

## Chapter 2.2

# LAC's Role in Global Food Security and the Multilateral System

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### Introduction

Global food security is increasingly shaped by a confluence of systemic pressures that challenge both production capacity and the governance of international markets. At the same time, geopolitical fragmentation, armed conflicts, and strategic rivalries have disrupted trade flows, contributed to higher price volatility, and reinforced the perception of food as a strategic asset subject to unilateral policy intervention. These dynamics unfold against a backdrop of weakening confidence in multilateral institutions and rules-based cooperation, further complicating collective responses to food crises.

Within this evolving context, LAC occupies a structurally distinctive position in the global food system. Unlike many regions that have become increasingly dependent on food imports, LAC remains one of the world's main net exporters of agri-food products.<sup>20</sup> Over the past two decades, the expansion of LAC's agri-food exports has broadly tracked, and in some cases exceeded the growth of global food demand, underscoring its relevance as a long-term supplier rather than a residual exporter (OECD/FAO, 2025).

The region accounts for approximately 16% of global agricultural exports and 13% of total agricultural production, supplying a substantial share of internationally traded cereals, oilseeds, meat, and sugar. Through these commodities, LAC contributes a significant portion of globally traded calories and proteins and plays a central role in supplying international markets at scale (Salazar et al, 2025).

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<sup>20</sup> Within LAC, however, there is significant heterogeneity: Southern Cone countries (e.g., Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) are structurally net exporters of agri-food products, while several Central American and Caribbean economies remain net food importers due to structural constraints related to scale, land availability, climate vulnerability, and production diversification.

Beyond aggregate export volumes, LAC's contribution to global food security is determined by structural and qualitative features of its production and trade profile. For example, the subregion of the Southern Cone combines large-scale land endowments, high productivity growth, and diversification across commodities (grains, oilseeds, meat, sugar, fruits and fisheries) and export destinations. This diversification reduces exposure to idiosyncratic shocks and mitigates concentration risks on both the supply and demand side.

In addition, the counter-seasonal production patterns of several South American exporters relative to the Northern Hemisphere increase temporal complementarity in global markets. This seasonal offset enhances the elasticity of world supply and contributes to moderating price volatility during tight market conditions. According to FAO and OECD assessments, LAC is expected to account for a growing share of global net agricultural exports over the coming decade, reinforcing its structural role in balancing food-deficit regions (OECD-FAO 2023).

These characteristics collectively reduce the probability of synchronized production shocks and allow exporters—particularly in the Southern Cone—to adjust shipments in response to demand shifts or supply disruptions elsewhere. In this sense, LAC performs a key role within the global food system, smoothing international food availability during periods of geopolitical tension, climatic stress, or market uncertainty.

However, the ability of LAC to sustain and strengthen this role depends critically on the functioning of the multilateral trading system. Predictable market access, transparency, and effective disciplines on trade-distortive measures influence investment decisions, production incentives, and the reliability of cross-border supply. Episodes of export restrictions and ad hoc policy interventions during recent food crises have demonstrated how quickly unilateral actions can amplify price volatility and undermine food security, especially for import-dependent countries (Koizumi, Furuhashi, and Sakuyama, 2025). For net exporting regions such as LAC, these dynamics not only threaten export revenues but also weaken the incentives to invest in productive and resilient agricultural systems.

This chapter argues that LAC's contribution to global food security cannot be understood in isolation from broader debates on trade governance and multilateral cooperation. As climate pressures, geopolitical fragmentation, and market volatility increasingly intersect, the credibility of the rules-based trading

system becomes a central determinant of global supply stability. In this context, LAC occupies a relevant position at the intersection of production capacity and global governance: as a major net exporter, it enhances international availability and moderates price volatility, thereby supporting affordability in food-deficit regions; yet, paradoxically, significant segments of its own population—particularly in parts of Central America and the Caribbean—still face constraints in affording a healthy diet (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2025.). This dual condition underscores that food security is multidimensional, linking availability, access, and stability. By leveraging its comparative advantages while engaging constructively in WTO-centered trade governance reform—strengthening disciplines on export restrictions, transparency, and dispute settlement—the region can safeguard its export interests and perform a structural, system-wide balancing role in promoting a more resilient, predictable, and affordable global food system.

## **Comparative advantage in global agri-food markets**

### **Natural endowments, productivity gains, and export specialization**

LAC exhibits a distinctive and consolidated comparative advantage in global agri-food markets, grounded in the combined weight of its natural resource base, sustained productivity growth, and long-standing export specialization. At the regional level, Latin America and the Caribbean bring together abundant arable land reserves, comparatively favorable water endowments, and a wide spectrum of agroecological zones—from temperate Southern Cone systems to tropical and subtropical production belts—enabling large-scale output across cereals, oilseeds, meat, sugar, fruits, and fisheries. These structural attributes, when considered collectively rather than at the country level, position LAC as one of the few net surplus-producing regions in global agriculture and a structurally significant supplier of internationally traded food commodities (OECD/FAO, 2025).

Over time, Latin America and the Caribbean's natural resource endowments have been complemented—and increasingly superseded—by gains in total factor productivity (TFP). Evidence compiled by the Inter-American Development Bank shows that between 1961 and 2021 regional agricultural

output grew at an average annual rate of 2.9%, with TFP expanding by 1.7% per year—above the global average and accounting for the majority of production growth over the long run (Salazar et al, 2025). These gains reflect sustained technological change, mechanization, improved input use, and organizational upgrading across key value chains, particularly in soybeans, maize, sugar, and export-oriented livestock systems. However, performance remains markedly heterogeneous across subregions: while the Southern Cone and parts of Central America have relied heavily on productivity gains, the Caribbean has exhibited slower growth driven more by input accumulation than efficiency improvements. Moreover, the recent deceleration of TFP growth underscores emerging structural constraints and reinforces the need to sustain innovation, climate adaptation, and institutional support to maintain competitiveness and long-term food system resilience.

These dynamics have shaped a clear pattern of export specialization. LAC accounts for a substantial share of global exports in key agri-food commodities, positioning the region as a price-relevant supplier in international markets. Unlike smaller exporters whose participation is marginal or sporadic, LAC's scale allows it to influence global availability in both normal conditions and periods of market stress. This scale effect is central to understanding the region's systemic relevance for global food security (Piñeiro, Hareau, and Andrade, 2025).

## **Scale, diversification, and counter-seasonality in global supply**

Beyond aggregate export volumes, the structure of LAC's participation in global food markets reinforces its comparative advantage. Scale is combined with a relatively high degree of diversification across products and destinations. Major exporters within the region typically maintain broad export portfolios that include bulk commodities, processed foods, and higher-value products, reducing vulnerability to demand shocks in specific markets.

Geographical diversification further strengthens this position. LAC exports are distributed across multiple regions, including Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, limiting dependence on a single destination and enhancing resilience to trade disruptions. This diversified market presence also allows LAC producers to respond more flexibly to shifts in global demand patterns, an increasingly important feature in a fragmented and uncertain international environment.

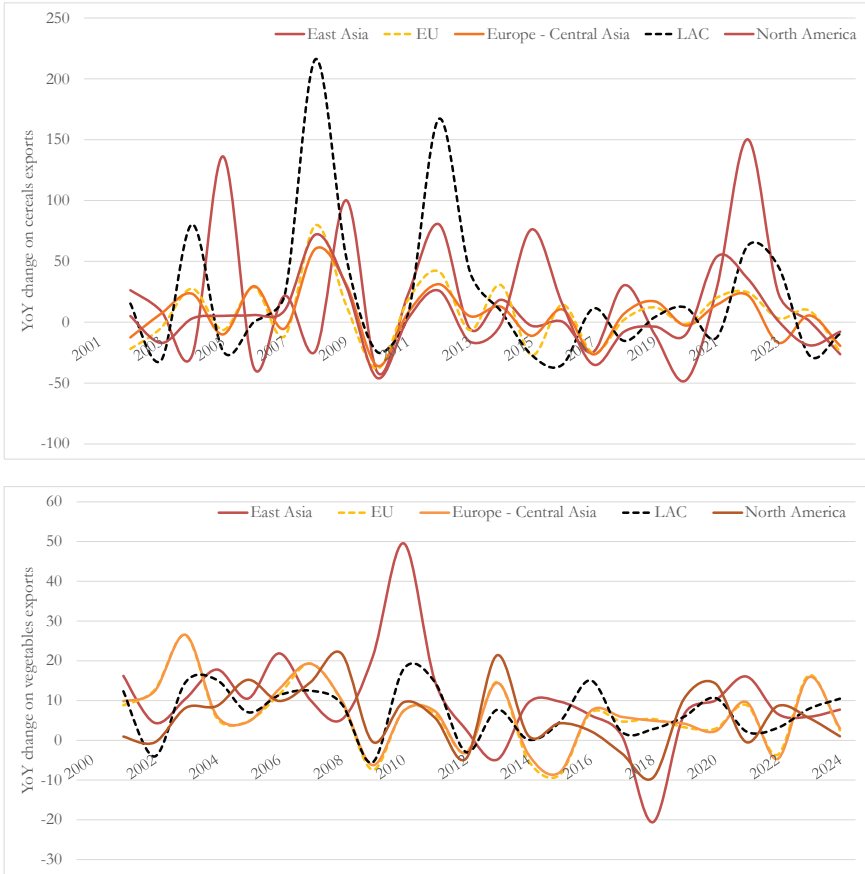
Counter-seasonality constitutes an additional, and often underappreciated, dimension of LAC's comparative advantage. Production cycles that differ from those of Northern Hemisphere exporters enable the region to supply international markets during periods when alternative sources are constrained. During the boreal winter (roughly November to March), when domestic production in the US, the European Union, and other temperate economies declines sharply, LAC exporters sustain the availability of fresh produce such as blueberries, table grapes, cherries, citrus, mangoes, avocados, apples, pears, asparagus, tomatoes, and green beans. Countries like Chile, Peru, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, and Ecuador have developed sophisticated production, cold-chain, and logistics systems that allow them to fill seasonal supply gaps with high-quality, standards-compliant products.

This counter-seasonal dynamic has broader systemic implications. By smoothing seasonal fluctuations in supply, LAC contributes to reducing price volatility and mitigating the risk of synchronized production shocks in global markets. The region's agroecological diversity and Southern Hemisphere production cycles enhance resilience in international food systems, reinforcing LAC's role not merely as a large exporter, but as a stabilizing actor in global food availability during periods of climatic stress or geopolitical disruption.

## **LAC as a relevant supplier in international food markets**

Taken together, scale, diversification, and counter-seasonality position LAC as a stabilizing supplier in global agri-food markets. Empirically, the region has maintained positive net export positions across a broad set of food categories, even during episodes of heightened global uncertainty. Compared with other major exporting regions, LAC's export performance has exhibited relatively lower volatility over time, reflecting both production resilience and diversified trade linkages (Ruiz-Arraz et al 2023, Machado Parente and Moreau, 2024). In Figure 1, the year-over-year (YoY) changes in exports of cereals (excluding rice, maize, and wheat) and vegetables for LAC and other regions are shown. It can be observed that LAC's growth rate declines starting in 2010.

**Figure 1. % Year-over-year change in cereals (a) and vegetables (b) exports in LAC versus other regions**



Source: Authors' calculations based on Comtrade data

This stabilizing role has important systemic implications. In periods of global stress—such as food price spikes, supply chain disruptions, or climate or conflict shocks—the availability of large and relatively reliable export surpluses from LAC helps contain sudden changes in international markets. While the region is not immune to shocks, its aggregate capacity to sustain exports contributes to dampening global supply fluctuations.

From a policy perspective, recognizing LAC as a relevant exporter in global agri-food markets highlights the strategic importance of preserving open, trans-

parent, and predictable trade channels. The region's scale and export specialization in staple commodities position it among the core suppliers that materially shape international availability and price dynamics. These contributions—measured in volumes, calories, and proteins traded—constitute a system-relevant input into global food security. However, their effectiveness depends on a trade environment that facilitates continuous cross-border flows. When export restrictions proliferate or market access conditions become uncertain, the capacity of major net exporters such as LAC to fulfill their role as reliable suppliers is diminished, with adverse consequences for importing countries and for the overall affordability and security of food at the global level.

## **Climate resilience and sustainable production capacity**

### **Climate-smart agriculture, innovation, and productivity–sustainability trade-offs**

Rising temperatures, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and shifting precipitation patterns have heightened output volatility and amplified risks along agri-food supply chains (IPCC, 2019). For LAC, these pressures are particularly salient given the region's exposure to climate variability and its central role as a major food-exporting region.

In response, the expansion of climate-smart agricultural practices and innovation has become a critical component of sustaining production capacity. Across LAC, productivity gains increasingly depend on technologies and practices that enhance resilience, such as improved crop varieties, better soil and water management, digital agriculture, and more efficient livestock systems (Table 1). Table 1 shows that long-term yield growth rates for major crops in LAC have been sustained and broadly comparable to those observed in other key producing regions, supporting the region's role as a dynamic rather than static contributor to global food supply. These innovations seek to reconcile productivity growth with environmental sustainability, addressing what are often framed as productivity–sustainability trade-offs.

**Table 1. Annual yield growth rates for rice, soybeans, and maize. LAC, North America and rest of the World**

	Rice			Soybean			Maize		
	LAC	North America	ROW*	LAC	North America	ROW*	LAC	North America	ROW*
1960-1970	1.28	3.08	1.47	0.35	0.59	3.51	1.02	1.51	2.92
1970-1980	2.86	-0.45	0.59	3.66	-0.04	2.66	0.81	2.27	3.10
1980-1990	1.24	2.28	1.34	0.94	2.53	2.73	0.16	2.65	1.10
1990-2000	1.84	1.28	1.28	2.42	1.09	1.45	4.01	1.38	1.21
2000-2010	1.31	0.69	0.83	1.94	1.34	1.32	2.88	1.20	2.13
2010-2024	1.79	1.02	0.51	4.85	1.09	0.22	1.20	1.14	0.73

Note: \*ROW refers to the average annual yield growth rates for the rest of the world.

Source: Authors' calculations based on FAOSTAT.

Importantly, resilience-oriented investments are not merely adaptive responses to climate risk; they are integral to maintaining LAC's comparative advantage in global food markets. As climate pressures intensify, regions unable to adapt face declining yields and higher volatility, undermining their reliability as suppliers. In contrast, the adoption of climate-smart practices strengthens the capacity of LAC producers to sustain output over time, reinforcing their role in global food availability.

## Production resilience and export stability over time

A key dimension of LAC's contribution to global food security lies not only in its scale of production, but in the relative resilience and stability of its agricultural output and exports over time. Historical patterns indicate that, despite recurrent climate and external shocks, agricultural production in LAC has demonstrated sustained adaptive capacity, supported by agroecological diversity and heterogeneous production systems.

Export performance has also displayed comparatively moderate variability, reinforcing the region's role as a stabilizing supplier in global food markets. Ev-

idence suggests that LAC's agricultural exports have contributed to cushioning international supply disruptions during periods of stress (Piñeiro, 2023). Moreover, agricultural export flows in parts of the region have exhibited relatively lower volatility compared to other export categories, indicating a degree of structural stability within broader trade dynamics (Ruiz-Arranz et al., 2023).

From a global food security perspective, the relationship between production resilience and export stability is particularly relevant. Export volatility can transmit domestic shocks to international markets, exacerbating price spikes and uncertainty. Conversely, stable export performance helps dampen global fluctuations and supports predictable access for importing countries (Bouët and Laborde Debucquet, 2017).

This dynamic could become increasingly salient as climate-related shocks continue to intersect with geopolitical disruptions and deeper trade fragmentation. In such a context, regions capable of sustaining export volumes under adverse conditions may assume greater relevance in global food markets. In the case of LAC, sustained investments in productivity, logistics, and climate resilience have the potential not only to strengthen domestic production systems but also to enhance the region's capacity to remain a consistent and large-scale exporter. If consolidated and supported by predictable trade frameworks, these investments could generate positive cross-border spillovers by helping to maintain supply flows to international markets and reinforcing LAC's role as a major participant in global agri-food trade.

## **Resilient production systems and global food availability**

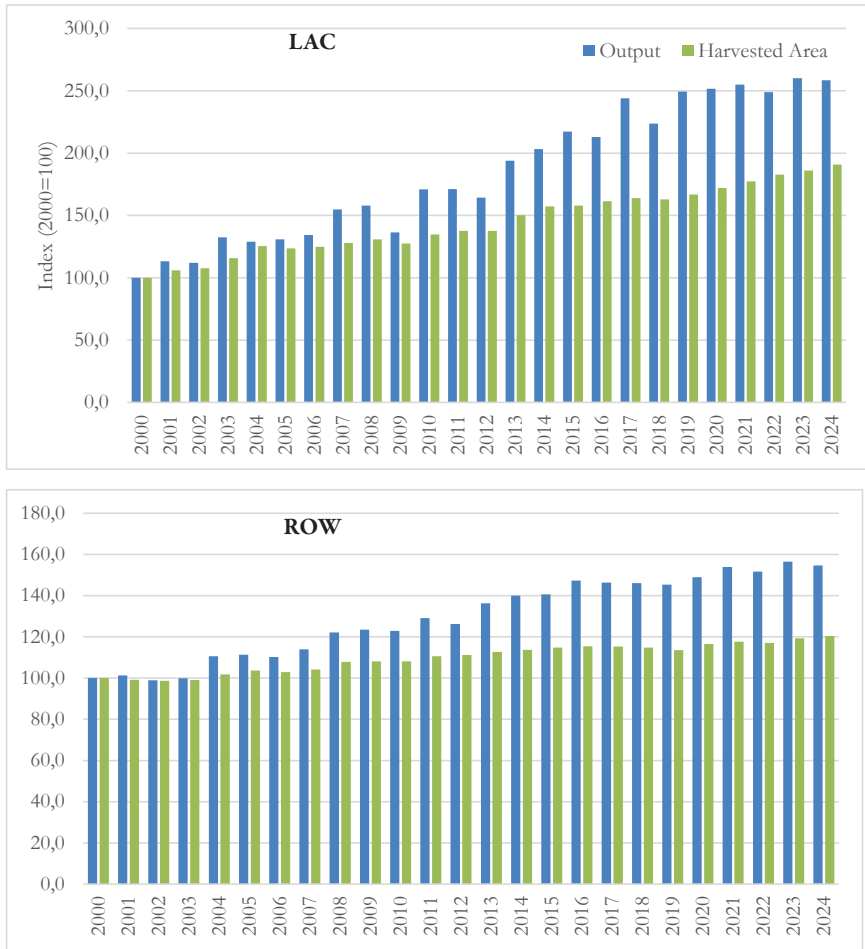
Resilient production systems in LAC contribute to global food security not only through availability and supply continuity, but also through their implications for food affordability at the international level. Agroecological diversity across subregions—ranging from temperate Southern Cone systems to tropical production structures in Central America and the Caribbean—reduces the probability of synchronized, region-wide production shocks (Ray, 2015). This spatial diversification, combined with counter-seasonal complementarities vis-à-vis Northern Hemisphere producers, expands effective global supply throughout the calendar year. By mitigating extreme price fluctuations and easing supply constraints during tight market conditions, these structural features enhance purchasing power in net food-importing countries and support the affordability dimension of food security, particularly for vulnerable populations exposed to international price volatility.

Beyond agroecological heterogeneity, structural features of Mercosur's production model further reinforce resilience and global food availability. LAC remains the world's largest net food-exporting region, playing a central role in stabilizing global supplies and reducing price volatility. Baseline projections indicate that future production growth in the ABPU countries is expected to rely primarily on efficiency gains, technological adoption, and the recovery of degraded lands rather than extensive cropland expansion. This productivity-led trajectory strengthens adaptive capacity under climate stress while preserving long-term supply potential. Moreover, the differentiated production structure across member countries—combining oilseeds, cereals, meats, and bioenergy—reduces systemic concentration risks and enhances aggregate supply continuity within global markets (Jorge et al, 2025).

Moreover, resilience-enhancing strategies increasingly intersect with sustainability objectives. Practices aimed at improving soil health, water efficiency, and biodiversity can reduce vulnerability to climate shocks while supporting long-term productivity. In this sense, sustainability and resilience should be viewed as mutually reinforcing rather than competing objectives. For global food security, the implication is clear: resilient and sustainable production systems are essential to ensuring reliable export surpluses over time.

LAC's experience highlights the importance of aligning innovation, sustainability, and resilience within a broader trade and governance framework that supports open and predictable markets (Salazar et al, 2025). Figure 2 illustrates that production growth in LAC has increasingly outpaced the expansion of harvested area, indicating a pattern of productivity-led growth consistent with adaptation under climate stress.

**Figure 2. Output and harvested area index (2000=100) of LAC and the rest of the World**



Notes: Indexes were calculated the sum of output and harvested area of for soybeans, maize, and rice from LAC versus Rest of the World (ROW).

Source: Authors' calculations based on EAOSTAT data

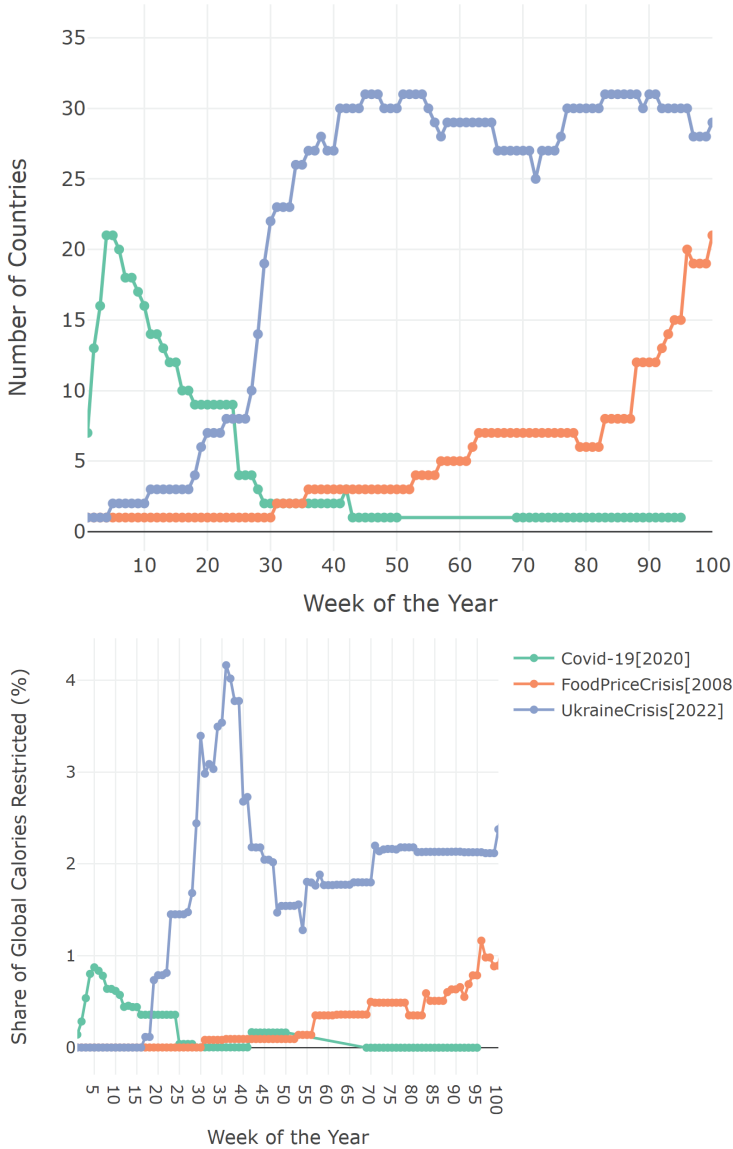
## Multilateral cooperation and global supply stability

### Trade rules as a buffer against volatility and unilateralism

The stability of global food supply depends not only on productive capacity but also on the rules and institutions that govern international trade. In recent years, episodes of heightened price volatility and supply disruptions have highlighted the critical role of trade rules as a buffer against unilateral policy responses. Export restrictions, ad hoc licensing requirements, and other trade-distortive measures have repeatedly amplified uncertainty in global food markets, often exacerbating the very crises they seek to address (Koizumi, Furuhashi, and Sakuyama, 2025).

For major net exporting regions such as LAC, the proliferation of unilateral measures represents a systemic risk. While short-term interventions may aim to protect domestic markets, their cumulative effect is to fragment global supply chains and undermine trust among trading partners. From a food security perspective, such fragmentation disproportionately affects import-dependent countries, increasing exposure to scarcity and price spikes. Figure 3 documents the repeated use of export restrictions and other trade-distortive measures during periods of global stress, underscoring how policy responses have amplified uncertainty rather than mitigated it.

**Figure 3. Time profile and period of implementation of export restrictions during the recent crisis**



Source: Export restriction tracker. Laborde, Abdullab & Marie (2020) from WTO data.

Multilateral disciplines are designed precisely to mitigate these risks. Transparency obligations, notification requirements, and agreed constraints on

trade-distortive measures help reduce uncertainty and facilitate coordination among countries. In this context, the role of the WTO is fundamental, as it provides the institutional framework where these disciplines are negotiated, monitored, and enforced. Through its rules, committees, and dispute-settlement mechanisms, the WTO underpins predictability and trust in the trading system. When effectively implemented, these rules contribute to smoother market functioning and reinforce the reliability of cross-border food supply.

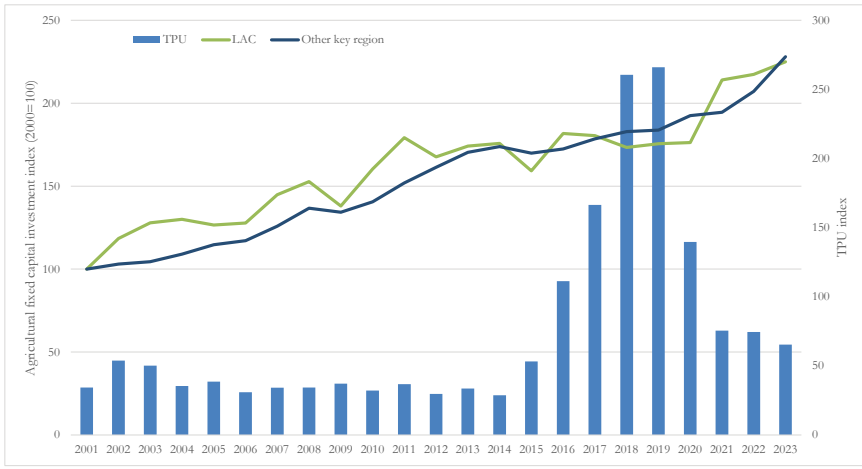
## **Predictable market access and incentives for investment**

Predictable market access is a central determinant of investment decisions in agriculture and agri-food value chains. Producers and exporters are more likely to invest in productivity, sustainability, and resilience when they can rely on stable access to international markets. Conversely, policy uncertainty—whether stemming from tariffs, non-tariff measures, or discretionary export controls—raises risk premiums and discourages long-term investment.

For LAC, the credibility of multilateral trade disciplines directly conditions its ability to sustain export-oriented growth, particularly in staple commodities where scale is decisive. The region's comparative advantage in crops such as maize, soybeans, wheat, rice, and basic animal proteins rests on large-scale production systems supported by substantial sunk investments in land development, logistics corridors, storage capacity, and technology. In staple markets, efficiency gains are intrinsically linked to scale economies, long planning horizons, and stable external demand. An international environment that rewards productivity and integration—rather than episodic recourse to self-sufficiency or ad hoc trade restrictions—is therefore essential. Predictable and enforceable rules reduce the risk that domestic shocks or external crises translate into abrupt trade disruptions in staple flows, preserving incentives to maintain and expand productive capacity in globally traded food essentials.

This link between market access and investment has broader implications for global food security. When major exporting regions face reduced incentives to invest, future supply growth may be constrained, increasing vulnerability to shocks. Strengthening multilateral disciplines, therefore, supports not only current trade flows but also the long-term expansion of global food supply. Figure 4 shows that episodes of heightened trade policy uncertainty coincide with periods of slower growth or temporary flattening in agricultural fixed capital investment, consistent with higher risk premiums and delayed long-term investment decisions.

**Figure 4. Agricultural investment dynamics and trade policy uncertainty in LAC versus other regions**



*Notes: LAC and Other key region Agricultural Fixed capital investment are shown as indexes (2000=100). The Trade Policy Uncertainty (TPU) index is shown on the right-hand axis and scaled so that 100 indicates that 1% of news articles reference trade policy uncertainty. For more methodological details see Caldara, Matteo Iacoviello, Molligo and Andrea (2019). Source: Authors' calculations based on WTO data and Caldara, Matteo Iacoviello, Molligo and Andrea (2019) from FED*

## Transparency, cooperation, and global supply continuity

Transparency and cooperation mechanisms are increasingly central to managing food security risks in a fragmented global environment. Timely information on production conditions, trade measures, and stock levels allows markets and policymakers to anticipate disruptions and adjust responses accordingly. In this regard, the work of the Agricultural Market Information System<sup>21</sup> (AMIS), coordinated by FAO in collaboration with other international organizations, is particularly important, as it enhances transparency, improves data quality, and provides a shared analytical platform that helps reduce uncertainty and prevent overreactions in global food markets. In the absence of such information, uncertainty can trigger precautionary behavior, including hoarding and restrictive trade measures, which further destabilize markets.

LAC has a clear interest in reinforcing transparency frameworks within the multilateral system. As a reliable exporter, the region benefits from signaling

21 <https://www.amis-outlook.org/home>

supply availability and policy predictability to international markets. Enhanced notification and information-sharing mechanisms can help distinguish between genuine supply shortages and policy-induced disruptions, reducing the likelihood of contagion effects across markets.

Cooperation mechanisms also play a preventive role. Platforms for dialogue and coordination among exporting and importing countries can mitigate the escalation of trade restrictions during crises. For LAC, active engagement in these mechanisms reinforces its image as a responsible supplier and strengthens its credibility in global food governance debates.

## **LAC and WTO reform: Food security as a strategic entry point**

### **Food security and development as converging agendas**

Food security has long occupied a prominent place on the global policy agenda, but it has re-emerged with renewed urgency in economic governance debates, increasingly intertwined with development objectives, and the affordability of healthy diets. Rather than constituting separate policy domains, these agendas now converge around shared challenges: maintaining supply stability, strengthening resilience to shocks, ensuring that food remains economically accessible, and addressing the rising cost barriers that prevent millions from affording nutritious diets. This convergence carries important implications for the reform of the multilateral trading system, where traditional debates on market access and subsidies must increasingly be complemented by disciplines and cooperation mechanisms that support sustainability, resilience, price transmission stability, and the affordability dimension of food security.

For LAC, this is a strategic opportunity. As a major net food-exporting region with relatively resilient production systems, LAC is well positioned to frame food security not as a defensive issue, but as a shared global objective that depends on predictable trade rules. By emphasizing the link between open markets, investment incentives, and long-term supply expansion, the region can contribute constructively to reform discussions that seek to reconcile trade liberalization with climate and development goals.

Importantly, positioning food security through trade at the center of reform debates enables LAC to move beyond polarized narratives that put exporters

against importers and to reframe the discussion around shared vulnerabilities, mutual dependence, and collective gains from a more predictable and resilient trading system. In this sense, food security provides a unifying framework through which diverse interests can be aligned around the stability and credibility of the rules-based system

## **LAC's role as a coalition-builder in multilateral reform debates**

Historically, LAC's participation in multilateral trade negotiations has been characterized by a mix of coordination and fragmentation. While the region has at times articulated common positions—particularly on agricultural market access and domestic support—divergent national priorities have often limited sustained collective action. In the current context, however, food security offers a pragmatic basis for coalition-building that cuts across traditional negotiating blocs (Freund, 2021).

As both a supplier of global public goods in the form of stable food exports and a region with development concerns, LAC could act as a bridge between exporting and importing countries, as well as between advanced and developing economies. This intermediary role is particularly relevant in discussions on export restrictions, transparency, and emergency response mechanisms, where interests often overlap despite differing economic structures.

Effective coalition-building does not require full regional alignment on all issues. Rather, it involves identifying specific reform areas where shared interests are sufficiently strong to support coordinated engagement. By prioritizing food security-related disciplines, LAC can enhance its influence within reform processes and contribute to outcomes that reinforce both global resilience and its own strategic interests.

## **Advancing plurilateral and multilateral solutions consistent with development needs**

Given the complexity of current negotiations, reform of the multilateral trading system is likely to proceed through a combination of plurilateral initiatives and broader multilateral disciplines. For LAC, proactive and coordinated engagement in both tracks is critical—not only to ensure that emerging rules adequately reflect development priorities and productive realities, but also to

safeguard the coherence, inclusiveness, and long-term credibility of the multilateral system.

Food security provides a natural entry point for such engagement. Plurilateral efforts aimed at enhancing transparency, limiting the use of export restrictions, or improving information-sharing during crises can generate tangible benefits even in the absence of comprehensive multilateral agreements. At the same time, anchoring these initiatives within the broader framework of the WTO helps avoid fragmentation and preserves the inclusiveness of the system.

From a development perspective, it is critical that reform efforts recognize asymmetries in capacity and exposure to shocks. LAC's engagement can help ensure that new disciplines balance predictability with policy space, particularly for developing countries facing food security vulnerabilities. By advocating solutions that are both credible and flexible, the region can support a reform agenda that strengthens the system without undermining legitimate development objectives.

## Conclusions and policy implications

LAC has an important role in the global food system at a time of heightened uncertainty and systemic stress. As one of the world's main net exporters of agri-food products, the region plays a critical role in sustaining global food availability through its scale, diversification, and capacity to supply international markets on a reliable basis. These structural characteristics, reinforced by investments in productivity and climate resilience, position LAC as a stabilizing supplier in an increasingly volatile global environment.

The analysis in this chapter underscores that LAC's contribution to global food security cannot be understood solely in terms of production capacity. Rather, it is intrinsically linked to the functioning of the multilateral trading system. Predictable market access, transparency, and effective disciplines on trade-distortive measures are essential to ensure that productive potential translates into stable cross-border supply. Episodes of unilateral trade interventions and export restrictions have demonstrated how quickly the erosion of multilateral cooperation can amplify volatility and undermine food security outcomes, particularly for import-dependent countries.

From a forward-looking perspective, food security offers a pragmatic and unifying entry point for advancing reform of the WTO. The growing conver-

gence between food security and development agendas creates opportunities to reframe trade governance debates around shared systemic objectives rather than zero-sum outcomes. In this context, LAC is well-positioned to contribute constructively to reform discussions by leveraging its experience as a reliable food supplier and its interest in preserving a rules-based system.

Several policy implications emerge from this analysis. First, reinforcing multilateral disciplines related to transparency and export restrictions should be a priority, given their direct impact on global supply stability and investment incentives. Second, trade policy frameworks should recognize the role of resilient and sustainable production systems in supporting long-term food security, ensuring coherence between climate action and trade rules. Third, greater coordination among LAC countries—focused on specific, food security–related reform areas—can enhance the region’s influence in multilateral negotiations without requiring full alignment on all trade issues.

Ultimately, strengthening the contribution of LAC to global food security requires aligning domestic investment in productive and resilient agriculture with an international environment that supports open, predictable, and cooperative trade relations. By engaging proactively in multilateral reform efforts and positioning food security at the center of trade governance debates, LAC can help reinforce the credibility of the multilateral system while advancing its own development and export objectives in an increasingly fragmented world.

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