

January 2022

PAPUA NEW GUINEA FOOD PRICE BULLETIN

This bulletin presents food price data compiled by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) from markets across the country to track food price trends and inform policymakers. In addition, users can access a [web-based interactive dashboard](#) for visualizing monthly prices of over 20 different food types over time. Price data collected in 2021 had comparatively higher number of observations compared to the previous year. However, data collection was interrupted in August through mid-September due to logistical challenges and market closures as a result of the COVID-19 surge in PNG, mainly in highland markets, creating gaps in the time series price data.

This quarterly bulletin (October through December, 2021) reports the average monthly price from five markets: Port Moresby, Lae, Goroka, Mt. Hagen, and Kokopo. We also compare prices (both in nominal and real terms) between 4th quarter prices in 2020 and 2021. For further information and to download individual price data and calculated moving average price data, please visit our [website](#).

Staple crop prices

Sweet potato and cassava prices were relatively stable in Mt. Hagen, Goroka and Lae markets in the first half of 2021 (Figure 1 and Figure 2). However, during the second half of 2021, sweet potato prices increased across all markets,

SUMMARY

Users can download the data reported in this bulletin, as well as build graphs and tables of up-to-date 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>

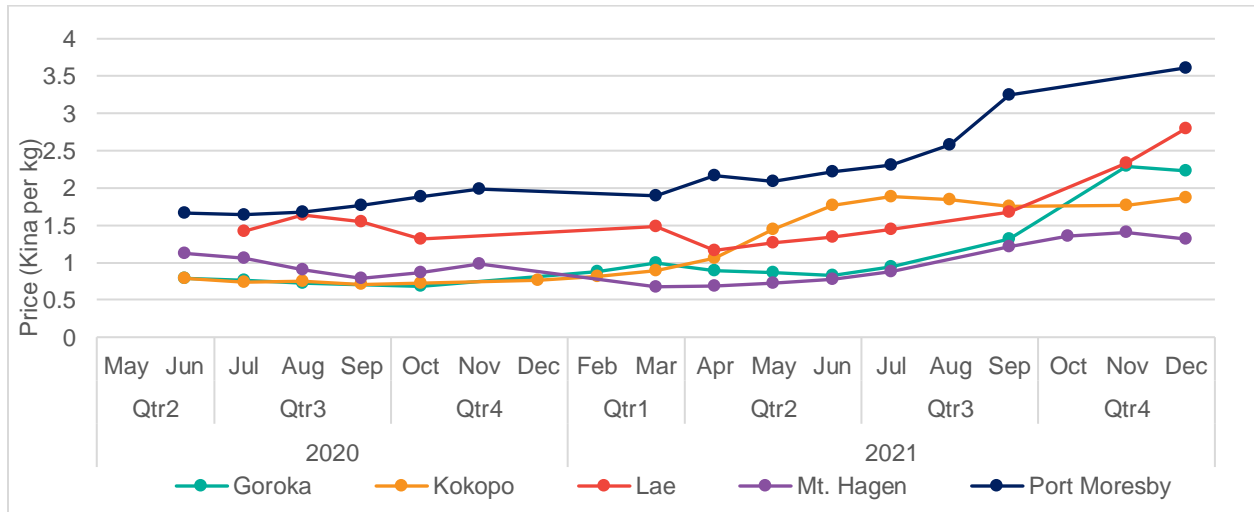
Kokopo experienced the greatest (nominal and real) price increase in staple foods compared to a year ago. Compared to 4th quarter of 2020, the 4th quarter 2021 real price of sweet potato more than doubled (125% increase) in Kokopo. In the same period, cassava and taro (real) prices increased 92 and 69 percent, respectively.

Rice prices (for a 1 kilo bag) remained stable throughout the year across all markets.

Vegetables (which are more vitamin-dense than starch staples) had relatively stable prices throughout 2021, with the lowest prices recorded in the highland markets and Lae. Transportation costs are likely driving higher prices for vegetables in Port Moresby.

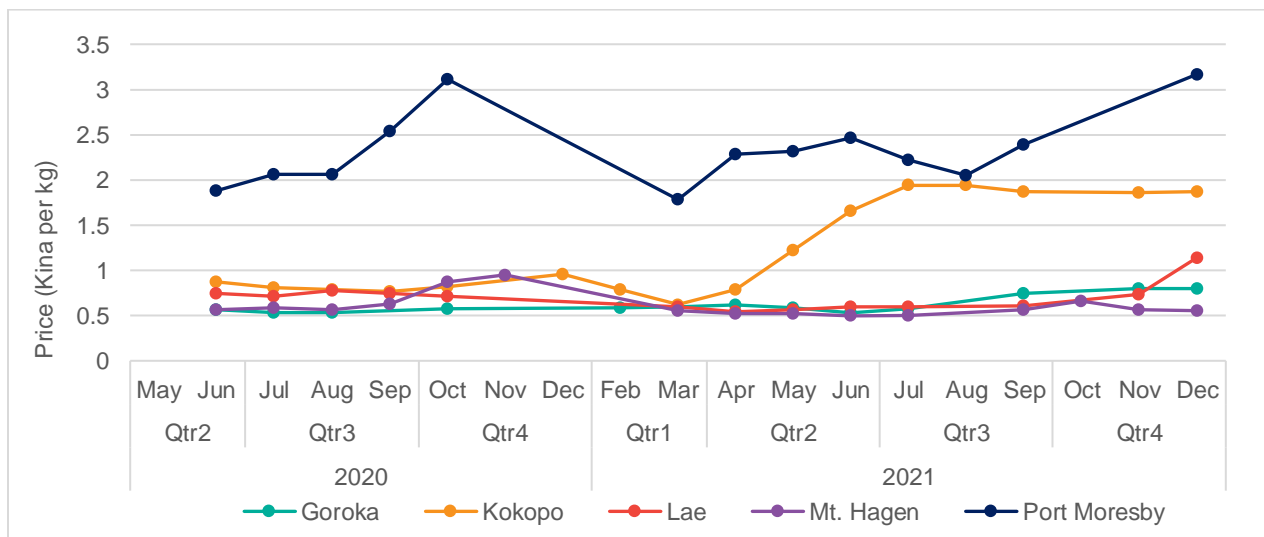
while cassava prices increased markedly in Kokopo market (and towards the end of the year in Lae market).

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



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

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



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

As shown in Figures 3 and 4, in most regions, prices of sweet potato and cassava rose sharply in both nominal terms (using actual market prices) and in real terms (i.e. when adjusted for overall inflation as measured by the food consumer price index in each region). For example, sweet potato market prices rose by 94 percent between 2020 and 2021 in Lae in nominal terms and 77 percent in real terms (i.e. above rate of change in the average consumer price of food items there), (Figure 1). Prices of sweet

potato in Kokopo and Port Moresby showed similar patterns. Cassava prices in Port Moresby, by contrast, changed very little (by only 7 percent) relative to the average price of food items (Figure 4). However, in Mount Hagen, nominal and real prices of cassava fell between 2020 and 2021.

Figure 3: Quarter 4 percent change in sweet potato (nominal and real) prices (2020 vs. 2021)

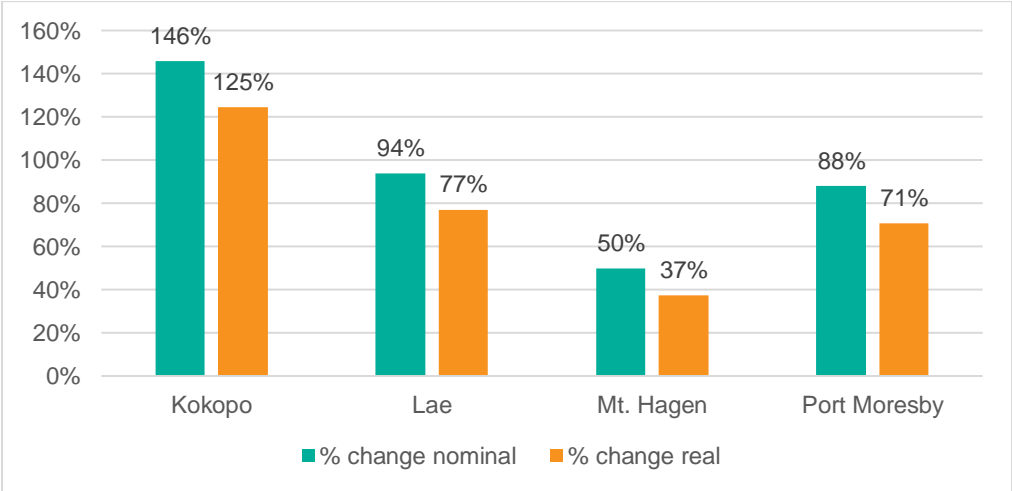
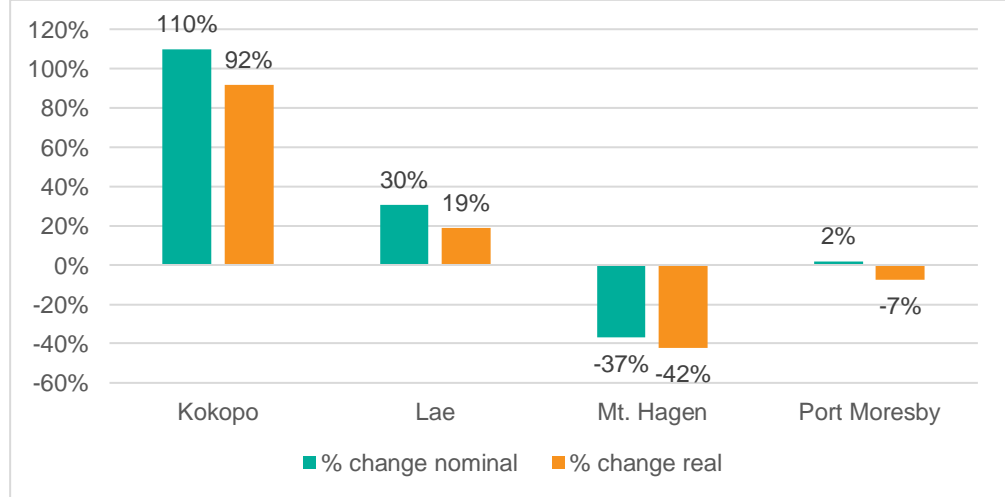
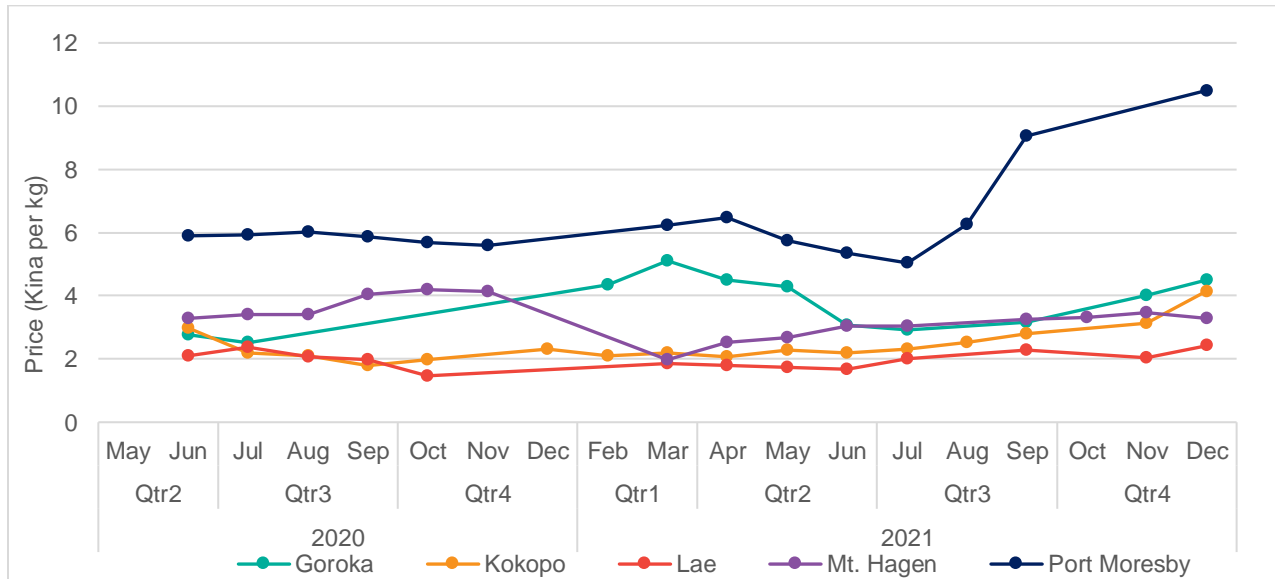


Figure 4: Quarter 4 percent change in cassava (nominal and real) prices (2020 vs. 2021)



The price of taro remained relatively stable in 2021 across all markets except in Port Moresby (Figure 5). Compared to the 4th quarter in 2021, the price of taro in Port Moresby increased by almost 86 percent (real terms). During the last month of 2021, Kokopo taro price increased, with quarter 4 average (real) prices 69 percent greater than the 4th quarter of 2021

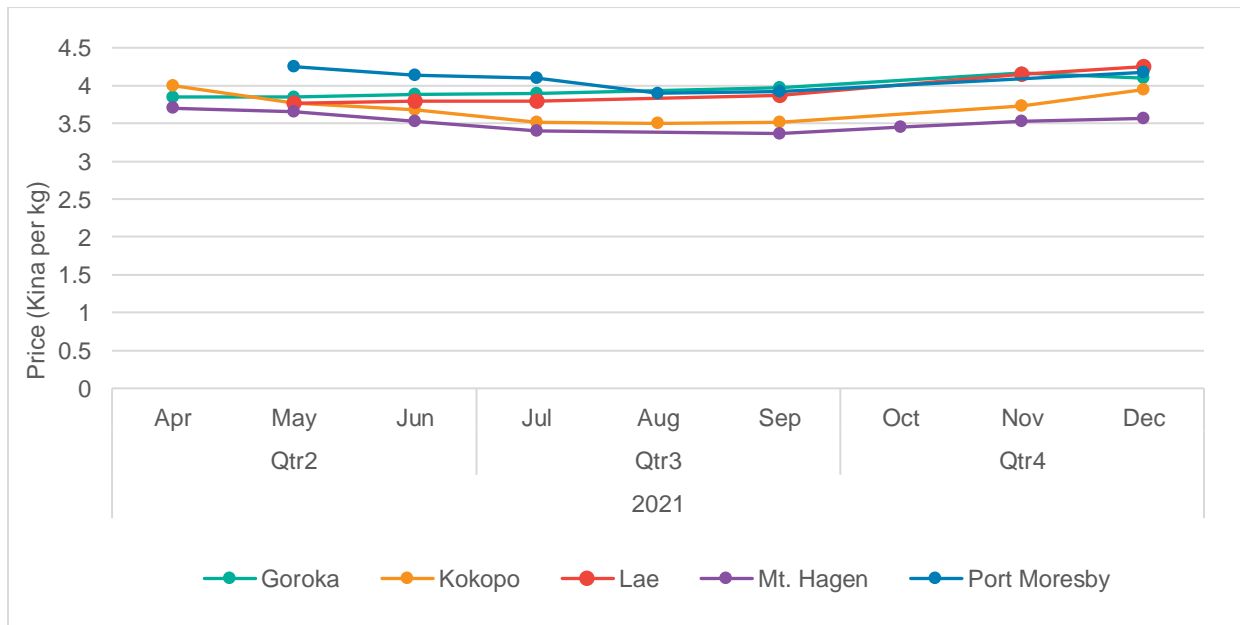
Figure 5: Price of taro across FPDA markets (nominal PGK / kg)



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

The FPDA began collecting packaged rice (1 kilo) rice prices in the second quarter of 2021. Data across the 5 FPDA markets suggest that rice prices (for a 1 kilo bag of rice) remained steady throughout the year. At the end of the year, a 1 kilo bag of rice ranged between 3.5 to approximately 4.1 PGK.

Figure 6: Rice price per kilo across FPDA markets (nominal PGK / kg)

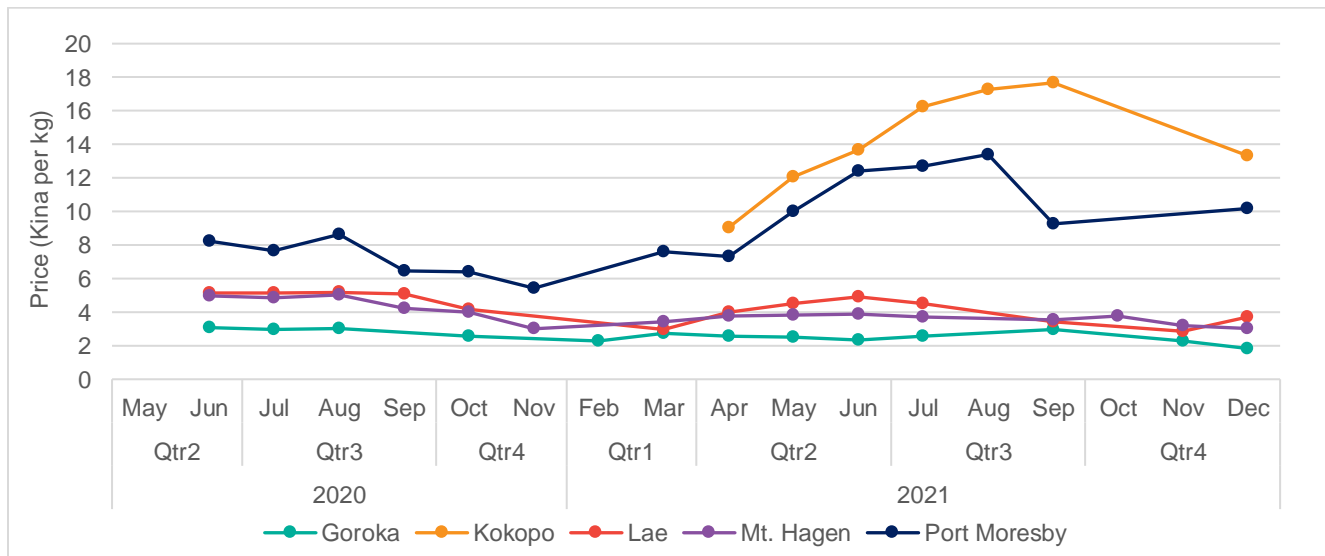


Source: Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) market retail price database.

Vitamin-dense food prices

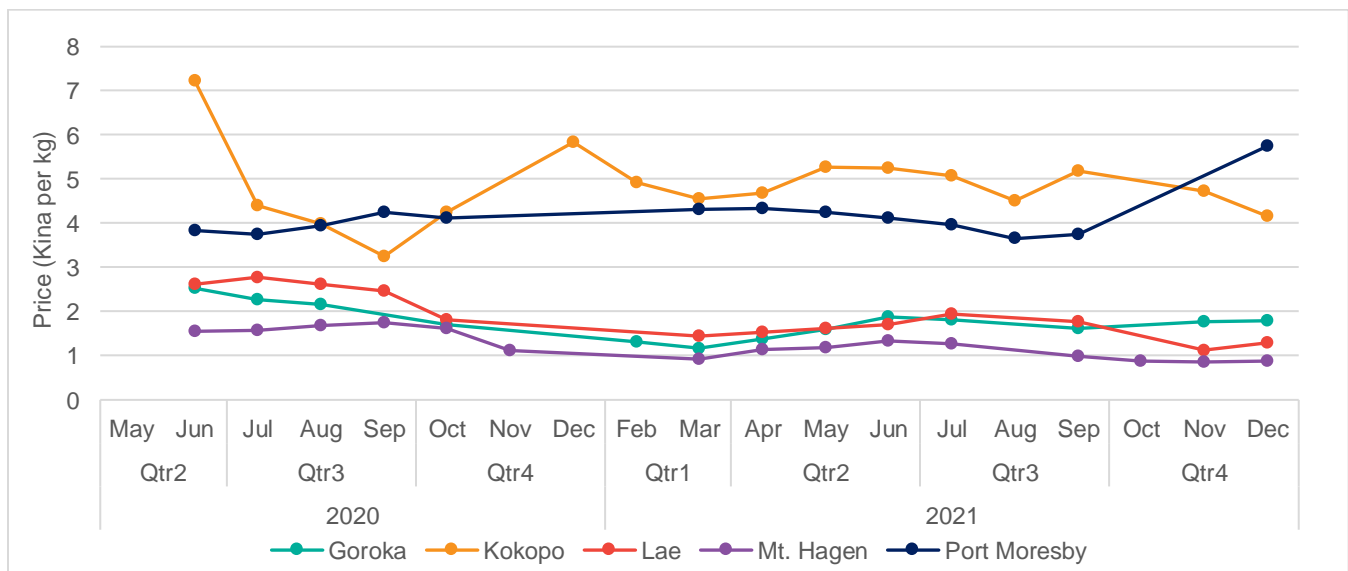
Carrots and English cabbage, as well as other vegetables such as broccoli and aibika, (price data can be found on the [website](#)) continue to be less expensive in the highlands (Goroka and Mt. Hagen), which are leading vegetable producing regions (Figure 7 and 8). Unlike staple crop prices, vegetable prices in the highlands remained steady throughout the year. Quarter 4 prices in 2021 were very similar to 2020 quarter 4 prices for carrots and cabbage in Mt. Hagen, Goroka and Lae markets, though prices in Port Moresby were comparatively higher in the last half of 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 7: Carrot price per kilo across 5 FPDA markets (nominal PGK / kg)



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

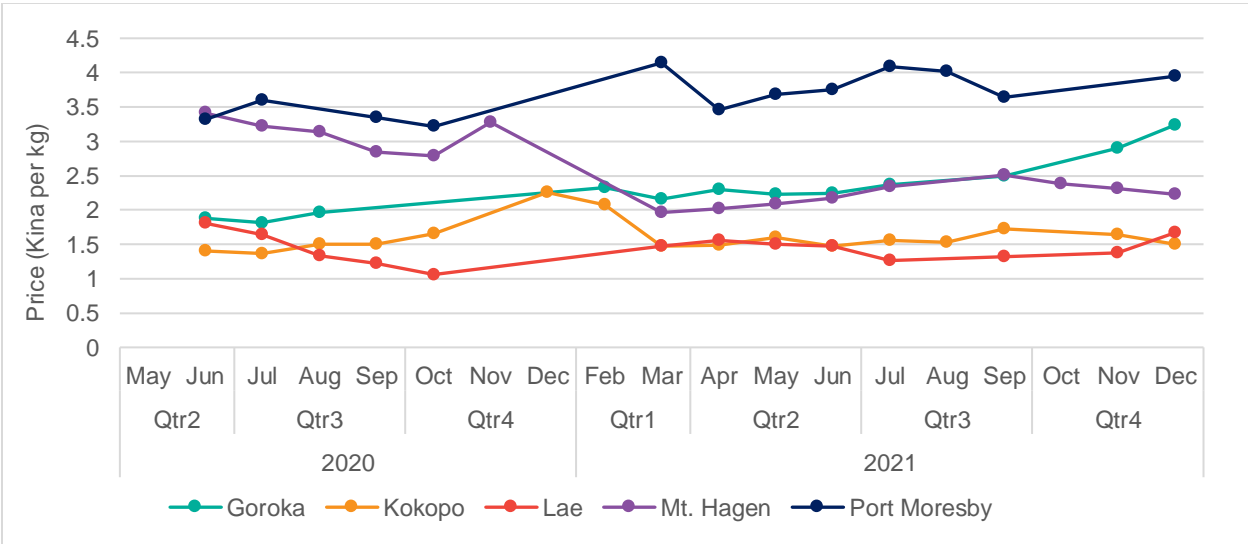
Figure 8: Cabbage price per kilo across 5 FPDA markets (nominal PGK / kg)



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

With slight price increases towards the end of 2020 and 2021, the price of pawpaw remained mostly stable across all markets. Given that pawpaw is predominantly grown in the lowlands, prices in Lae and Kokopo were considerably lower than in the highlands markets of Goroka and Mt. Hagen, as well as in Port Moresby. Compared to quarter 4 of 2020, pawpaw (real) prices in Kokopo and Mt. Hagen have decreased by 14 and 10 percent, respectively, while Port Moresby and Lae experienced 12 and 31 real price percent increases, respectively (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Pawpaw price per kilo across 5 FPDA markets (nominal PGK / kg)



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

The next bulletin will build from this publication to provide updated price data for the the first quarter of 2022. As we move forward, we will update this analysis and include other types of price and market analysis to help to inform policy and monitor food security across the country. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or comments about this bulletin or future food price bulletins.

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