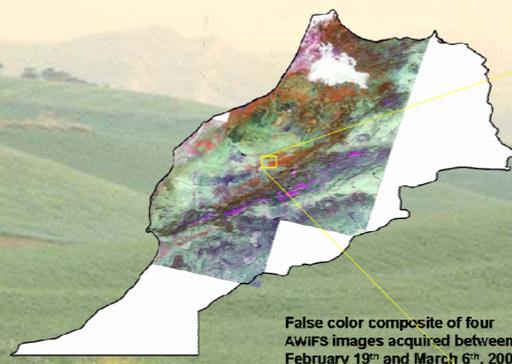
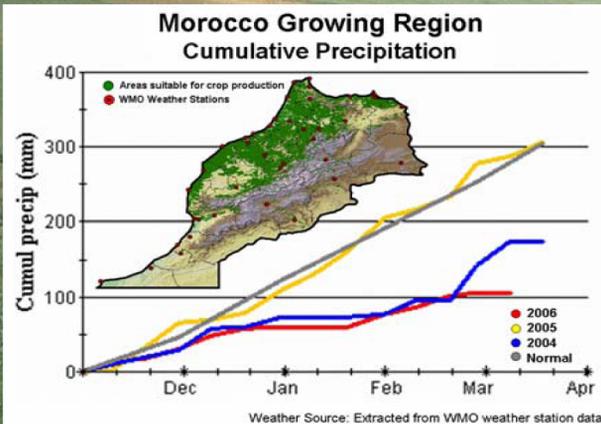


How the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Monitors Crop Conditions in Morocco

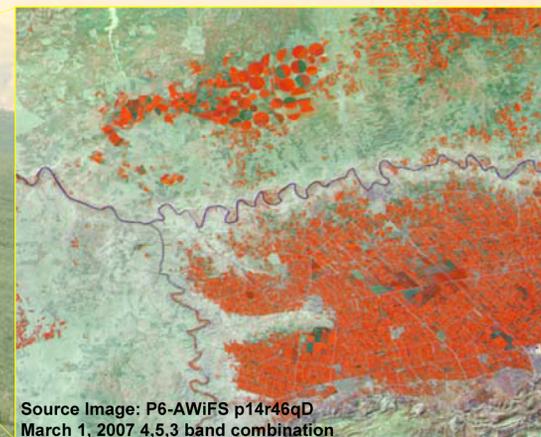


Convergence of Evidence: The USDA-FAS uses a convergence of evidence methodology to estimate crop production in foreign countries. The USDA-FAS utilizes a combination of meteorological (see precipitation chart), moderate resolution imagery (see MODIS-NDVI chart), and other data (see crop calendar chart) to monitor crop conditions. New to this mix is the RESOURCESAT-1 AWIFS.



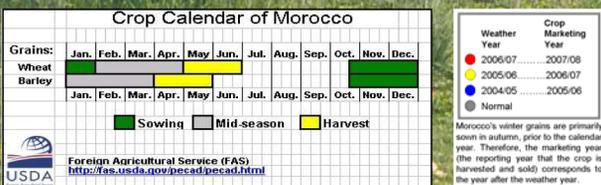
Medium Resolution Satellite Imagery:

An important use of the RESOURCESAT-1 AWIFS medium-resolution imagery (56 meter GSD) is to confirm or refute observations made by other sources pertaining to the condition of crops and fields in given areas. FAS uses composites (see false color composite) to assess overall crop conditions, and the single-date scenes (see March 1, 2007 blowup) to analyze field-level conditions. Ideally, year-to-year comparisons are made using near-date acquisitions.



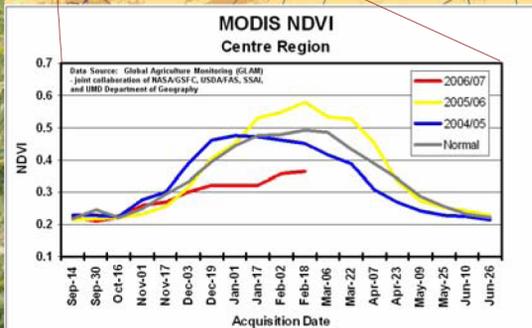
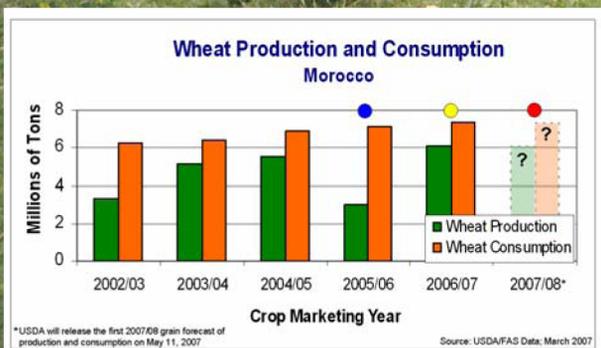
Morocco: Rainfall, Wheat Production, & Import Connections:

Morocco's grain production is highly correlated to weather during its growing season. Rainfall is the most influential and highly variable factor. Morocco's wheat-growing area is in a semi-arid climate — rainfall is often lacking, infrequent, and untimely. Morocco imports wheat every year; however, when rainfall deficits reduce crop production, substantial imports are needed requiring purchases on the international market.



Free-Trade Agreement:

The United States of America and the Kingdom of Morocco have a Free-Trade Agreement which came into effect on January 1, 2006. A key agricultural provision of this agreement is the variable tariff rate quote (TRQ) for imports of wheat. The TRQ varies according to the level of Moroccan wheat production. Accurate and timely information about Morocco's wheat production allows U.S. exporters to plan for and deliver commodities efficiently if there is a production shortfall in Morocco. Increased transparency in agricultural information aids the Government of Morocco as well as grain suppliers and consumers.



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