

PAPUA NEW GUINEA FOOD PRICE BULLETIN

April 2022

The Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) will continue to collect and analyze market food price data in Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 2022. Data for the food price analysis is collected every fortnight from seven markets around the country to monitor food price trends. However, for this quarter (January - March), fortnightly data were collected only in January due to logistical challenges. The two February price data observations were both collected during the last week of February and no price data were collected in March except for Kokopo market. Thus, we have included the 1st fortnight price data collection for April (2nd quarter) 2022 in this bulletin. This bulletin reports the average of monthly pricing information (except March due to missing data) from five main markets: Port Moresby, Lae, Goroka, Mt. Hagen, and Kokopo. The unit food price observations and calculated moving average database is available for download at our [website](#).

Staple crop prices

Prices for sweet potato, one of PNG's most important staple crops, may have stabilized in the first quarter of 2022 following increases in the latter part of 2021, particularly in Port Moresby, Lae and Kokopo markets (Figures 1). Nonetheless, sweet potato prices were nearly double in the 1st quarter of 2022 compared to the same period in 2021 in Port Moresby and Lae. During the 1st quarter of 2021, the real (2020) sweet potato price^[1] in POM and Lae was on average 1.89 and 1.45 PGK/kg, respectively. Comparatively, during the 1st quarter of 2022, average sweet potato prices in POM and

SUMMARY

Users can download the data reported here, and build graphs and tables of price data of over 20 different food crops. The website link provides a user-friendly graphing and data visualization tool: <https://www.ifpri.org/project/fresh-food-price-analysis-papua-new-guinea>

The per kilo sweet potato (2020 real) price in Port Moresby and Lae in the 1st quarter of 2022 were nearly double the per kilo sweet potato price of the 1st quarter of 2021.

The price of cassava and taro held stable in quarter 1 with minimal price changes between January and April across all markets.

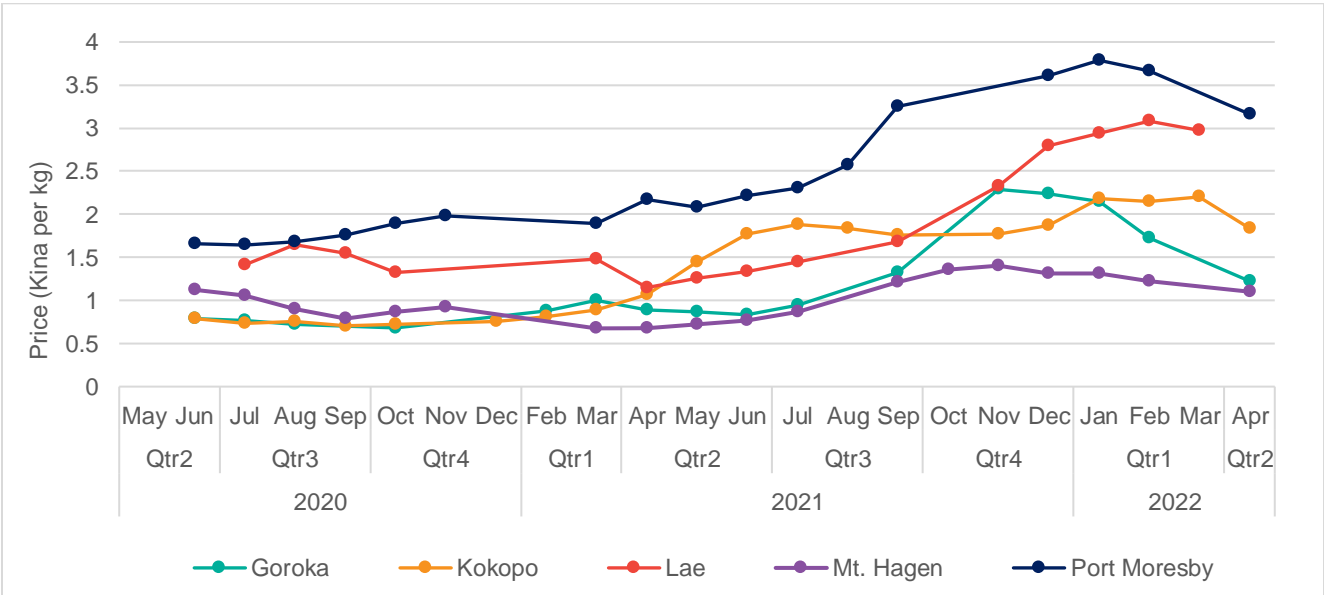
While, globally, commodity food prices are rising due to supply chain issues and concerns over the Russia-Ukraine conflict, thus far rice prices in PNG remain stable.

Vitamin dense fresh vegetables are more costly than staple foods in PNG. However, in Goroka, Mt. Hagen, and Lae, the kg prices of broccoli, carrot and cabbage in the first quarter of 2022 were comparable to taro and cooking banana.

[1] Prices are adjusted to be real prices with January 2020 being the base period, using FAO CPI food index.

Lae were 3.31 and 2.64 PGK/kg., respectively. Since January 2021, sweet potato prices in Port Moresby have consistently been three times more expensive than in Mt Hagen.

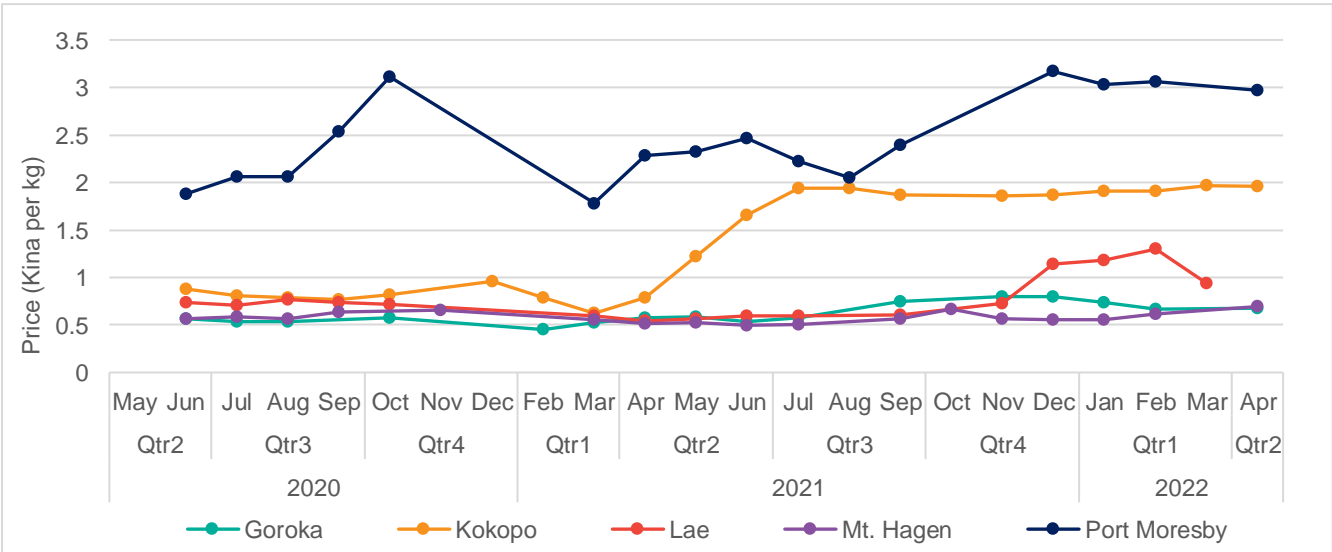
Figure 1: Price of sweet potato across FPDA markets (PGK / kg)



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

Cassava prices have remained stable in most markets since December 2021. On average, a kilo of cassava costs three times more in Port Moresby and Kokopo than the rest of the markets (Figure 2). The price of 1 kg of cassava in Port Moresby was, on average, about 3 kina per kg in the 1st quarter of 2022, while the price in Goroka and Mt. Hagen hovered around 0.6 PGK/kilo.

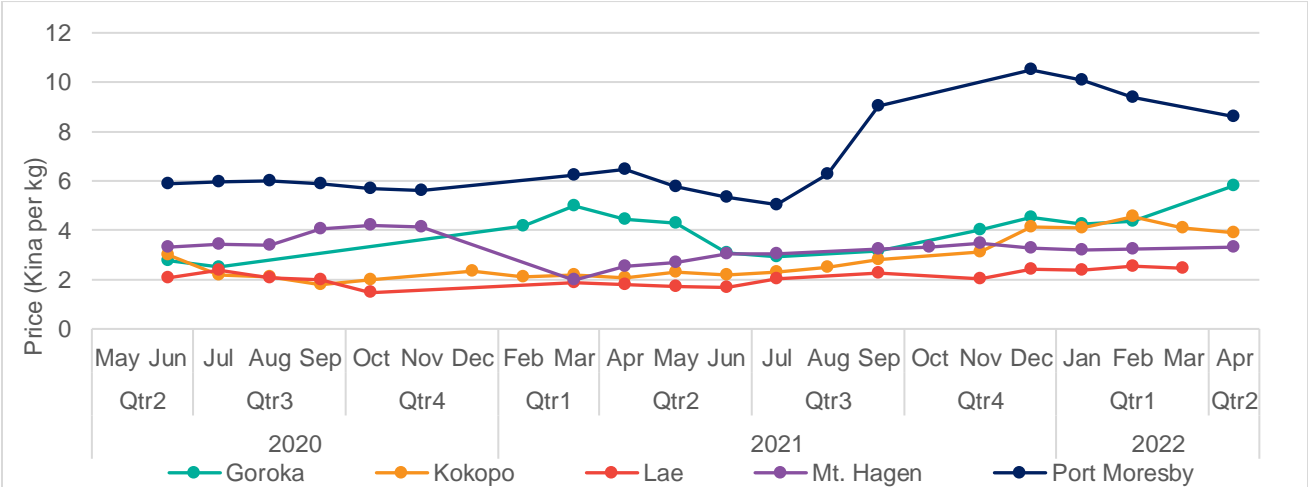
Figure 2: Price of cassava across FPDA markets (PGK / kg)



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

The taro price in Port Moresby decreased by 11% to 9.6 PGK/kg compared to the last quarter of 2021. The unit price of taro at the Lae market is the cheapest compared to other markets, despite the fact that the average price has increased by 11% since the end of 2021 to 2.47 PGK/kg (Figure 3) in the 1st quarter of 2022. Similarly, the average taro price in Kokopo increased since the last quarter of 2021 (from a relatively low base) by 14% to 4.2 PGK/kg in the first quarter of 2022.

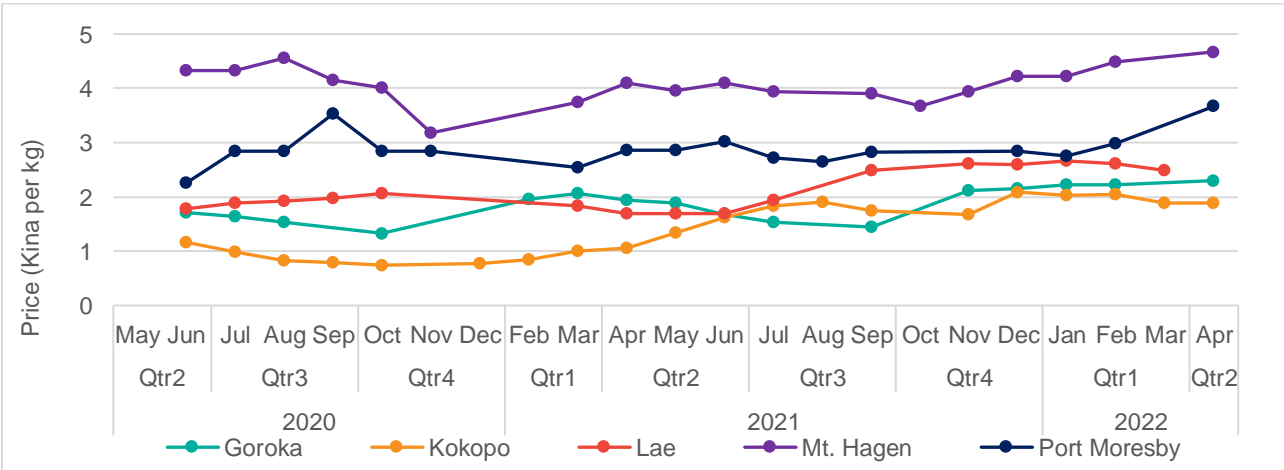
Figure 3: Price of taro across FPDA markets (PGK / kg)



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

The price of cooking banana has risen substantially in Mt Hagen in the 1st quarter of 2022 to an average of 4.5 PGK/kilo (Figure 4). Currently, a kilo of cooking banana costs 2.3 PGK more in Mt. Hagen than in any other market. While the price of cooking banana remained relatively stable in Lae, Goroko, and Kokopo markets, the kilo price in Port Moresby increased throughout the 1st quarter of 2022. On-going price collection is needed to understand whether this price increase is a reflection of seasonal supply.

Figure 4: Price of cooking banana across FPDA markets (PGK / kg)

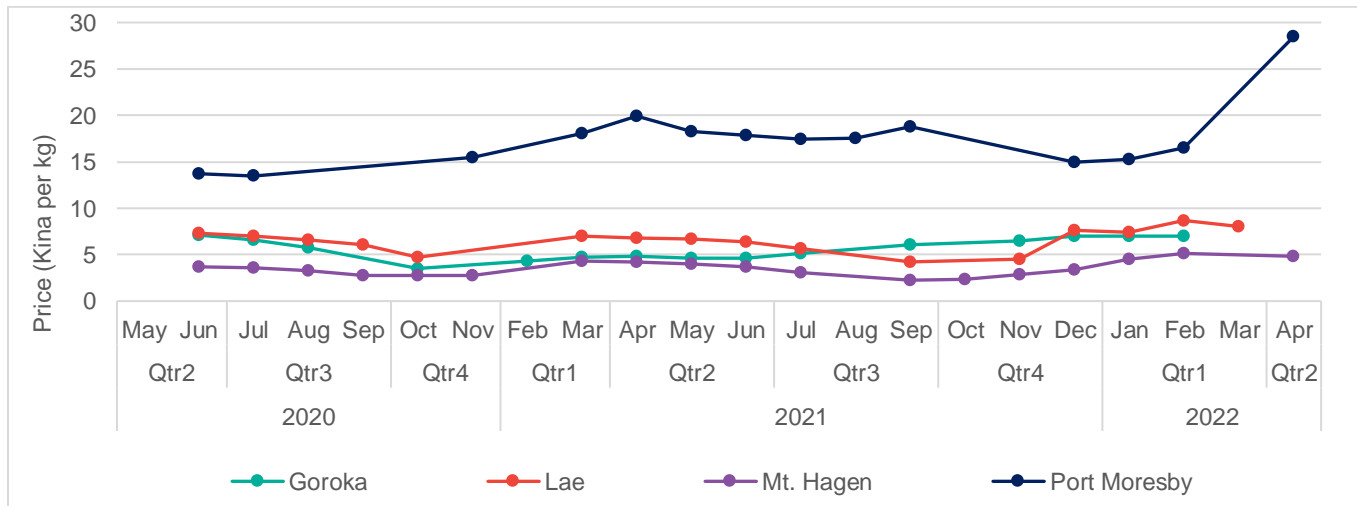


Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

Comparing staple food prices with vitamin-dense food prices

In general, vitamin dense fresh vegetables are more costly than primary staples in PNG. However, in Goroka, Mt. Hagen, and Lae, the kg price of broccoli, carrot and cabbage in the first quarter of 2022 were comparable to taro and cooking banana (Figure 3,4, 5 and 6). While currently comparable, price trends suggest that broccoli and carrot prices are slowly increasing in Goroka, Mt. Hagen and Lae markets.

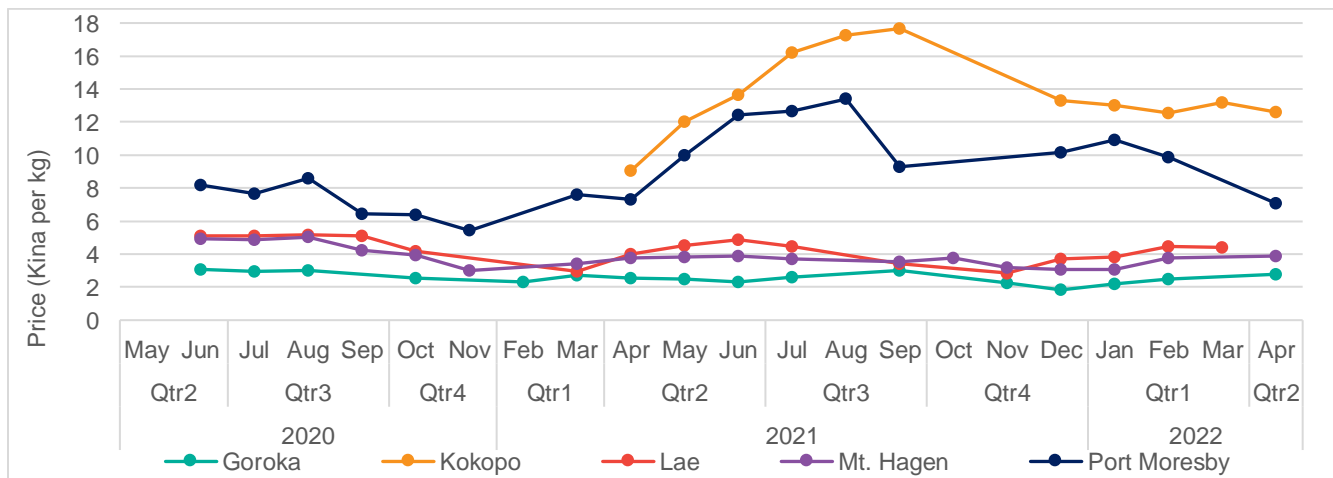
Figure 5: Broccoli price per kilo across 4 FPDA markets



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database. *Note: No data are available for Broccoli in Kokopo market

The price of carrot in Port Moresby and Kokopo are significantly higher than the other markets, however unit prices did decrease in POM and Kokopo in the 1st quarter of 2022 by 9 and 4 percent, respectively (Figure 6). Despite a 28 percent drop in the price of carrot in Kokopo from 17.6 PGK/kg in September to 12.6 PGK/kg in early April, it remains the most expensive from other markets.

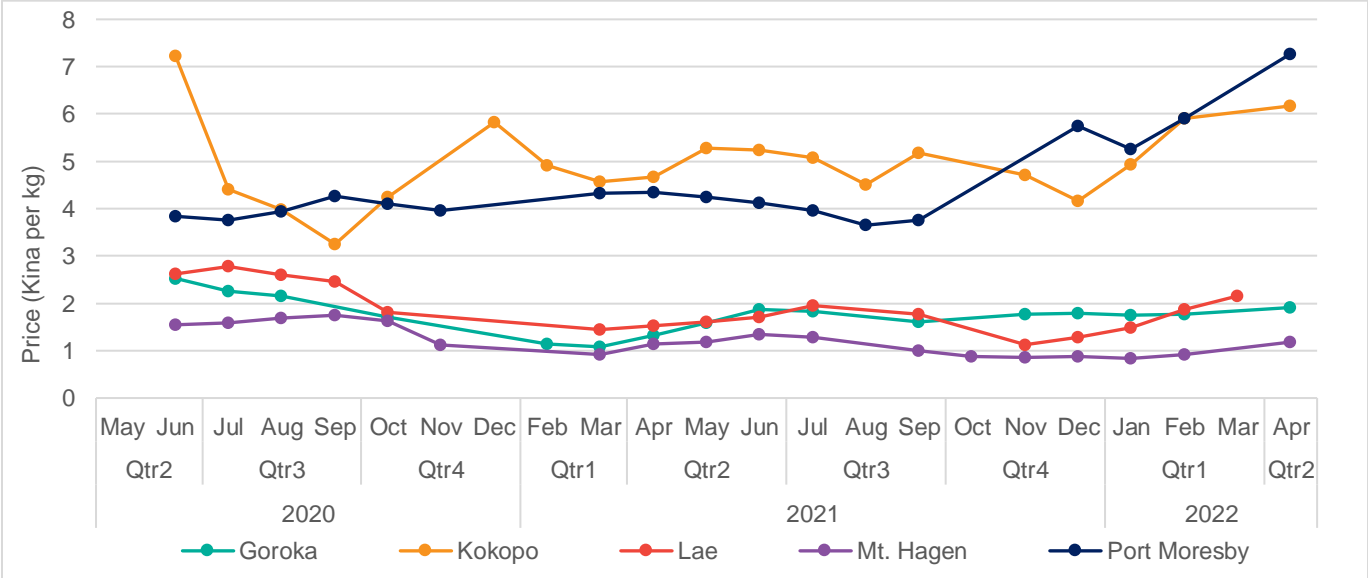
Figure 6: Carrot price per kilo across 5 FPDA markets



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

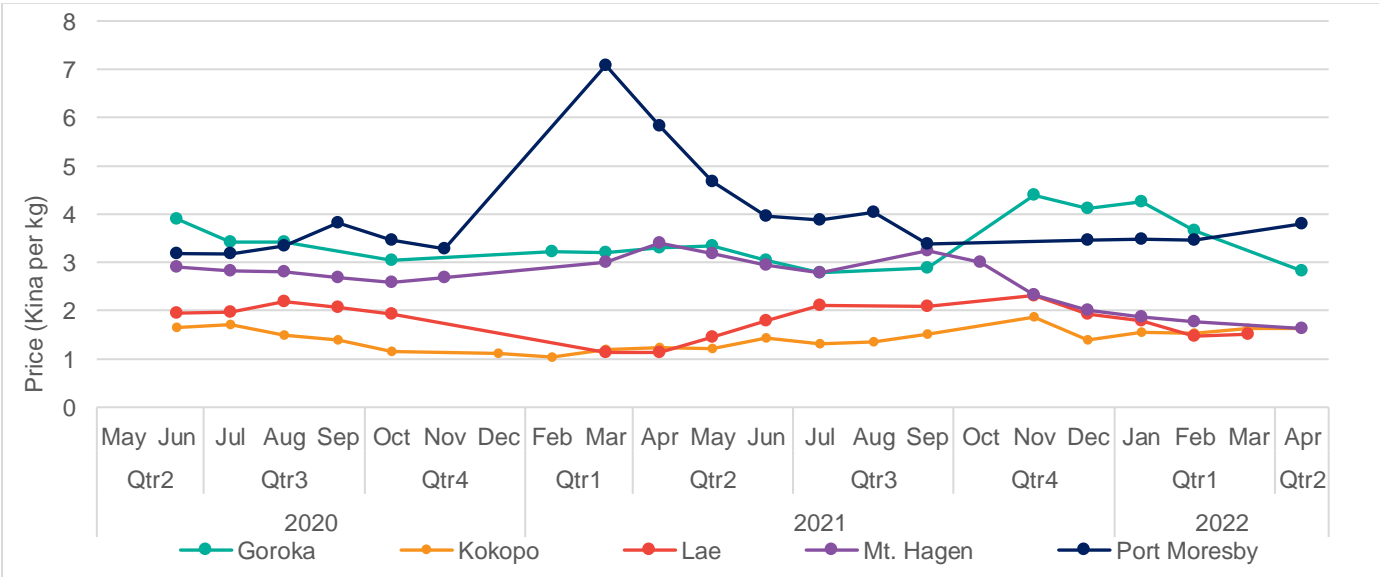
While the price of cabbage in Goroka and Mt Hagen remains stable, prices in Lae and Kokopo increased by 42 and 36 percent, respectively to 1.8 and 5.7 PGK/kg (Figure 7). While in general, there are clear price differences between Port Moresby (and in some cases Kokopo) and the highland markets, aibika prices are more comparable across markets. Since December 2021, aibika prices fell by 13 percent on average in both highland markets (Mt. Hagen & Goroka) and 18 percent in Lae market (Figure 8).

Figure 7: Cabbage price per kilo across 5 FPDA markets



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

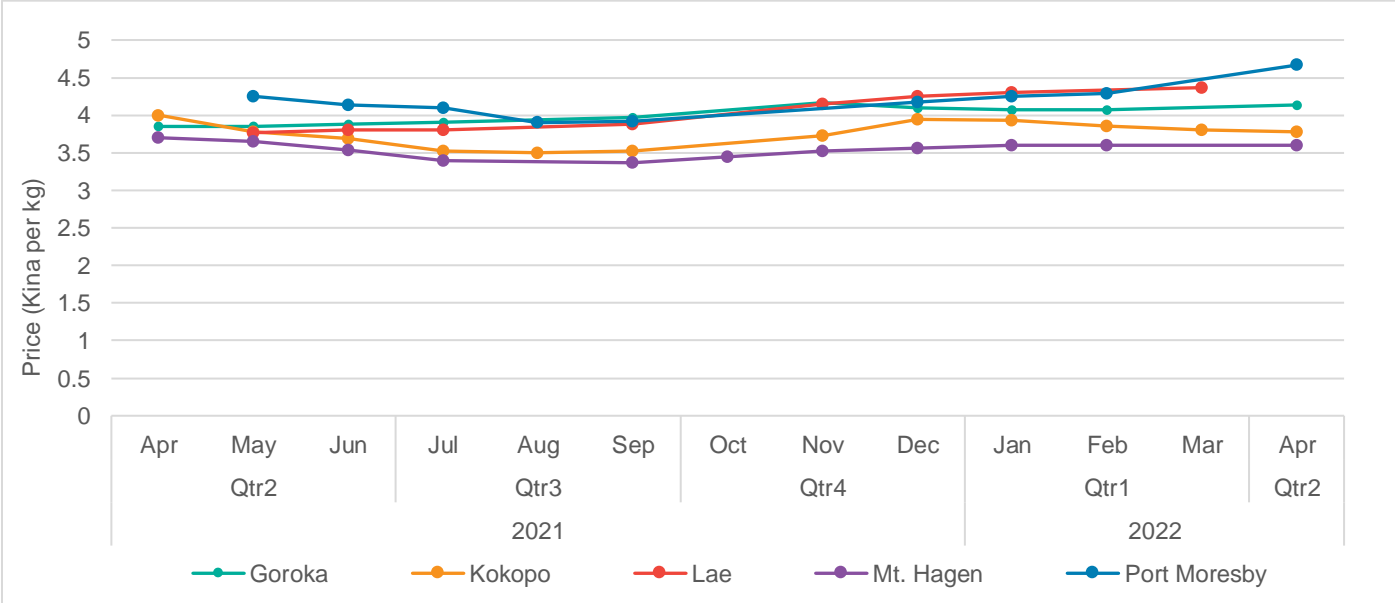
Figure 8: Aibika price per kilo across 5 FPDA markets



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

Globally, commodity food prices are rising due to ongoing supply chain issues and concerns over the Russia-Ukraine conflict, however, thus far rice prices in PNG have not experienced major price shifts. The price of a 1kg bag of rice ranges from 3.4 to 4.6 PGK across all markets (Figure 9). It will be important to continue monitoring imported food commodity prices throughout 2022. The PNG National Statistical Office monitors supermarket commodity goods and collects monthly price information on specific imported items.

Figure 9: Rice price per kilo across 5 FPDA markets



Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

Due to logistical challenges in fresh market data collection in the 1st quarter of 2022, consistent fortnightly data were only collected in January. The February price data were collected in two rounds within a week gap, and no price data were collected in March except one round in Kokopo market. Efforts are being made to overcome logistical challenges in collecting data fortnightly, so that upcoming bulletins can be based on a improved data regularity. Please contact us if you have any questions or comments regarding this bulletin or future food price bulletins.

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