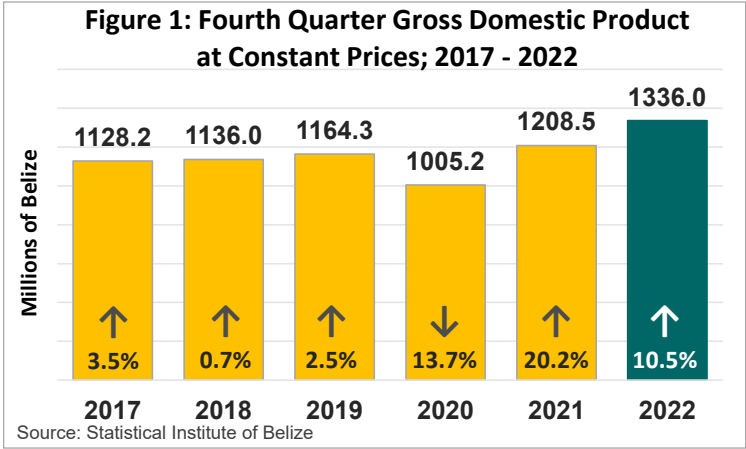




ECONOMY GREW 10.5% IN FOURTH QUARTER 2022 BOOSTED BY STRONG PERFORMANCES IN SECONDARY AND TERTIARY SECTORS

FOURTH QUARTER 2022:

Preliminary Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates by the Statistical Institute of Belize indicated that, for the fourth quarter months of October to December 2022, the value of goods and services produced within Belize totaled \$1.336 billion. This represented an increase of 10.5 percent or \$127.5 million in the level of economic activity during the period, when compared to the \$1.208 billion recorded for the fourth quarter of 2021 (see Figure 1).



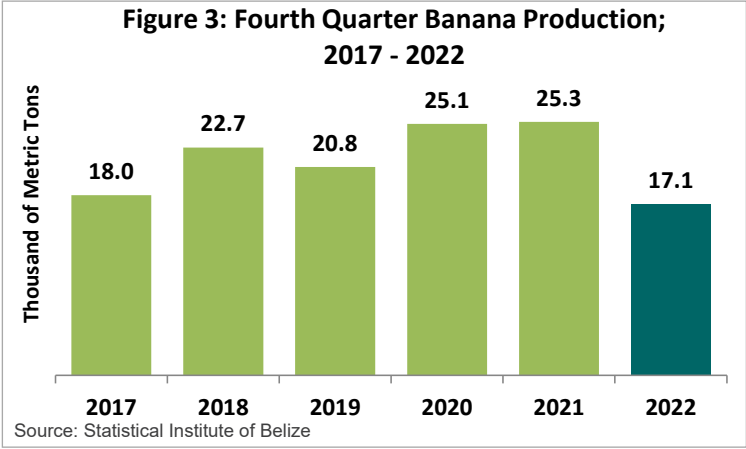
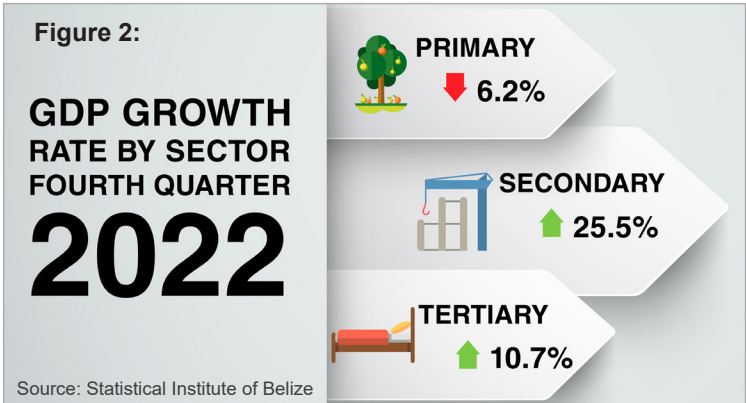
Strong performances were seen across the secondary and tertiary sectors throughout the quarter, with growth being driven by wholesale and retail activities, manufacturing, construction, electricity generation, transport, and tourism. Activities within the primary sector, on the other hand, decreased during the quarter, as production within the agricultural industries continued to lag. ‘Taxes on Products’ were up by 12.8 percent, from \$153.4 million in the fourth quarter of 2021 to \$173.1 million in the fourth quarter of 2022.

For the year 2022, preliminary annual GDP figures indicated that the economy grew by 12.1 percent or \$556.2 million, with total goods and services produced during the year valued at an estimated \$5.14 billion.

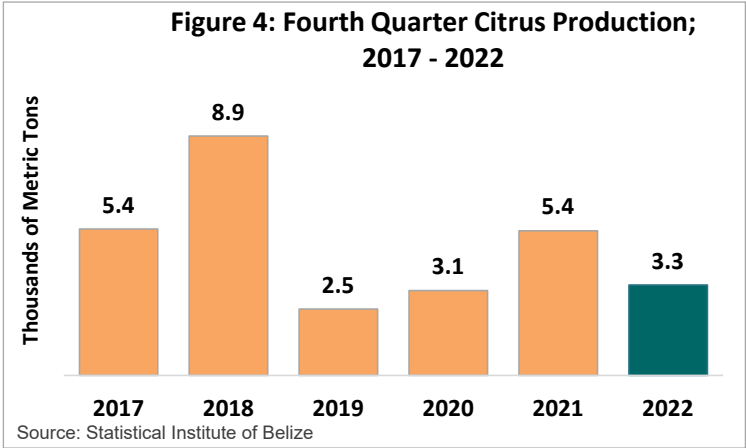
PRIMARY ACTIVITIES:

Production within the primary sector totaled \$152.8 million for the fourth quarter of 2022, down by 6.2 percent or \$10 million from \$162.8 million during the fourth quarter of 2021.

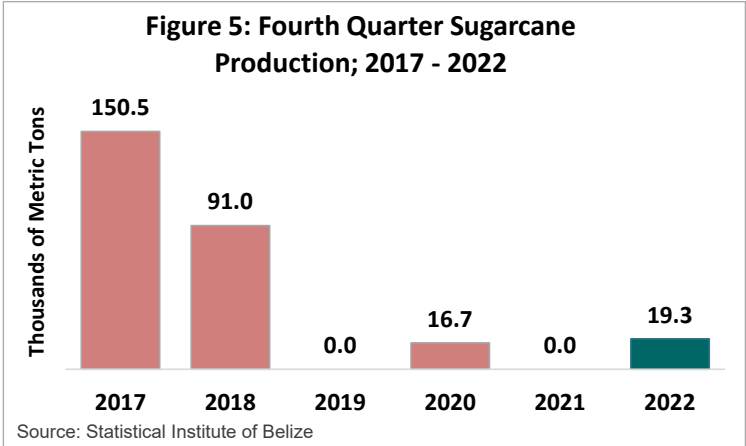
Several of the country’s major crops were adversely affected by Hurricane Lisa, including bananas, which saw production decline by 32.3 percent from 25.3 thousand metric tons to 17.1 thousand metric tons, due to increased incidence of disease



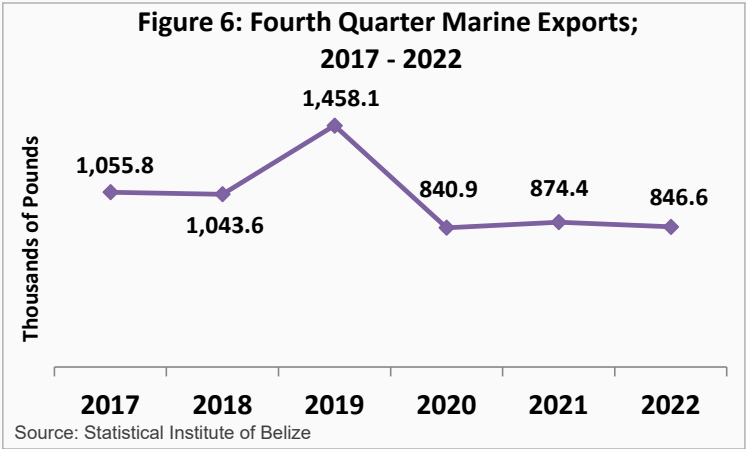
brought on by the excessive rains, labour shortages, and rising production costs (see Figure 3). Citrus fruit deliveries also fell sharply by 37.4 percent, from 5.4 thousand metric tons in the fourth quarter of 2021 to 3.3 thousand metric tons in the fourth quarter of 2022 (see Figure 4). While there was no sugarcane harvested in the fourth quarter of 2021, some 19.3 thousand metric tons of this crop were produced in the same period of 2022 (see Figure 5).



The livestock industry was down by 2 percent during the quarter, as a rise in poultry production was offset by lower cattle and pig outputs. Following the spike in cattle exports during 2021, this industry recorded a 6.4 percent decrease, from 12.8 thousand heads of cattle in the fourth quarter of 2021 to 11.9 thousand heads of cattle in the fourth quarter of 2022. Pig production declined by 3.6 percent, from 11.1 thousand heads to 10.7 thousand heads. On the other hand, poultry production grew



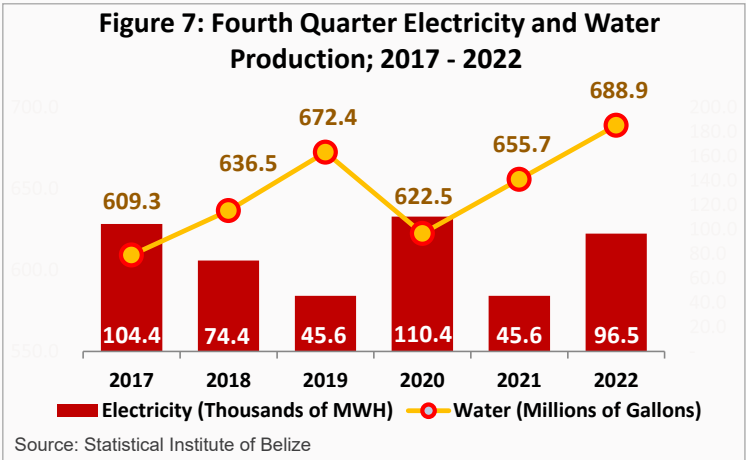
by 3.3 percent, from 11 million pounds in the fourth quarter of 2021 to 11.4 million pounds in the same quarter of 2022. Notwithstanding a slight increase in shrimp production, the fishing industry saw a 3.2 percent reduction in output as other marine exports declined during the period (see Figure 6).



SECONDARY ACTIVITIES:

Activities within the secondary sector rose by a substantial 25.5 percent or \$37.9 million overall, from \$148.7 million in the fourth quarter of 2021 to \$186.6 million in the fourth quarter of 2022. Manufacturing grew by 6.1 percent, driven by improved performances across several industries. Production of beverages increased by 16 percent as a result of rising consumer demand, which was boosted by an increase in visitor arrivals and the resumption of large public activities in the latter part of the year. Similarly, flour production was up by 14.1 percent for the period. In keeping with the decline in fruit deliveries, citrus concentrate production dropped by 37.3 percent, from 92 thousand gallons in the fourth quarter of 2021 to 58 thousand gallons in the fourth quarter of 2022.

‘Construction’ recorded a strong performance for the period, with activities within this industry expanding by 32.1 percent from \$64.7 million in the fourth quarter of 2021 to \$85.4 million in the same period of 2022. Electricity generation more than doubled during the fourth quarter, increasing by 111.4 percent from 45.6 thousand megawatt hours to 96.5 thousand megawatt hours. Water production was also up, albeit by a more modest 5.1 percent, from 655.7 million gallons to 688.9 million gallons (see Figure 7).



TERTIARY ACTIVITIES:

Production in the tertiary sector over the fourth quarter of 2022 was valued at \$823.5 million, an increase of \$79.9 million or 10.7 percent from the \$743.6 million produced in the same period in 2021. The main driver of growth within the sector was ‘Wholesale and Retail Trade’, which saw a 17.2 percent increase from \$172.5 million to \$202.3 million. ‘Transport’ operations also recorded a considerable uptick of 31.9 percent from \$48.7 million to \$64.2 million, reflecting an increase in the movement of products and passengers across all modes of transportation. With the continued rise in the numbers of cruise ship and overnight tourist arrivals, the ‘Hotels and Restaurants’ industry grew by 16.5 percent, from \$52.4 million in the fourth quarter of 2021 to \$61.1 million in the fourth quarter of 2022 (see Figure 8a and Figure 8b).

