

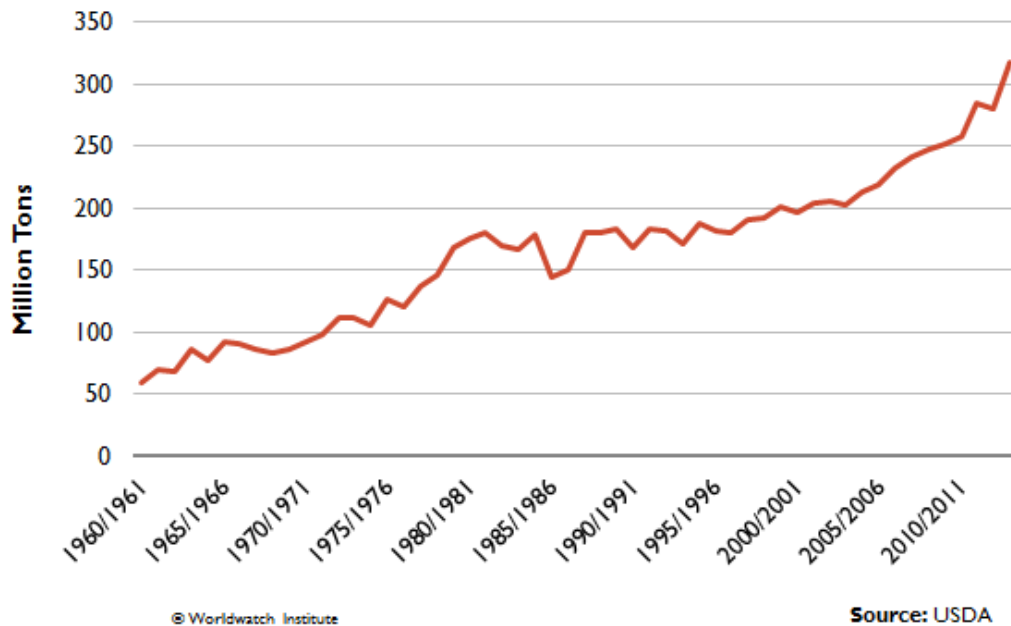


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## Food Trade and Self-Sufficiency

Imports of grain globally increased more than fivefold between 1960 and 2013 as more nations turned to international markets to help meet domestic food demand.<sup>1</sup> (See Figure 1.) For some countries, the imported share of domestic grain consumption has risen substantially.<sup>2</sup> In 2013, more than a third of the world's nations-77 in all-imported at least 25 percent of the major grains they needed.<sup>3</sup> This compares to just 49 countries in 1961, an increase of 57 percent over half a century.<sup>4</sup> (See Table 1.)

**Figure 1 | World Grain Imports, 1960-2014**



**Table 1 | Number of Grain-Importing and Grain-Exporting Countries, 1961 and 2013**

	1961	2013	Increase
Grain-Importing Countries	49	77	57%
Grain-Exporting Countries	25	25	0%

Grain-Importing Countries	(Number of Countries)		(Percent)
100 percent dependent	11	13	18
More than 50 percent dependent	31	51	65
More than 25 percent dependent	49	77	57
Grain-Exporting Countries	21	27	29

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**Source:** USDA

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Even more worrying, 51 countries-about a quarter of the community of nations-imported more than half of their grain in 2013, and 13 imported all of the grain they needed.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the number of grain-exporting countries expanded by just 6 between 1961 and 2013.<sup>6</sup>

Determining the food import dependence of people, rather than of countries, is more challenging, because imported food is often consumed in a few locations (such as a country's capital city) rather than distributed equally among an entire population. But a 2013 study found that in 2000, some 950 million people-16 percent of the world's population at the time-were using international trade to meet their food needs (although not just grain).<sup>7</sup>

**Read More:** [Food Trade and Self-Sufficiency](#)

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