

Quarterly Market Report

Report No. 5a for Selected Legumes, Roots, Tubers, and Other Cereals, October to December 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 bean, soyabean, groundnut and pigeon pea increased throughout the country by between 9 percent and 38 percent, depending on the crop and region.
- Average retail prices of sweet potato and Irish potato increased by 14 and 41 percent respectively.
- Retail prices of cassava decreased by 4 percent.
- Retail prices of rice and sorghum increased by 4 and 11 percent from last quarter.

Legumes

Figure 1 presents average monthly retail prices of selected legumes for the year 2021. Overall, soybean prices were somewhat stable with an increasing trend throughout the year. Beans and groundnut prices sharply decreased right at harvest (April-May) but sharply increased immediately after May.

Table 1 shows regional retail prices for the last quarter of the year 2021. This quarter marks the beginning of the lean season, as such, prices of most crops (food) are expected to rise. As shown in Table 1, retail prices of all selected legumes increased in all the regions. Soybean increased the most (38 percent), followed by groundnut (13 percent), pigeon peas (11 percent) and beans (9 percent). Additionally, most of these selected legumes are sold as seed during the planting season which starts in this quarter. Seed is sold at higher prices.

Figure 1. Selected Legumes retail prices for 2021

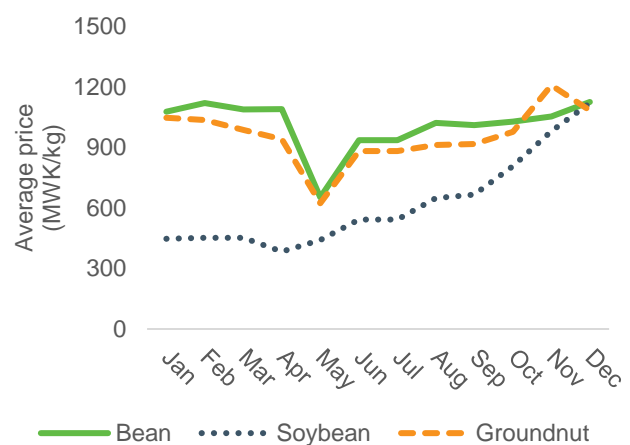


Table 1. Legume retail prices (MWK/kg) by region

	October	November	December	Percentage change Since October	
Legumes					
Common beans					
North	887	886	993	↑	12%
Center	1113	1192	1194	↑	7%
South	1149	1188	1230	↑	7%
All markets	1050	1088	1139	↑	9%
Pigeon peas					
North	405	418	441	↑	3%
South	608	636	682	↑	12%
All markets	506	527	561	↑	11%
Soybean					
North	848	1008	1120	↑	32%
Center	826	867	1014	↑	23%
South	780	1094	1258	↑	61%
All markets	818	990	1131	↑	38%
Groundnut					
North	853	981	1014	↑	19%
Center	954	939	1017	↑	7%
South	1099	1704	1259	↑	15%
All markets	969	1208	1097	↑	13%

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

Roots and Tubers

Retail prices for roots and tubers increased during this quarter except cassava prices which decreased. Table 2 presents the average retail prices for roots and tubers.

Reports from the traders indicate that some cassava was harvested in this quarter, increasing supply on the market. Average retail prices of cassava hence, declined by 4 percent during the quarter. On the other hand, Irish potato and sweet potato retail prices increased by 41 and 14 percent respectively.

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

	October	November	December	Percentage change Since October	
Roots and tubers					
Cassava					
North	376	316	298	↓	-21%
Center	297	285	347	↑	17%
South	318	335	307	↓	-3%
All markets	330	312	317	↓	-4%
Irish potato					
North	528	590	910	↑	72%
Center	406	414	442	↑	9%
South	348	375	457	↑	31%
All markets	427	460	603	↑	41%
Sweet potato					
South	288	308	328	↑	14%
All markets	288	308	328	↑	14%

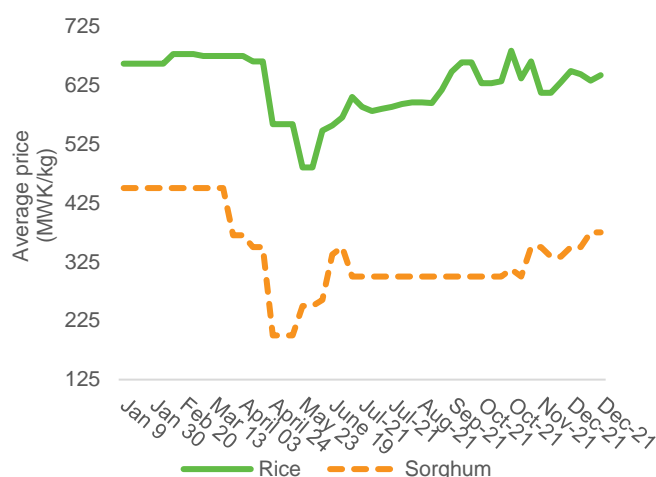
Note: Cassava and Irish potato are priced per kilogram; sweet potatoes are priced per heap and only monitored in the south; number of markets monitored: cassava = 6; Irish potato = 5; sweet potato = 5

Other Cereals

In the year 2021, rice and sorghum prices have been unstable throughout. Like many other crops,

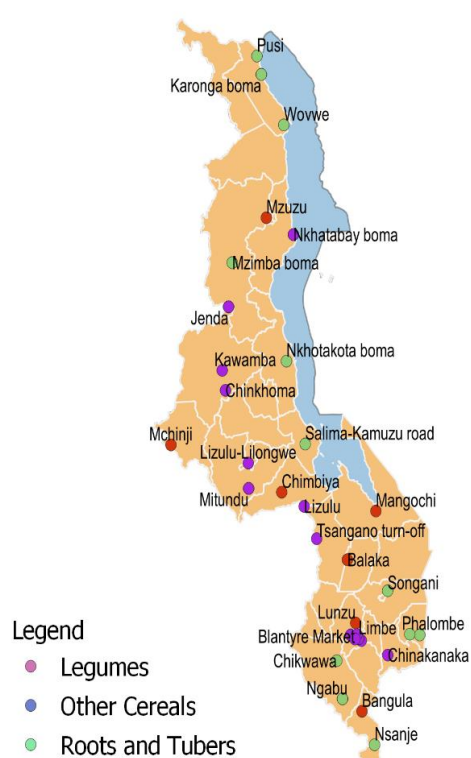
rice and sorghum retail prices decreased sharply towards April and May (Figure 2). Just after May, rice prices picked up a sharply increasing trend up until September through to the end of the year when they showed mixed trends. Whilst, sorghum prices sharply increased from May up until June where they decreased to a stable flat pattern. However, from the beginning of this quarter sorghum prices were increasing.

Figure 2. Rice retail prices for 2021



Focusing on this last quarter of 2021, on average, rice retail prices in the Center (MWK650/kg) were higher than in the North (MWK647/kg) and South (MWK622/kg). Overall, rice retail prices averaged at MWK640/kg, 4 percent higher last quarter (MWK615/kg). Sorghum prices increased by 11 percent from last quarter averaging at MWK333/kg.

Figure 1. Location of markets by commodity type



How data were 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](#)



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For further information contact

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

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