

The Monthly Maize Market Report was developed by researchers at IFPRI Malawi with the goal of providing clear and accurate information on the variation of daily 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 6 percent in February and are now 97 percent higher than in February 2019.
- By the end of February, maize prices were above MWK300/kg in 24 of the 26 markets monitored.
- The price of old maize was MWK55/kg higher than the price of new maize.
- ADMARC sales at MWK150/kg were reported in 15 of the 26 markets monitored.
- Maize prices in Malawi were higher than in most eastern and southern African markets.

Prices increased by 6 percent

By the end of February, the average retail price for ‘old’ maize was MWK337/kg. ‘Old’ maize refers to maize harvested in the 2018/2019 season while ‘new’ maize refers to maize that has been recently harvested. This is about 97 percent higher than in February 2019. Prices rose in twenty markets, fell in four, and remained constant in two markets (Table 1). Retail prices were at or above MWK300/kg in 24 of the 26 markets monitored by the fourth week of February (shaded in Table 1). Fourteen markets had retail prices above MWK350/kg and one market, Chikwawa boma, reported a price of MWK400/kg throughout February. Mzimba market recorded the largest price increase (25 percent) followed by Jenda market (24 percent). Salima market recorded the largest price decline (9 percent). Retail prices in all markets during February were higher than the revised minimum farm gate price of MWK180/kg announced by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) in August 2019.

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

Market	1-Feb-20	8-Feb-20	15-Feb-20	22-Feb-20	29-Feb-20	Change
Chitipa	230	287	290	290	280	↑ 22%
Karonga	263	281	281	300	298	↑ 13%
Rumphi	270	278	322	332	332	↑ 23%
Mzuzu	250	280	313	322	327	↑ 31%
Jenda	280	288	288	327	347	↑ 24%
Mzimba	237	252	253	295	295	↑ 25%
Salima	367	353	347	347	333	↓ -9%
Mchinji	300	298	298	300	305	↑ 2%
Nsungwi	330	357	342	342	360	↑ 9%
Mitundu	320	323	330	330	340	↑ 6%
Chimbiya	320	327	333	333	337	↑ 5%
Balaka	350	350	353	353	353	↑ 1%
M'baluku	360	360	360	360	370	↑ 3%
Mangochi	360	360	347	347	347	↓ -4%
Liwonde	320	360	360	360	360	↑ 13%
Chiringa	350	357	353	353	353	↑ 1%
Mpondabwino	360	367	383	375	385	↑ 7%
Lunzu	360	370	370	370	380	↑ 6%
Mbayani	350	360	360	357	360	↑ 3%
Mwanza	367	350	350	353	353	↓ -4%
Mulanje	345	360	360	360	360	↑ 4%
Luchenza	360	357	357	357	347	↓ -4%
Chikwawa	400	400	400	400	400	⇒ 0%
Ngabu	337	370	367	370	370	↑ 10%
Bangula	348	366	364	384	377	↑ 8%
Nsanje	360	360	360	360	360	⇒ 0%
All markets	327	337	340	345	347	↑ 6%

Prices for old and new maize in February 2020

Figure 2 compares the average retail maize price of old and new maize stock in February 2020. Compared to the previous years, new maize arrived on the market relatively early this year. Traders attribute this to the high maize prices that prevailed last year, which forced farmers to start planting maize earlier than usual. On average, retail prices of ‘old’ maize were MWK55/kg higher than of ‘new’ maize, which is mostly being marketed in southern Malawi. This price difference is not unusual since ‘old’ maize has a lower moisture content than ‘new’ maize and therefore reduces weight losses to traders during storage.

Figure 1. Retail prices for old and new maize (MWK/kg)



