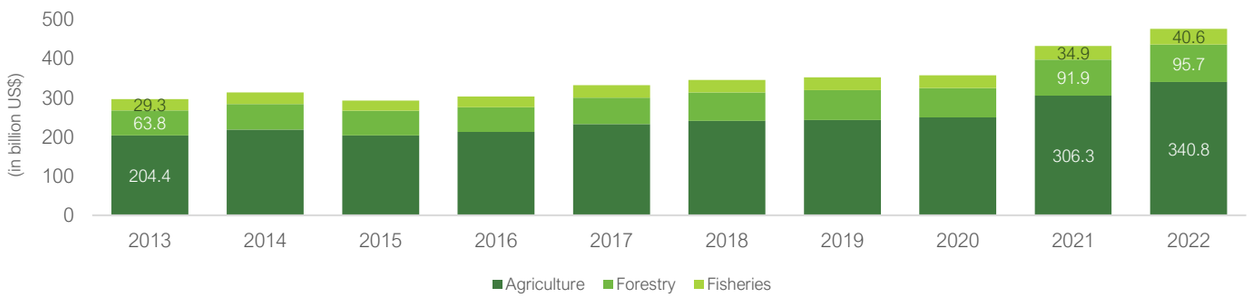
Role of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing Industry in ASEAN Economy

The Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (AFF) industry continues to be instrumental in the economic development of ASEAN, contributing significantly to the region's Gross Domestic Products (GDP) and providing significant employment opportunities. Moreover, the AFF industry plays a crucial role in supporting the global food supply, while generating revenue through trade. Its impacts extends beyond the national borders, shaping regional and global economic dynamics. As a result, the AFF is pivotal in ensuring sustainable development and prosperity for the ASEAN population and the world.

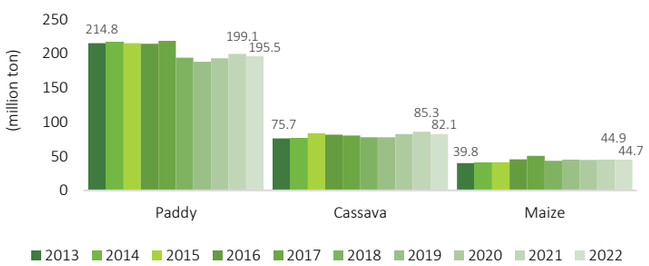
The value added of the ASEAN AFF industry in 2022 reached US$354.3 billion, contributing to 9.8% of the ASEAN GDP. The industry has grown by 2.3%, maintaining its positive growth since 2015, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. The AFF industry is a primary source of employment, providing jobs to 27.6% of the 337.9 million employees in ASEAN[1]. The AFF industry also played a key role in ASEAN's international trade. In 2022, ASEAN AFF products[2] grew 10.1%, contributing 12.4% to the total ASEAN merchandise trade. The trade value of AFF products reached USD 447.1 billion, with agriculture trade comprising the majority at US$340.8 billion (71.4%), followed by forestry and fisheries trade at US$95.7 billion (20.1%) and US$40.6 billion (8.5%), respectively. Meanwhile, the contribution of agriculture products to AFF total trade increased from 68.7 in 2013 to 71.4 in 2022. During this period, trade of agriculture products grew significantly by 66.8%, surpassing the growth of total AFF products at 60.4%.

Total Trade in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, 2013-2022



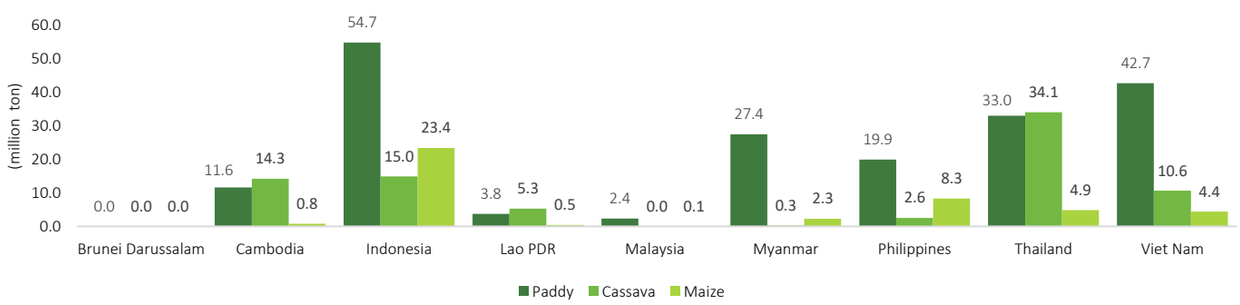
The production of ASEAN major food commodities in ASEAN, such as paddy, cassava, and maize, contributes to the diverse agricultural landscape and economy in the region. Between 2013 and 2022, the production of other commodities, such as cassava and maize, climbed by 8.5 and 12.2%, respectively. However, over the same period, paddy production fell by 9% to 195.5 million tons from 214.8 million tons.

Production of ASEAN Major Food Commodities, 2013-2022



Nevertheless, in 2024, ASEAN paddy production is estimated at 202.34 million tons, an increase of 1.09 million tons or 0.95 percent compared to 200 million tons estimated for 2023. This projection assumes the absence of extreme natural disasters. With an increase in either harvested area or yield, the production is expected to increase in all member states, except Malaysia and Thailand[3].

Production of Major Food Commodities in ASEAN Countries, 2022



In 2022, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, and the Philippines were the top five paddy producers in ASEAN, collectively contributing 90.9% of the total paddy production in the region. Similarly, Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Vietnam were the leading cassava producers in the region, accounting for 77.0% of the total production. Indonesia emerged as the largest maize producer, with a production of 23.4 million tons, equivalent to 52.4% of the total ASEAN production.

Data source: ASEAN Secretariat and ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS).

Note:

1. The latest available data of number of employment in agriculture, forestry and fisheries in Cambodia and Myanmar is 2019;
2. HS-code on agriculture products: 01-24 (WTO classifications); HS-code on forestry products: 44-49, 94, 6808 (FAO classifications); HS-code on fisheries: 03, 1212, 1302, 1504, 1604, 1605, 2301, 0511191, 151610, 151790 (FAO Classifications).
3. AFSIS, ASEAN Agricultural Commodity Outlook, June 2023.