

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. The reports are intended as a resource for those interested in maize markets in Malawi, namely producers, traders, consumers, or other agricultural stakeholders.

Highlights

- Retail maize prices increased by 2 percent in May 2021.
- No ADMARC purchases were reported in the markets monitored by IFPRI.
- Fewer than 10 percent of farmers who sold maize in May received a price equal to or greater than the MFG price.
- Retail prices in Malawi remain lower than in selected markets in eastern Africa and on SAFEX.

Prices Increased by 2 percent in May

Only few traders reported trading ‘old’ maize (harvested in 2020) by the end of April 2021. All prices in this report are therefore for the ‘new’ maize harvested in 2021.

Retail prices for ‘new’ maize that has recently been harvested increased on average by 2 percent during May 2021. However, prices in Mzimba, Salima, Chimbiya and Ngabu decreased by 0.4 to 9 percent, and prices were constant in Chitipa Rumphii, Mchinji, Mpondabwino, Lunzu, Mwanza, Mulanje, Luchenza and Nsanje.

The monthly average retail maize price for May 2021 was MWK 127/kg. This is about 5 percent lower than last month, 26 percent lower than in May 2020, and 15 percent lower than the government-mandated minimum farmgate (MFG) price.

Prices are Higher in the South

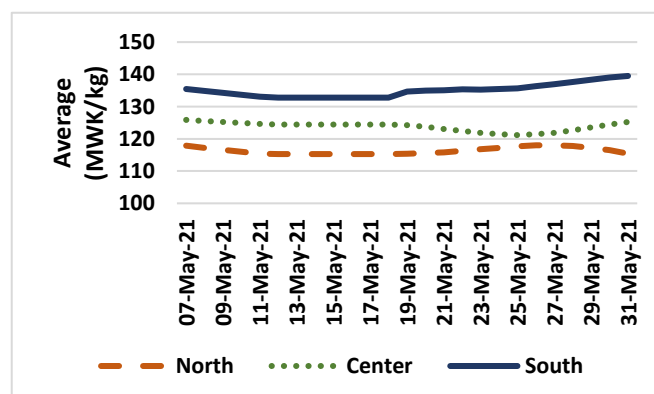
Retail maize prices remained highest in the South and lowest in the North (Figure 1), as is the usual pattern. Prices in all regions remained relatively stable until the end of the month.

Towards the end of the month, prices in the center were mostly higher than in the North by MWK 6/kg and MWK 12/kg lower than in the South.

Table 1. Maize retail prices (MWK/kg) by market

	08-May-21	15-May-21	22-May-21	29-May-21	Change
Chitipa	100	100	100	100	↔ 0%
Karonga	125	125	125	126	↑ 1%
Rumphii	125	125	125	125	↔ 0%
Mzuzu	120	120	122	125	↑ 4%
Mzimba	122	122	122	117	↓ -4%
Jenda	100	100	103	110	↑ 10%
Salima	140	140	140	128	↓ -9%
Mchinji	120	120	120	120	↔ 0%
Nsungwi	127	127	123	132	↑ 4%
Mitundu	107	107	104	111	↑ 4%
Chimbiya	107	106	104	106	↓ -0.4%
Balaka	107	107	109	111	↑ 4%
M'baluku	120	120	123	136	↑ 14%
Mangochi	127	127	127	137	↑ 8%
Chiringa	120	120	120	129	↑ 7%
Mpondabwino	145	145	145	145	↔ 0%
Lunzu	140	140	140	140	↔ 0%
Mbayani	140	140	140	148	↑ 6%
Mwanza	140	140	140	140	↔ 0%
Mulanje	120	120	120	120	↔ 0%
Luchenza	120	120	120	120	↔ 0%
Chikwawa	120	120	120	137	↑ 14%
Ngabu	160	160	157	147	↓ -8%
Bangula	161	161	161	166	↑ 3%
Nsanje	140	140	140	140	↔ 0%
All markets	126	126	126	129	↑ 2%

Figure 1. Daily average maize retail prices during May 2021



Farmgate Prices

On average, farmgate maize prices during May 2021 were about 31 percent below the minimum farmgate (MFG) price of MWK 150/kg announced by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in late March this year. Fewer than 10 percent of farmers who sold maize in May received at least the MFG for their produce.

ADMARC Activities

ADMARC sales continued to be reported in May 2021 with some markets monitored by IFPRI. Old maize is being offered to consumers by ADMARC at MWK 160/kg. No ADMARC purchases were reported in any of the 26 markets monitored.

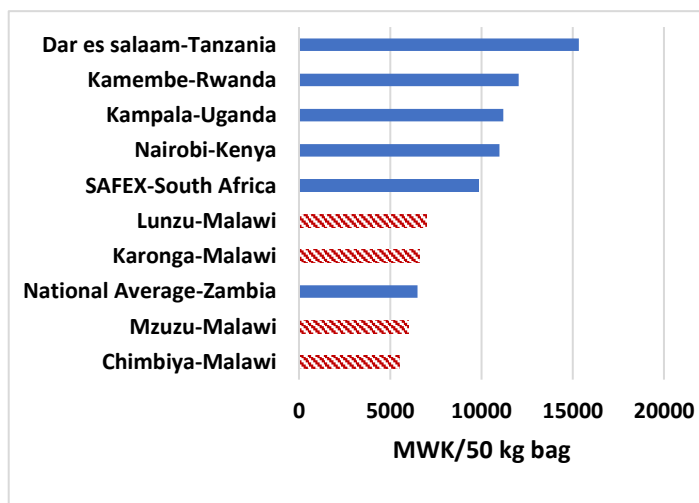
Regional Prices

By the end of May 2021, retail maize prices in Malawian markets were lower than in selected regional markets in eastern Africa and on SAFEX (the main grain futures market in South Africa). Prices in Lunzu and Karonga were higher than Zambia's national average of May 2021.

Table 2. Daily farmgate prices for maize during May 2021 (MWK/kg)

	Average			Median	Max	Min	No of transactions
	Overall	10th Percentile	90th Percentile				
Maize price	103	80	140	100	200	70	450
% of MFGP	69%	53%	93%	67%	133%	47%	

Figure 3. Retail maize prices in selected markets in eastern and southern Africa (as of May 2021)



How data was collected

IFPRI Malawi has been monitoring retail maize prices and ADMARC activities in selected markets since December 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 of these markets. Data is collected by means of automated short message service (SMS) with follow-ups made by telephone if necessary. **Due to technical issues with the third-party messaging platform used for data collection, prices were not reported from all markets on all days in May.** Prices in Table 1 and Figure 1 are therefore reported as weekly moving averages rather than spot prices like in the previous reports. Farmgate prices reported in Figure 2 are collected using IFPRI's new crowdsourcing method, whereby farmers are invited to report their crop sales to a free call center, and encouraged to do so by means of a raffle for agricultural input vouchers (see <https://massp.ifpri.info/2021/07/09/event-recap-a-new-method-for-monitoring-farmgate-prices-in-malawi/> for details). Regional prices reported in Figure 3 are sourced from Food and Agriculture Organization's Global Information and Early Warning System (FAO-GIEWS), IFPRI Malawi, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), and the Zambia Statistics Agency.



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