

The Honduran banana sector reportedly estimates that around 8,000 hectares of plantations have been lost due to flooding from Hurricane Eta.

The estimate would represent around half of the total hectarage in the Central American country, which bore much of the brunt of the storm last week, [La Prensa](#) reported.

The storm came amid one of the most severe Atlantic hurricane seasons on record and caused widespread damage to the region.

"I think this is the biggest damage in history for bananas," one grower, Hector Castro, was quoted as saying. He estimates that at least 16,000 direct jobs are at risk in the Honduran banana sector and that the volume of fruit exported will decrease.

Agriculture Minister Mauricio Guevara said that one of the most affected areas in the country is Olanchito, which sits along the Aguán River, local website [El Mundo](#) reported.

The official explained that one of the banks of the river overflowed and resulted in a total loss for the Standard Fruit Company of 2,000 hectares of bananas.

The Agriculture Ministry said that there was also severe damage to the production of corn, sugar, and rice.

As floodwater continues to subside, hundreds of thousands of households, businesses and farmers across the country are beginning to count the damage.

"Honduras will be in a very weak situation at the level of government finance and the blow to the private sector," businessman Mateo Yibrín said, adding that he expects a full recovery will take years.

"We all have to be aware that it won't be easy to get out of this. We are going to have an economically very complicated and complex 2021 year and we have to tell the truth and things as they are: the people will suffer from lack of employment, lack of investment, hunger, and companies too, so the picture is not flattering."

In August, exports of agricultural products grew by 11 percent year-on-year, totaling \$631.0 million, thanks largely to a year-on-year increase of \$63.6 million in banana exports, which go mainly to the US.

Although the volume of fruit shipped fell by 5 percent, the average international price increased by 26 percent, according to data reported by the Central Bank.

