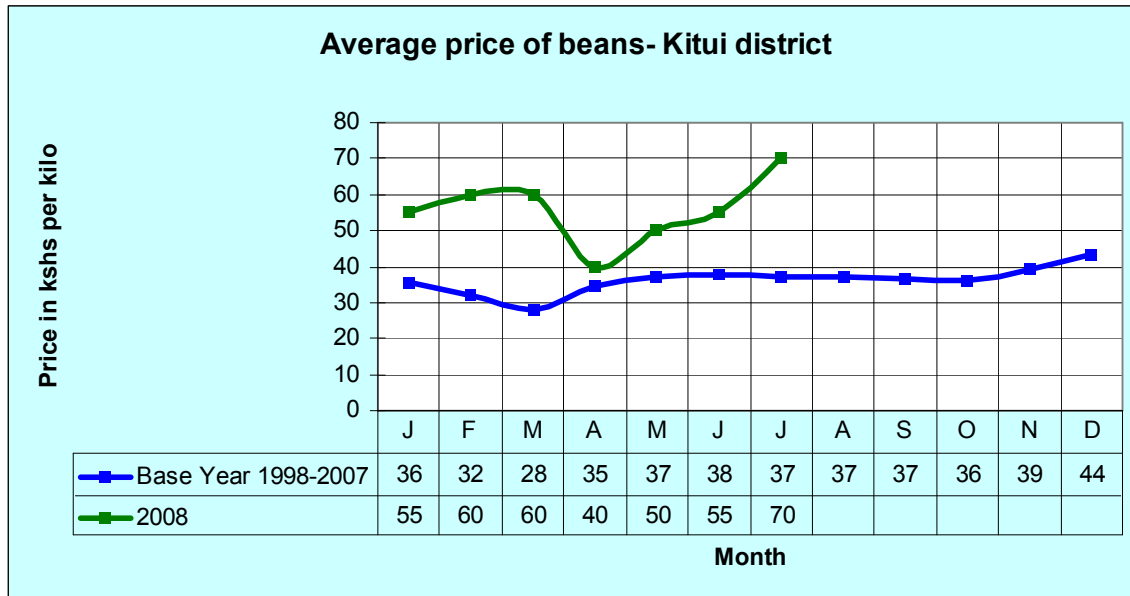
3.2 Crop Prices

3.2.1 Maize



- Average maize prices rose sharply.
- The trend was attributed to increased demand following depletion of stocks by most families.
- The trend is not normal compared to the long term average.

3.2.2 Beans



- There was a rise in the price of beans following the dismal performance of the long rains.
- Beans supplies were not replenished locally and the district relied on supplementation from western Kenya and Oloitokitok.
- The prices were higher in the marginal mixed farming livelihood zone, where there was total crop failure, and slightly lower in the mixed farming livelihood zone where consumption of beans was supplemented with pigeon peas.
- The trend is not normal and is expected to persist.

3.3 Incomes

3.3.1 Crop income

- Income from sale of crops increased from 3 per cent in the previous month to 4 per cent.
- The increase was attributed to the pigeon peas harvest in the mixed farming livelihood zone and availability of markets in the marginal mixed farming zone, which recorded total crop failure.
- The high prices were also due to farmers hording food stocks as disposable assets.

3.3.2 Livestock income

- The percentage of income derived from sale of livestock declined to 7 per cent from 8 per cent in June.

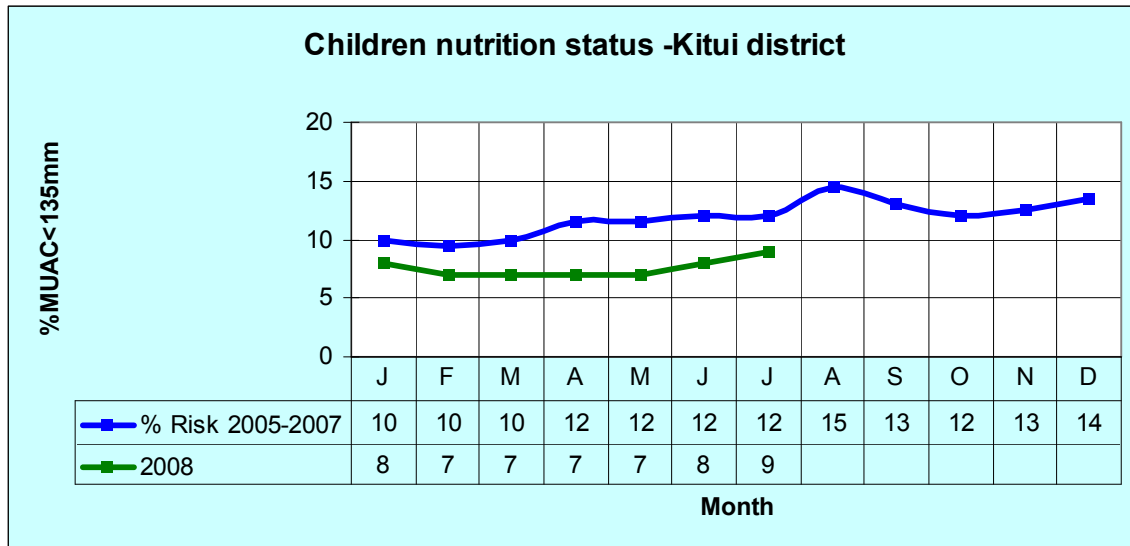
3.3.3 Other sources

- Casual labour was the main source of income, contributing 37 per cent of the communities' income.
- Other sources included remittances (25 per cent), employment (11), petty trade (11) and charcoal (5).

3.4 Implications on food security

- The above indicators had mixed implications on food security.
- The rise in livestock prices was a welcome gesture to farmers but the gain was soon eroded by the increase in the price of other household goods, including the main food crops (maize and beans).

4.0 Welfare Indicators (Utilization of food)



- The nutrition status for children under the age of five rose slightly compared to the previous month.
- The highest levels of malnutrition were reported in Yatta and Mutomo divisions at 16.5 per cent and 13.8 per cent respectively. The two divisions registered poor performance of short and long rains, resulting in a drop in nutrition levels

4.2 Human health

- No major human disease outbreak was reported during the reporting period. However, HIV/Aids prevalence in the district remains a challenge to food security.
- Cases of diarrhoea, typhoid, ringworms, malaria and RTIs were reported in all the divisions.

5.0 Current Interventions

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5.2 Non-food interventions

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6.0 Recommendations to DSG and KFSSG

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