

The Monthly Maize Market Report was developed by researchers at IFPRI Malawi to provide clear and accurate information on the variation of maize prices in selected markets throughout Malawi. All prices are reported in Malawi Kwacha (K).

### Highlights

- Retail prices of maize increased by 5 percent in October.
- Maize prices were highest in the Southern region.
- ADMARC sales were reported in 13 of 26 markets monitored by IFPRI, mostly in the Southern region.
- Retail prices of maize in Malawi were higher than in the neighboring countries, attracting informal imports.

### Prices increased by 5 percent in October

Figure 1 shows a trend in prices in the past 12 months ending in October 2023, and, for comparison, over the 12 months ending in October 2022. At the beginning of the harvest season, we start reporting prices of newly harvested maize, which has a higher moisture content than maize from the previous harvest. High moisture content makes it unsuitable for storage or milling. During drying, it loses about 20 percent of its weight. Solid lines in Figure 1 represent observed maize prices. Dotted lines represent prices adjusted for moisture content and thus the true price trend.

Retail maize prices experienced a 5 percent increase in October, rising from K692 in the final week of September to K732 in the final week of October (Table 1). This increase in price, occurring at the onset of the lean season, represents a notably more lenient change compared to the same period in the previous season (when prices increased by 23 percent), but from a much higher base (Figure 1).

### Maize prices highest in the South

Consistent with the typical trend, the Southern region recorded the highest monthly average maize retail price of K775/kg, with the peak weekly retail price (K883/kg) noted in Luchenza in Thyolo. The Central region maintained relatively stable prices, with the monthly average settling at K710/kg. Two markets in the Central region even recorded a modest price decline: Mitundu in Lilongwe (4%) and Mchinji (1%). This can be attributed to local availability of maize as farmers are releasing previously withheld stock to use in purchasing farm inputs and labor as they prepare for the upcoming farming season.

Figure 1. Long-run trends in average maize retail prices

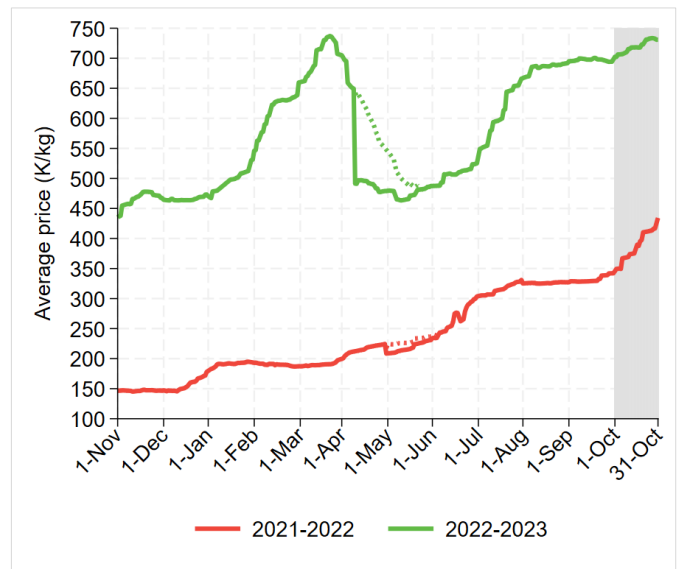
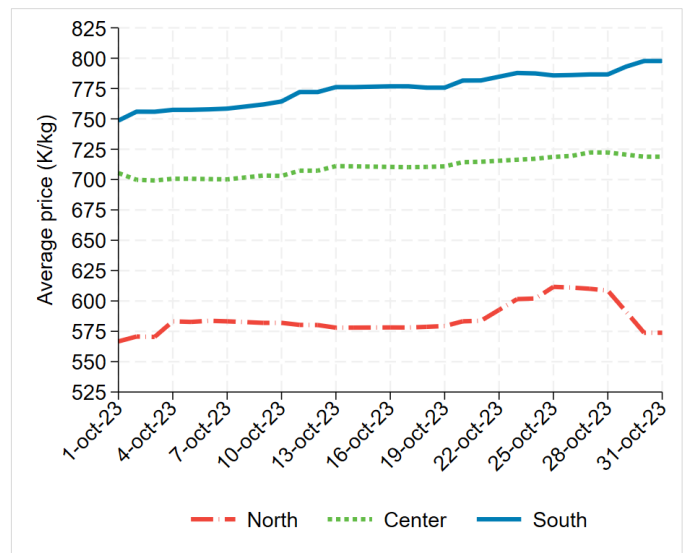


Figure 2. Average daily maize retail prices by region

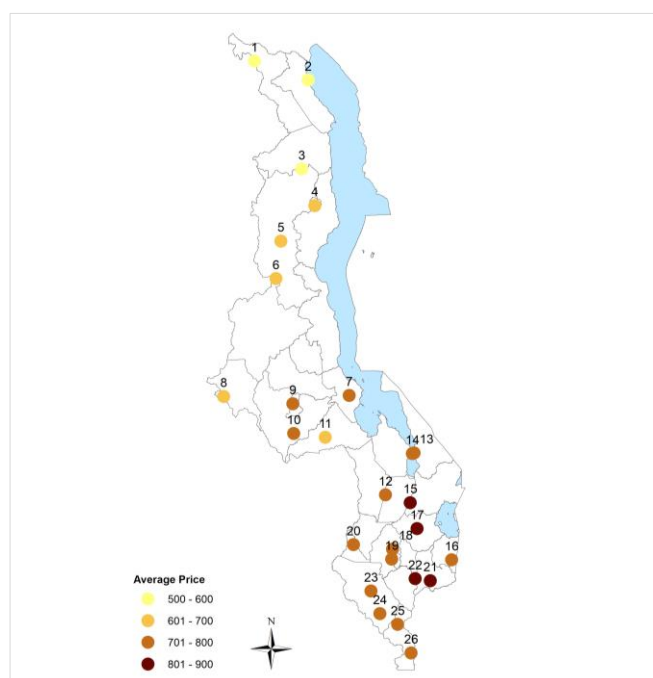


The Northern region documented the lowest monthly average retail maize price at K585/kg, with the lowest weekly average price recorded in Chitipa at K505/kg during the third week of October (Table 1). Towards the end of the month the region experienced a decline in prices (Figure 2) thanks to maize inflows from Zambia and Tanzania.

Table 1. Weekly average retail prices (K/kg)

	Week ending on					Change
	28-Sep-23	7-Oct-23	14-Oct-23	21-Oct-23	28-Oct-23	
Chitipa <sup>1</sup>	543	525	513	505	541	↓ 0%
Karonga <sup>2</sup>	560	571	567	565	574	↑ 3%
Rumphi <sup>3</sup>	550	586	593	575	621	↑ 13%
Mzuzu <sup>4</sup>	597	588	580	597	639	↑ 7%
Mzimba <sup>5</sup>	593	580	622	640	647	↑ 9%
Jenda <sup>6</sup>	587	613	608	598	609	↑ 4%
Salima <sup>7</sup>	726	717	737	760	754	↑ 4%
Mchinji <sup>8</sup>	695	681	671	670	686	↓ -1%
Nsungwi <sup>9</sup>	707	706	731	734	746	↑ 6%
Mitundu <sup>10</sup>	749	727	718	713	717	↓ -4%
Chimbiya <sup>11</sup>	679	674	675	681	692	↑ 2%
Balaka <sup>12</sup>	701	712	721	720	727	↑ 4%
M'baluku <sup>13</sup>	760	756	764	763	763	0%
Mangochi <sup>14</sup>	743	737	740	740	752	↑ 1%
Liwonde <sup>15</sup>	755	807	843	853	853	↑ 13%
Chiringa <sup>16</sup>	777	787	800	800	800	↑ 3%
Mpondabwino <sup>17</sup>	800	800	819	807	800	↔ 0%
Lunzu <sup>18</sup>	687	736	775	785	784	↑ 14%
Mbavani <sup>19</sup>	791	799	800	800	800	↑ 1%
Mwanza <sup>20</sup>	747	748	747	747	747	0%
Mulanje <sup>21</sup>	782	800	826	838	850	↑ 9%
Luchenza <sup>22</sup>	750	808	824	883	883	↑ 18%
Chikwawa <sup>23</sup>	733	725	748	745	759	↑ 4%
Ngabu <sup>24</sup>	700	704	714	730	752	↑ 7%
Bangula <sup>25</sup>	695	687	694	705	761	↑ 10%
Nsanje <sup>26</sup>	695	732	721	751	765	↑ 10%
<b>All markets</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>↑ 5%</b>

Figure 3. Location of markets



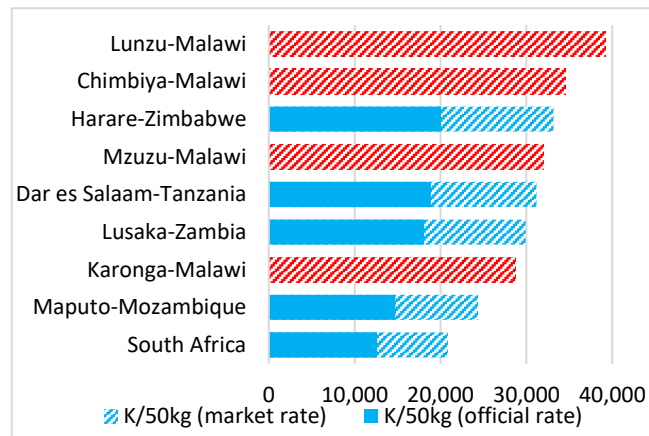
### Regional prices

Markets in southern and central Malawi as well as in Mzuzu recorded higher retail prices of maize than neighboring countries at both the official (K1,180) and the market (K1,950) exchange rate (Figure 4), attracting imports of maize.

### ADMARC Activities

ADMARC sales were reported in half of the 26 markets monitored by IFPRI, 1 in each of the Central and Northern regions and 11 in the Southern region. No ADMARC purchases were reported in any of these markets.

Figure 4. Regional comparison (October 2023)



Note: Weekly average price for the week ending on 28th October

### How data was collected

IFPRI Malawi has been monitoring retail maize prices and ADMARC activities in selected markets since October 2016. Currently, data is collected from 26 markets across the country, with monitoring occurring six days per week, excluding Sundays. At least three monitors report data from each market. Data is collected by means of phone calls to the monitors. Regional prices reported in Figure 4 are sourced from weekly reports from Commodity Insights Africa.