

PRICE WATCH Urban Food Markets

February 2009

To more closely monitor the evolution and transmission of international and local food prices, FEWS NET is monitoring and reporting on staple food prices in key markets in urban and town centers in food insecure countries. A selection of these market centers, along with additional markets in non-presence (no FEWS NET office) countries are presented here. A much longer list of commodities and markets are available at www.fews.net.

Key points:

- While food prices are generally declining, they remain well above last year's levels in most markets.
- Prices in Zimbabwe fell significantly due the opening of markets to private traders and legalized use of foreign currency.
- Commodity prices decreased in most East African markets, except for Kenya, where they rose by about 16% on average.

This month's Price Watch includes 84 markets in 22 countries.

- Table 1 lists the five largest increases and decreases in the current month's prices of primary food commodities consumed by urban populations.
- Table 2 includes a list of the 40 commodities and markets with the largest change in price over the previous year. Note that the staple foods for the urban poor are shaded in gray.

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Table 1. Five largest price increases and decreases in February 2009

Largest increases in primary food commodity prices			Largest decreases in primary food commodity prices						
Urban Center	change 1 month	Observation	Urban Center	change 1 year	Urban Center	change 1 month	Observation	Urban Center	change 1 year
Burao Somalia (Sorghum)	60	Prices rise as consumers substitute sorghum for more expensive imported rice, the preferred food.	Jijiga Ethiopia (Yw. Maize)	269	Harare# Zimbabwe (Maize)	-38	Prices fell as supply expanded in response to government opening markets to private traders	Kigali Rwanda (Beans)	-37
Kisumu Kenya (Potatoes)	54	High price levels reflect reduced supplies resulting from poor production in Molo, the main producing area.	Dhusamareb Somalia (Sorghum)	200	Dikhil Djibouti (Wheat Flr.)	-37	Food prices dropped in response to the massive food aid distribution program.	Dar es Salaam Tanzania (Wh. Maize)	-29
Lahore Pakistan (Chicken)	43	NO FEWS NET PRESENCE	Jijiga Ethiopia (Wh. Sorghum)	184	Dar es Salaam Tanzania (Wh. Maize)	-37	Price declines are due to government interventions to restrict fuel price increases and the release of stocks onto the markets as traders expect a good harvest in unimodal areas.	Ibadan Nigeria (Maize)	-28
Saminaka Nigeria (Sorghum)	42	Prices jumped as a result of high demand and low stocks.	Jijiga Ethiopia (Wh. Wheat)	133	Malanville Benin (Cassava Flr.)	-33	NO FEWS NET PRESENCE	Illela Nigeria (Rice)	-26
Dandume Nigeria (Rice)	38	N/A	Baidoa Somalia (Rice)	133	Mogadishu Somalia (Sorghum)	-33	Price decreases due to improved security making the markets accessible. New harvest also entering the market.	Cap Haitien Haiti (Maize)	-23

Table 2. Forty largest price increases in February 2008

Urban Center	Major Food Commodities				
	Current price/kg US\$ price	Percentage change (%)			Change over 1 mo. 3 months and for 1 year (time →)
		Over 1 month	Over 3 months	Over 12 months	
Jijiga Ethiopia	Yw. Maize 7 ETB \$0.68	-4	-8	269	▶ ▼ ▲
Dhusamareb Somalia	Sorghum 18,000 SOS \$0.62	0	-10	200	▶ ▼ ▲
Jijiga Ethiopia	Wh. Sorghum 6 ETB \$0.52	-19	-26	184	▶ ▼ ▲
Jijiga Ethiopia	Wh. Wheat 7 ETB \$0.64	0	-13	133	▶ ▼ ▲
Baidoa Somalia	Rice 35,000 SOS \$1.21	-3	-5	133	▶ ▶ ▲
Eldoret Kenya	Wh. Maize 26 KHS \$0.35	36	27	126	▲ ▲ ▲
Arua Uganda	Cassava chp. 683 UGX \$0.35	-2	14	110	▶ ▲ ▲
Kisumu Kenya	Wh. Maize 31 KHS \$0.41	0	17	107	▶ ▲ ▲
Kitui Kenya	Sorghum 41 KHS \$0.54	21	32	106	▲ ▲ ▲
Dhusamareb Somalia	Rice 36,000 SOS \$1.24	-10	-25	100	▼ ▼ ▲
Boidoa Somalia	Sorghum 6,400 SOS \$0.22	7	-9	97	▲ ▼ ▲
Djibouti City Djibouti	Sorghum 236 FRA \$1.37	13	16	90	▲ ▲ ▲
Karachi Pakistan	Chicken 127 PKR \$1.59	10	35	88	▲ ▲ ▲
Kitui Kenya	Wh. Maize 28 KHS \$0.37	-1	6	87	▶ ▲ ▲
Addis Ababa Ethiopia	Teff Mix 10 ETB \$0.90	5	-10	82	▶ ▼ ▲
Port-au-Prince Haiti	Bk. Beans 104 HTG \$2.68	1	67	81	▶ ▲ ▲
Blantyre Malawi	Rice 198 MWK \$1.44	0	13	80	▶ ▲ ▲
Nairobi Kenya	Wh. Maize 27 KHS \$0.36	11	-6	77	▲ ▼ ▲
Quetta Pakistan	Wheat Flr 27 PKR \$0.34	-8	-18	77	▼ ▼ ▲
Harare# Zimbabwe	Maize Gr. 0.46 USD \$0.74	-38	-39	77	▼ ▼ ▲
Guatemala City Guatemala	Bk. Beans 13 GTQ \$1.69	20	7	71	▲ ▲ ▲
Kabul Afghanistan	Rice 37 AFG \$0.70	4	-3	71	▶ ▶ ▲
Nairobi Kenya	Sorghum 34 KHS \$4.30	2	8	69	▶ ▲ ▲
Addis Ababa Ethiopia	Sorghum 6 ETB \$0.59	0	-19	69	▶ ▼ ▲
Blantyre Malawi	Maize Gr. 80 MWK \$0.58	4	33	68	▶ ▲ ▲
Quetta Pakistan	Sugar 42 PKR \$0.52	14	16	65	▲ ▲ ▲
Multan Pakistan	Sugar 41 PKR \$0.52	10	19	64	▲ ▲ ▲
Iringa Tanzania	Wh. Maize 500 TZS \$0.38	0	63	64	▶ ▲ ▲
Lahore Pakistan	Sugar 43 PKR \$0.54	12	20	64	▲ ▲ ▲
Peshawar Pakistan	Wheat Flr. 28 PKR \$0.36	-2	-10	63	▶ ▼ ▲
Burao Somalia	Rice 13,000 SOS \$0.45	-9	-13	63	▼ ▼ ▲
Saint-Louis Senegal	Rice, Brk. 417 CFA \$0.83	-2	-7	62	▶ ▼ ▲
Bahur Dar Ethiopia	Sorghum 5 ETB \$0.45	-8	-17	61	▼ ▼ ▲
Iringa Tanzania	Rice 1,300 TZS \$0.99	13	22	59	▶ ▶ ▲
Peshawar Pakistan	Sugar 43 PKR \$0.54	12	17	58	▲ ▲ ▲
Lahore Pakistan	Chicken 106 PKR \$1.34	43	29	58	▲ ▲ ▲
Maputo Mozambique	Maize Meal 25 MZM \$0.96	6	7	58	▲ ▲ ▲
Peshawar Pakistan	Rice 43 PKR \$0.58	-4	-6	57	▶ ▼ ▲
Ziguichor Senegal	Rice, Brk. 440 CFA \$0.87	3	2	57	▶ ▶ ▲
Comé Benin	Maize 305 CFA \$0.60	2	-	56	▶ - ▲

NOTES: The commodity shaded in gray is the staple most often consumed by the poorest of the poor in the urban area indicated. Additional commodities provided are important commodity(ies) consumed in the same urban area. Average monthly prices are calculated using weekly price data available at the time of publication, and may be based on less than one full month of price data. Consequently, monthly prices reported here may be different than those reported in FEWS NET monthly Food Security Updates, which are based on a full set of weekly price data for the month. ▲▶▼ The symbols depict the direction of price changes: the red upward-facing arrow denotes an increase 5 percent or greater, the blue horizontal arrow denotes no change, or changes that are 5 percent or less, and the green downward-facing arrow denotes price decreases that are 5 percent or greater. The first arrow corresponds to the change in price over one month, the second arrow refers to the percentage change over the past three months and the third arrow reflects the percentage change over the previous year. The “-” symbol indicates that no data are available. # The symbol indicates a currency change in Zimbabwe to USD.