

Quarterly Market Report

Report No. 3a for Selected Legumes, Roots, Tubers, and Other Cereals, April to June 2021

This quarterly market report was developed by researchers at IFPRI Malawi with the goal of providing clear and accurate information on the variation of weekly and monthly retail prices of selected agricultural commodities that are important for food security and nutrition in Malawi. The reports are intended as a resource for those interested in agricultural markets in Malawi.

Highlights

- Retail prices of common beans, groundnuts and pigeon peas decreased throughout the country by between 3 percent and 23 percent, depending on the crop and region.
- Soyabean prices increased by 42 percent on average, and even more drastically in the Center and North.
- Average retail prices of cassava and Irish potato and sweet potato increased by 5 and 1 percent respectively while sweet potato prices decreased by 15 percent.
- Retail prices of rice were on a downward trend before increasing somewhat in June. Retail prices of sorghum followed a similar trend, with an even sharper increase in June.

Legumes

Table 1 presents the regional average retail prices of legumes during the second quarter of 2021, when newly harvested commodities were brought to markets. Prices of newly harvested commodities tend to be lower than commodities from previous season due to increased supply and high moisture content.

Retail prices of common bean decreased by 9 percent in the North and South and by 23 percent in the Center. Groundnut prices decreased in all the regions by 3 to 10 percent.

Pigeon pea prices decreased by 7 percent in the South. Pigeon pea exports are expected to increase this year since India eased its import re-

Table 1. Legume retail prices (MWK/kg) by region

	April	May	June	Percentage change (April-June)	
Legumes					
Common beans					
North	1036	767	944	↓	-9%
Center	1133	622	867	↓	-23%
South	1093	667	998	↓	-9%
All markets	1087	685	936	↓	-14%
Pigeon peas					
North	500	-	-	-	-
South	522	400	487	↓	-7%
All markets	511	400	487	↓	-5%
Soybean					
North	362	397	558	↑	54%
Center	363	443	556	↑	53%
South	421	468	511	↑	21%
All markets	382	436	542	↑	42%
Groundnut					
North	946	583	855	↓	-10%
Center	883	621	855	↓	-3%
South	997	647	936	↓	-6%
All markets	942	617	882	↓	-6%

Note: Number of markets monitored: common bean = 9; pigeon pea = 5; sorghum = 9; groundnut = 9; - = prices not reported

strictions on the commodity from May until October 2021.

Soybean prices, on the other hand, increased by 21 percent in the South and over 53 percent in the North and Center on the back of a poor harvest in Malawi and abroad combined with increased global demand.

Roots and Tubers

Table 2 presents the average retail prices for roots and tubers. Average retail prices of cassava and Irish potato increased by 5 and 1 percent respectively but decreased by 12 to 2 percent in the Center and South respectively. Unlike cassava and Irish potato which were mostly harvested in the first quarter of the year, sweet potatoes were massively harvested in this quarter, with their prices consequently falling by 15 percent in the Southern region where they are monitored.

Table 2. Root and tuber prices (MWK/unit) by region

	April	May	June		Percentage change (April-June)
Roots and tubers					
Cassava					
North	245	246	-	↑	0.2%
Center	339	278	297	↓	-12%
South	221	216	266	↑	21%
All markets	268	247	282	↑	5%
Irish potato					
North	375	378	388	↑	3%
Center	398	371	410	↑	3%
South	396	356	389	↓	-2%
All markets	390	368	395	↑	1%
Sweet potato					
South	313	262	266	↓	-15%
All markets	313	262	266	↓	-15%

Note: Cassava and Irish potato are priced per kilogram; sweet potatoes are priced per heap and only monitored in the south; number of markets monitored: cassava = 6; Irish potato = 5; sweet potato = 5

Other Cereals

Average retail prices of rice were lower in the North than in the Center and South and were mostly unstable in all regions during the quarter as shown in figure 2. At the beginning of June, prices increased up to the end of the quarter except in the South where prices dropped sharply in the second week of June. This was due to different harvest periods in these regions. On average, rice retail prices in the Center (MWK635/kg) were higher than in the North (MWK551/kg) and South (MWK589/kg).

Most sorghum was harvested in April and May, when prices hit their lowest point. Sorghum prices then increased sharply in the first week of June upon realization of a bad harvest. They remained higher in Nsanje than in Chikwawa and Ngabu as shown in figure 2.

Figure 1. Location of markets by commodity type

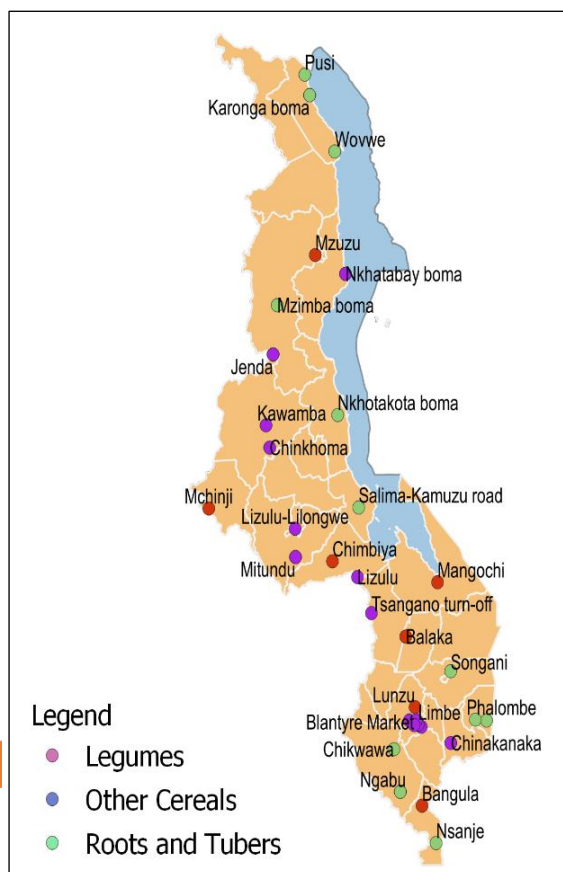
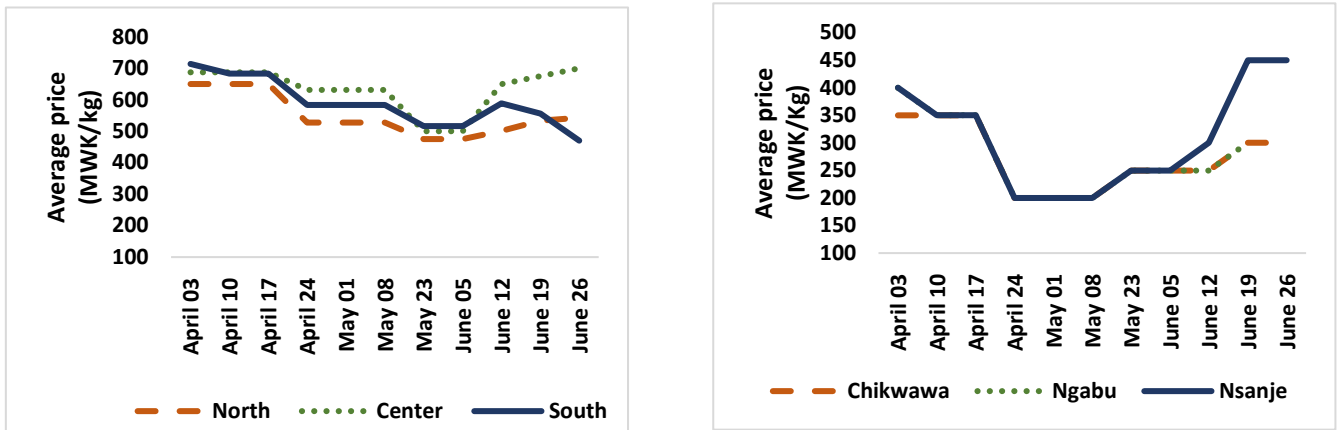


Figure 2. Average retail prices (MWK/kg) of rice and sorghum



How data was collected

With financial support from the European Union, IFPRI Malawi began monitoring retail prices of selected legumes, roots and tubers, and non-maize cereals* in selected markets in October 2020. Currently, prices are collected from 44 markets across the country, with monitoring occurring once per week. Three monitors report prices from each market. Data is collected by means of automated short message service (SMS) with follow-ups made by telephone the next day if needed. The commodities monitored are being phased-in, starting with legumes, root crops and other cereals, and then expanding to include livestock products and fish by the end of March 2021. Note that the number of markets monitored vary by commodity because major markets are targeted in areas where these commodities are widely produced.

* daily retail prices for maize are available from our [monthly maize market reports](#)



For further information contact

Aubrey Jolex (a.jolex@cqiir.org) at IFPRI Malawi.

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