



MONTHLY REPORT ON FOOD PRICE TRENDS

KEY MESSAGES

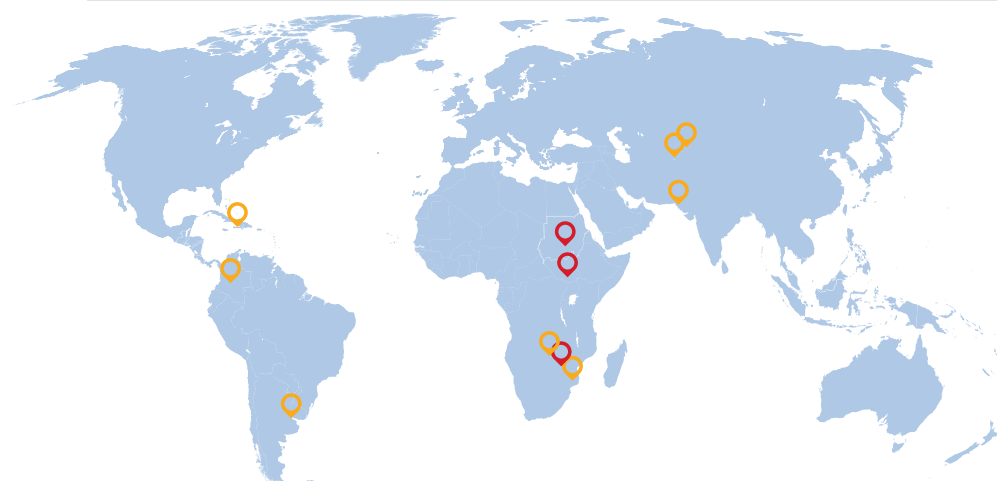
- Export prices of wheat and maize averaged lower in March than in February despite brisk trade activity amid worries over the COVID-19 pandemic as large global supplies and favourable production prospects continued to dominate market sentiment. By contrast, concerns over the pandemic and news of Viet Nam temporarily halting new export contracts, kept international prices of rice on the rise.
- An upsurge in food demand and disruptions to supply chains triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic underpinned food price increases in several countries in the second half of March. To counter over-pricing and ensure domestic availabilities during the pandemic, governments are adopting a variety of policy interventions.
- In Mexico and South Africa, prices of white maize rose significantly in March amid sharp currency depreciations largely driven by expectations of a COVID-19-induced economic downturn.
- In the Sudan, prices of staple foods soared to record highs in March following a further devaluation of the country's currency as a result of acute foreign exchange shortages and a widening gap between the official and parallel exchange rates. Fuel shortages and a below-average 2019 cereal output, coupled with high production and transportation costs, continued to exert an upward pressure on prices.

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Domestic price warnings

Price warning level:  High  Moderate [Based on GIEWS analysis]



Warnings are only included if latest available price data is not older than two months.

Argentina | Food Items
Colombia | Rice
Haiti | Cereals
Kyrgyzstan | Wheat flour
Mozambique | Maize
Pakistan | Wheat flour
South Sudan | Staple foods
The Sudan | Staple foods
Tajikistan | Wheat flour
Zambia | Maize
Zimbabwe | Food items

INTERNATIONAL CEREAL PRICES

International prices of wheat and maize weaker in March, those of rice increased

International prices of **wheat** averaged lower in March than in February. Large global supplies and a mostly good 2020 global supply outlook continued to weigh on prices in the first half of the month, with a fall in global oil prices adding downward pressure. In the United States of America, the benchmark US wheat (No.2 Hard Red Winter, f.o.b.) decreased for the second consecutive month and averaged USD 227 per tonne, slightly lower than in February and about 2 percent higher than in the corresponding month in 2019. However, stronger demand for export, triggered by concerns over the pandemic and news about export limitations from the Russian Federation, underpinned price increases in the second half of March and limited the decline.

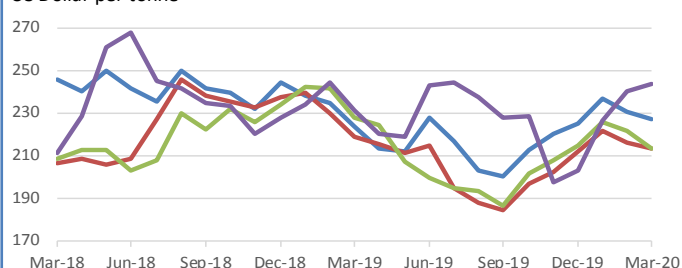
Similarly, export prices of **maize** generally declined in March, with the benchmark US maize (No.2, Yellow, f.o.b.) averaging USD 162 per tonne, nearly 5 percent lower than in February and 3 percent down on a yearly basis. Large global supplies and the optimistic outlook for production in the Southern Hemisphere weighed on prices. In addition, weaker biofuel demand following the drop in crude oil quotations contributed to the

downward pressure on prices. However, an uptick was recorded in the second half of the month, which stemmed from improved export sales and spill-over effects from neighbouring markets.

The FAO All Rice Price Index (2002-2004=100) rose for the third successive month in March, exceeding its February level by 1.7 percent and its March 2019 value by 4.7 percent. Indica prices drove the increase, rising amid concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic, which unleashed a rush of purchases at a traditionally seasonally tight period. In Viet Nam, which witnessed the sharpest price rise, a surge in demand exacerbated the upward pressure on prices from a fast pace of sales earlier in the year. This prompted Vietnamese officials, on 25 March, to temporarily stop new export contracts, while they reviewed the country's supply situation and export policy. The news of potential Vietnamese export restrictions tended to buoy sentiment in other origins, especially in Thailand, where prices had already been well underpinned by a drought-reduced offseason crop.

International wheat prices

US Dollar per tonne

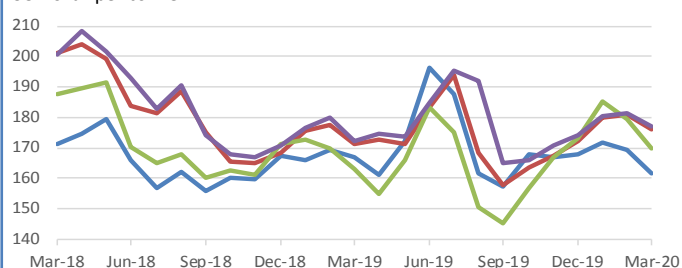


Source(s): International Grains Council

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
United States of America (Gulf), Wheat (US No. 2, Hard Red Winter)	227.00	-1.4	0.8	1.6
European Union (France), Wheat (grade 1)	213.60	-1.0	0.9	-2.4
Black Sea, Wheat (milling)	213.20	-3.9	-0.8	-6.4
Argentina, Wheat (Argentina, Trigo Pan, Up River, f.o.b.)	243.20	1.3	19.8	5.2

International maize prices

US Dollar per tonne

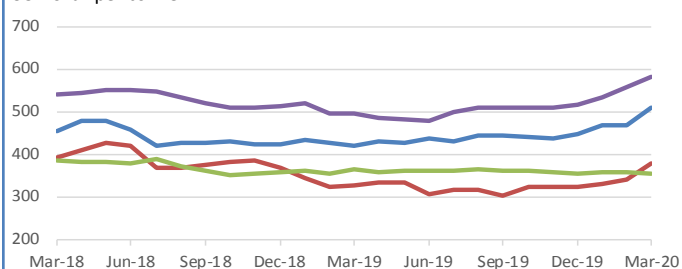


Source(s): USDA; International Grains Council; APK-Inform Agency

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
United States of America (Gulf), Maize (US No. 2, Yellow)	161.73	-4.6	-3.6	-3.1
Black Sea, Maize (feed)	176.00	-2.6	2.3	2.8
Argentina, Maize (Argentina, Up River, f.o.b.)	169.60	-5.5	-2.0	4.0
Ukraine, Maize (offer, f.o.b.)	177.25	-2.3	1.9	2.8

International rice prices

US Dollar per tonne



Source(s): Thai Rice Exporters Association; FAO rice price update


	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Thailand (Bangkok), Rice (Thai 100% B)	509.25	9.1	13.4	21.0
Viet Nam, Rice (25% broken)	378.75	10.7	17.0	15.5
India, Rice (25% broken)	355.00	-1.1	0.0	-3.0
United States of America, Rice (US Long Grain 2.4%)	581.00	4.1	12.8	17.4

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

DOMESTIC PRICE WARNINGS

Countries where prices of one or more basic food commodity are at abnormal high levels which could negatively impact access to food

Argentina | Food Items

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 02/20	Same period average
3 months	 0.7	-1.0
12 months	-0.6	2.1



Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Argentina, Greater Buenos Aires, Retail, Wheat (flour)

Strong food inflation persists

Retail prices of **food items** continued increasing in February, although to a lesser extent than in January, in line with a slowdown in the general inflation rate. This reflected a more stable currency against the US dollar and the freezing of prices of various items, including utility tariffs. However, food price increases persisted and, in the Greater Buenos Aires area, they rose by 2.4 percent in February. Among food products, prices of **wheat flour** and **bread** increased despite good domestic availabilities from the 2019 record output. The elevated prices of wheat-derived products are in part supported by high export quotations of wheat grain. In addition, the removal, on 31 December, of the Value Added Tax (VAT) exemption on basic food commodities contributed to sustain prices. More recently, further increases in food prices were reported due to stronger domestic demand amid concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. In an effort to counter the over-pricing of food items, the Government introduced, on 20 March, price ceilings on basic food items for a period of 30 days.

Colombia | Rice

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/20	Same period average
3 months	 5.6	0.9
12 months	 2.4	-0.1


Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Colombia, National Average, Retail, Rice (first quality)

Prices of rice increased to record or near-record highs in March

Prices of **rice** increased for the fifth consecutive month and reached record or near-record highs in March. Prices have been on the rise for several months mainly due to higher input costs, supported by a weaker currency, which depreciated since early 2019 and lost a further 10 percent in value in the past month alone, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the domestic and global economies. Prices were some 40 percent above their year-earlier values and at record or near-record highs after a prolonged period of stability, reflecting the successive bumper harvests in the previous years. Recent price gains were further exacerbated by seasonal tightness ahead of the 2020 first semester harvest, due to start in April, in addition to concerns over the impact of high temperatures on yields. Stronger domestic demand amid COVID-19 containment measures at a national level, put further upward pressure on prices in late March.

Haiti | Cereals

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 02/20	Same period average
3 months	-5.8	1.1
12 months	 0.6	-0.1

Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Haiti, Port-au-Prince, Retail, Maize meal (local)


Prices of maize and rice still above those a year earlier

Prices of locally-produced **maize meal** were overall stable in February, mainly as a result of adequate domestic supplies and normalized economic activities on account of the improved socio-political situation in the country. However, prices remained generally above those a year earlier, underpinned by lower production in the 2019 first and second season outputs as well as high production costs, supported by a weak currency. As of March, the country's currency had lost more than 15 percent of its value in a year, sustaining inflationary pressure upwards and prices of imported **rice** at levels above those a year earlier, despite some recent declines. Massive buying amid the COVID-19 pandemic was reported in March, resulting in food price increases in some cases, but measures have been put in place to counter over-pricing. In order to ensure food supplies during the pandemic, the Government is also encouraging farmers to plant short-cycle crops such as white maize, cassava and sorghum, which may lead to an expansion in maize plantings of the 2020 main season, to be harvested from June.

Price warning level:  High  Moderate

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Kyrgyzstan | Wheat flour

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/20	Same period average
3 months	0.3	-0.7
12 months	 0.9	-0.2

Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Kyrgyzstan, National Average, Retail, Wheat (flour, first grade)

Prices of wheat flour increased in March and higher year on year

Retail prices of first grade **wheat flour**, which had recorded atypical increases between October and December 2019, increased again in March. The recent increase mostly stems from an upsurge in consumer demand in the second half of the month amid concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic and the announcement of export limitations from Kazakhstan. The country imports almost half of its domestic consumption needs and shipments are mainly sourced from Kazakhstan. In an effort to counter over-pricing, the Government introduced, on 16 March, temporary ceilings on prices of food items, including wheat flour, and halted exports on 23 March ([FPMA Food Policies](#)). After the recent increases, prices reached levels above those in March last year, sustained by higher export quotations from Kazakhstan and a reduced 2019 cereal output.

Mozambique | Maize

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 02/20	Same period average
3 months	-0.8	5.2
12 months	 1.7	0.1


Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Mozambique, Maputo, Retail, Maize (white)

Prices levelled off prior to the start of the 2020 harvest

Prices of **maize grain** generally levelled off in February with some declines reported in southern markets, as early harvesting of the 2020 crops improved market availabilities. However, compared to a year earlier, prices were, on average, nearly 40 percent higher mainly due to tighter supplies after the extensive crop losses during the 2019 growing season. Prospects for the 2020 harvest indicate below-average outputs in southern and some central provinces, which is likely to sustain the upward pressure on prices in the affected areas. In northern provinces, a good harvest is forecast and this would lead to larger seasonal price declines relative to other parts of the country. Factors that could counter the seasonal supply pressure in the coming months and sustain higher prices, are associated with the steep depreciation of the currency that has raised import costs and the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which could include the disruption of local supply chains and stronger domestic demand.

Pakistan | Wheat flour

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/20	Same period average
3 months	-0.8	-0.7
12 months	 0.6	-0.1

Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Pakistan, Karachi, Retail, Wheat (flour)


Prices of wheat flour averaged lower on a monthly basis but remained at near-record levels

Prices of key staple, **wheat flour**, in March averaged overall lower than in February. However, an upsurge in demand and transport disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in prices in the second half of the month and limited the month-on-month decline. Harvest delays due to above-average rains throughout March, which also caused localized crop damages, provided further upward pressure. Prices remained well above their year-earlier levels and at near-record highs in some markets after the steady increases late last year and in January 2020 due to tight market availabilities. The bulk of the 2020 harvest is expected to reach the markets towards the end of April and the output is forecast at 25.2 million tonnes, close to the average of the past five years.

Price warning level:  High  Moderate

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

South Sudan | Staple foods

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/20	Same period average
3 months	 4.6	-1.7
12 months	1.5	-1.2

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: South Sudan, Juba, Retail, Wheat (flour)

Prices of food at exceptionally high levels

In the capital, Juba, prices of **maize** and **sorghum** remained firm in March, while prices of **groundnuts** and **cassava** declined. By contrast, prices of **wheat flour**, sourced from Uganda, increased by more than 10 percent due to reduced imports following the implementation by the Government of Uganda of movement restrictions to contain the spread of COVID-19. Although Ugandan authorities allow for commercial and food aid cargo to continue moving across the borders, the screening process has significantly slowed down commodity trade flows. In addition, the exchange rate in the parallel market depreciated from SSP 270 per US dollar at the beginning of the month to SSP 300 per US dollar in late March. As a result, price spikes were recorded in Juba also for other imported food commodities. Food prices were overall at exceptionally high levels, with those of coarse grains 50 percent higher on a yearly basis and nearly 20 times above their values in July 2015, before the currency collapse. The high level of food prices is driven by inadequate domestic supplies, high transport costs, the difficult macro-economic situation and the lingering impact of prolonged conflict. The 2019 aggregate cereal production is estimated at 10 percent above the 2018 output but 4 percent below the average of the previous five years.

Sudan | Staple foods


Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/20	Same period average
3 months	 11.2	0.3
12 months	 2.4	0.2

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: Sudan, Nyala, Wholesale, Millet

Prices of staple foods increase sharply and at record highs

Prices of locally grown **sorghum** and **millet** accelerated their increasing trend in March after the Central Bank of Sudan devalued the Sudanese Pound from about SDG 52 per US dollar in February to SDG 55 per US dollar in March amid shortages of foreign exchange reserves and a widening gap between the official and parallel exchange rates. Similarly, prices of **wheat**, mostly imported, increased despite the ongoing harvest, estimated to be more than 30 percent above the previous five-year average. In general, prices of grains reached record highs, between two to three times above the already high levels a year earlier. This was mainly triggered by a poor 2019 cereal output and the weak currency, coupled with fuel shortages and the high prices of agricultural inputs inflating production and transportation costs. The 2019 coarse grains (sorghum and millet) production is estimated at about 5.2 million tonnes, 36 percent below the bumper 2018 output and 18 percent below the average of the previous five years ([GIEWS Special Report](#)). The main driver of the production shortfall was a combination of prolonged dry spells in July followed by heavy late season rains, which triggered widespread floods and severe pest infestations affecting yields.

Tajikistan | Wheat flour

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/20	Same period average
3 months	 0.8	-1.0
12 months	1.4	0.1

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: Tajikistan, Kurgonteppa, Retail, Wheat (flour, first grade)


Prices of wheat flour rose in March

Retail prices of first grade **wheat flour**, which had recorded atypical increases in September and October 2019 on account of higher regional export quotations, increased again in March and reached levels well above those in March last year. The recent increase mostly stems from an upsurge in consumer demand on concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a significant increase in prices late in the month. Export limitations from Kazakhstan, the country's main wheat supplier, also provided upward pressure. Imports of wheat account, on average, for more than half of the country's domestic consumption. Although the purchases of wheat flour have decreased significantly in recent years with improved domestic milling capacities, the country still heavily depends on imports of wheat grain.

Price warning level:  High  Moderate

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Zambia | Maize

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/20	Same period average
3 months	2.5	3.1
12 months	 4.4	-0.1



Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Zambia, National Average, Retail, Maize (white)

Price increases slow but levels remained at record highs

Prices of **maize grain** and **maize products** increased moderately in March, as the effects of the price controls introduced in 2019 continued to contain the upward pressure from the tight supply situation. Reports from the country indicate relatively steeper price increases for maize products from the informal market, where there is less availability or negligible supplies of subsidized products compared with formal outlets. Although an expected upturn in maize production in 2020 is likely to exert downward pressure on prices, the sharp depreciation of the country's currency in March and adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the supply chains could result in price hikes.

Zimbabwe | Food items

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 01/20	Same period average
3 months	 8.0	-1.1
12 months	 6.3	-1.6

Compound growthrate in real terms.

Refers to: Zimbabwe, Harare, Retail, Maize meal

Food prices continue to rise substantially

The annual inflation rate in February was officially estimated at 540 percent. Although data for individual food products is not available for recent months, **food** prices are likely to have increased substantially, given their weight within the general inflation index. The high prices have been mainly driven by the significant loss of value of the currency and the overall tight food supplies, owing to a low 2019 harvest and limited imports. In an effort to stabilize prices and ease access constraints, the Government reintroduced a fixed exchange rate system in March, pegging the country's currency at a rate of Zimbabwe dollar 25 per US dollar and permitted domestic transactions using foreign currencies. Risks to the consumers, however, concern expectations of a second consecutive below-average cereal harvest in 2020 and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the supply chains, which could instigate price hikes.

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Prices of cereals relatively stable except in conflict-affected areas

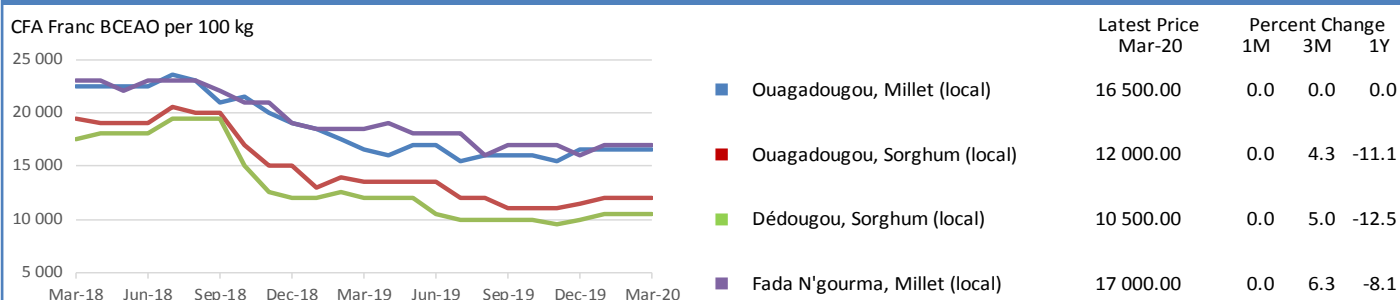
In the Sahelian countries, prices of coarse grains remained generally stable or weakened further in March amid good availabilities from the 2019 harvests and imports, except in the areas where insecurity continued to disrupt markets. As of late March, latest information indicated that access to food was generally not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic containment measures in the subregion, although a few exceptions were noted. In **Burkina Faso**, wholesale prices of millet and sorghum remained virtually unchanged in March and were below their year-earlier values on account of good market availabilities from the above-average 2019 harvest and food assistance in some areas. In **the Niger**, prices of sorghum generally declined while those of millet remained broadly stable reflecting adequate market supplies from domestic and imported produce, although Nigeria's land border closure is affecting availabilities in the southern border markets. However, field reports from Burkina Faso, where the main market of Ouagadougou was closed on 25 March amid the COVID-19 pandemic containment measures, and from the Niger, indicate cases of food hoarding, which led to price increases in some markets. In **Mali**, prices of coarse grains remained stable or increased but were generally lower or around their values a year earlier. In addition, in these countries, persisting insecurity continued to disrupt markets in

some areas. In **Chad**, prices of coarse grains generally increased in February and were higher year on year due to strong demand from the deficit and conflict-affected areas exacerbating seasonal pressure. In **Senegal**, prices of millet weakened for the second consecutive month in February on account of good domestic supplies and regular internal trade flows. However, the reduced 2019 output and strong domestic demand, particularly in urban areas, kept prices above their values a year earlier. In coastal countries along the Gulf of Guinea, prices of maize increased in most markets in **Ghana** in March. Strong demand for institutional purchases and seeds for the 2020 cropping season, offset the downward pressure on prices from the 2019 above-average harvest. Similarly, in **Togo**, prices increased seasonally in February with stocking purchases ongoing. By contrast, in **Benin**, prices of maize weakened further in March in most markets, as a result of the good 2019 harvest and reduced trade activity with Nigeria after the border closure. In **Nigeria**, prices of locally-produced cereals remained mostly stable across the country, while those of imported rice continued to decline. Insecurity continued to hamper normal trade activities and affect market availabilities in the northeast, while trade activities remained significantly subdued in the areas surrounding closed land borders.

National policy responses to limit the impact of COVID-19 on food markets

- **Burkina Faso**, on 2 April, announced the implementation of measures to counter over pricing of food items for the period April to June 2020.
- **The Gambia**, on 24 March, introduced price ceilings on key staple foods, including rice, maize, millet and bread.
- **Mauritania**, on 25 March, announced measures that would effectively remove the requirement to pay import duties on wheat, oil, milk powder, vegetables and fruits for the rest of the year.
- **The Niger**, on 3 April, introduced price ceilings on essential food items, including millet, maize, sorghum and rice, for a period of three months, with possibility of extension.
- **Nigeria** approved, on 1 April, the release of 35 000 tonnes of maize, 25 000 tonnes of sorghum, 5 000 tonnes of millet and 5 000 tonnes of gari (cassava-based flour) from the National Grain Reserve to be distributed to the most vulnerable households.

Wholesale prices of millet and sorghum in Burkina Faso

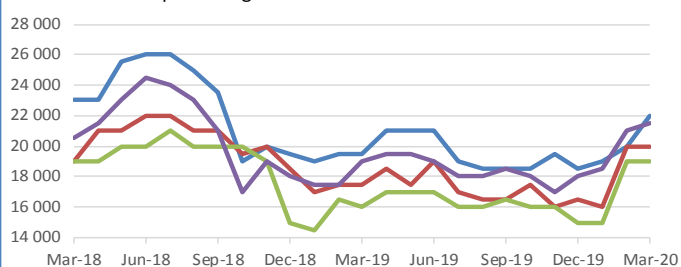


Source(s): Afrique verte

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Wholesale prices of millet and sorghum in the Niger

CFA Franc BCEAO per 100 kg

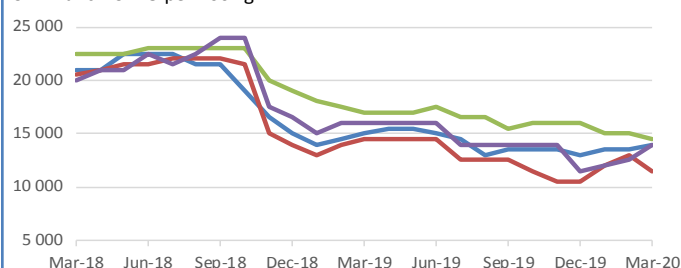


Source(s): Afrique verte

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Niamey, Millet (local)	22 000.00	10.0	18.9	12.8
Niamey, Sorghum (local)	20 000.00	0.0	21.2	14.3
Zinder, Sorghum (local)	19 000.00	0.0	26.7	18.8
Zinder, Millet (local)	21 500.00	2.4	19.4	13.2

Wholesale prices of millet and sorghum in Mali

CFA Franc BCEAO per 100 kg

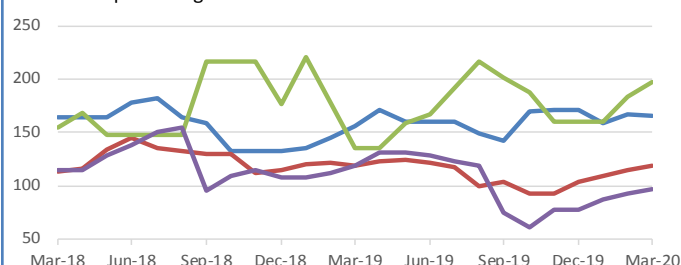


Source(s): Afrique verte

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Bamako, Millet (local)	14 000.00	3.7	7.7	-6.7
Bamako, Sorghum (local)	11 500.00	-11.5	9.5	-20.7
Mopti, Millet (local)	14 500.00	-3.3	-9.4	-14.7
Mopti, Sorghum (local)	14 000.00	12.0	21.7	-12.5

Wholesale prices of maize in Ghana

Ghana Cedi per 100 kg

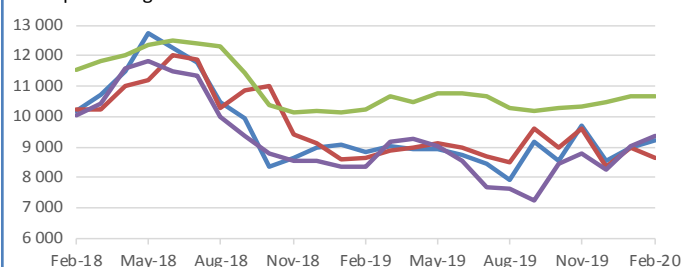


Source(s): Marketing Services Unit, SRID (MOFA)

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Accra	165.00	-1.0	-3.6	5.8
Bolgatanga	118.68	3.5	14.9	-0.4
Kumasi	197.72	7.8	23.2	46.5
Techiman	96.16	4.2	25.0	-19.2

Wholesale prices of maize in Nigeria

Naira per 100 kg



Source(s): FEWSNET

	Latest Price Feb-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Kano	9 205.00	2.7	-5.3	3.9
Maiduguri	8 625.00	-3.9	-10.4	0.0
Lagos	10 650.00	-0.2	2.9	4.2
Kaura Namoda	9 375.00	3.8	6.6	12.3

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Prices of maize began to decline seasonally in some countries but continued to increase in others

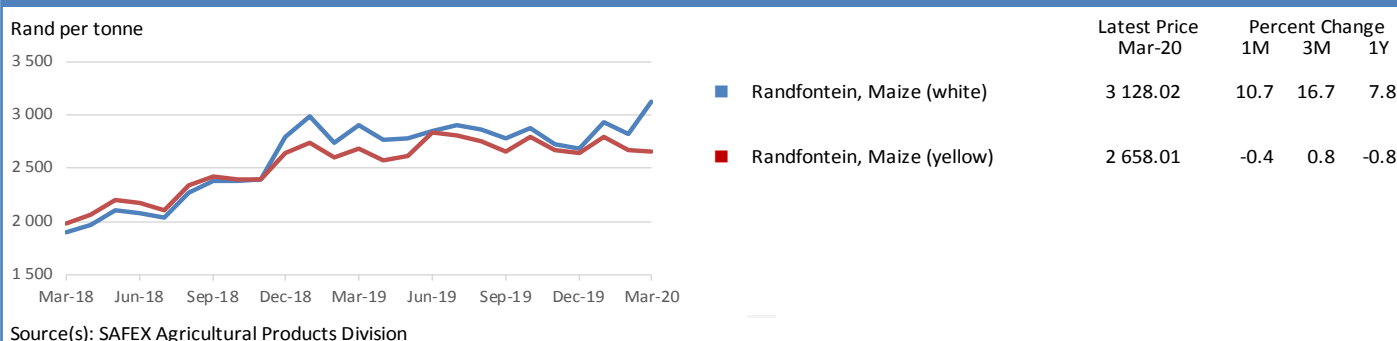
Prices of maize increased in countries affected by deteriorating macro-economic conditions, in some cases triggered by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, while they declined where the 2020 harvest started. Although prices would normally fall seasonally in the next months with the onset of the main harvest, there are concerns that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic could cause localized supply shortages, through quarantine measures for example, and trigger price spikes. In **South Africa**, prices of white maize increased significantly in March on the back of a sharp depreciation of the country's currency, which was driven by expectations of the COVID-19-induced economic downturn, coupled with strong export demand, largely from Zimbabwe. Prices of yellow maize also increased during the month but at a more moderate rate and they averaged slightly lower than in February. Food prices in **Zimbabwe** continued to rise rapidly in February due to tight supplies and severe macro-economic instability, particularly related to the weak value of the country's currency; the annualized general inflation rate was estimated at 540 percent in February. To ease access constraints for consumers, the Government permitted the use of foreign currencies for local transactions and reintroduced a fixed exchange rate system to stabilize the currency.

The outbreak of COVID-19 is expected to further pressure prices, as quarantine measures, introduced in March, could stem the movement of goods and result in further supply shortages. In **Zambia**, prices of maize products continued to increase in March underpinned by tight supplies although the implementation of price subsidies in late 2019 continued to cap the increases. However, according to reports from the country, prices of maize meal in informal outlets, where there is a scarcity of subsidized products, have been rising at a steeper rate. In **Malawi**, the arrival of the new crop from the 2020 harvest led to an overall decline in prices in March. Production of maize in 2020 is expected to be above average and an improvement in domestic supplies would likely weigh on price levels in the immediate future, notwithstanding the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prices of maize grain in **Mozambique** declined in southern markets as the onset of the main harvest increased market availabilities, however, reflecting overall lower supplies due to shortfalls in production from the 2019 season, prices of grain were still higher year on year. Stable prices were recorded in **Eswatini**, while in **Namibia** there was a small increase in the cost of maize meal. Both countries have a high cereal import dependency, with most grains sourced from South Africa.

National policy responses to limit the impact of COVID-19 on food markets

- In **Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa**, measures have been put in place to counter over-pricing of food items.
- **South Africa** introduced, on 19 March, [price regulations](#) on a range of food items, including maize meal, rice and wheat flour and, on 27 March, it announced the Value Added Tax (VAT) exemption on imported essential goods, which include food products.
- **Madagascar** introduced price ceilings on rice in mid-March.

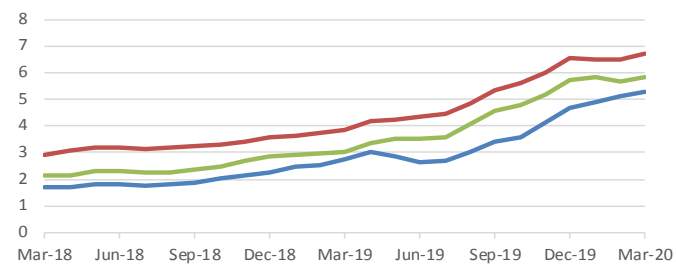
Wholesale prices of maize in South Africa



For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Retail prices of maize in Zambia

Kwacha per kg

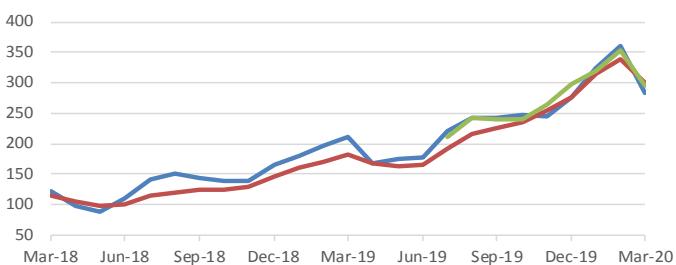


Source(s): Central Statistical Office

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
National Average, Maize (white)	5.26	2.5	12.9	92.0
National Average, Breakfast maize meal	6.73	3.7	3.1	75.3
National Average, White roller maize meal	5.82	2.5	1.9	92.1

Retail prices of maize in Malawi

Kwacha per kg

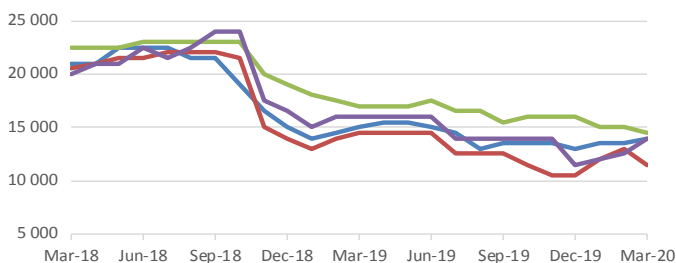


Source(s): Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security/IFPRI

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Nsanje	283.25	-21.3	2.7	33.5
National Average	301.25	-11.2	9.1	65.7
Liwonde	296.50	-15.8	-0.7	n.a.

Wholesale prices of millet and sorghum in Mali

CFA Franc BCEAO per 100 kg

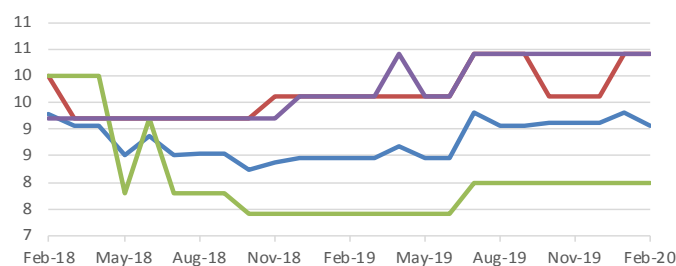


Source(s): Afrique verte

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Bamako, Millet (local)	14 000.00	3.7	7.7	-6.7
Bamako, Sorghum (local)	11 500.00	-11.5	9.5	-20.7
Mopti, Millet (local)	14 500.00	-3.3	-9.4	-14.7
Mopti, Sorghum (local)	14 000.00	12.0	21.7	-12.5

Retail prices of maize meal in Eswatini

Lilangeni per kg



Source(s): Central Statistical Office (CSO)

	Latest Price Feb-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
National average	9.07	-2.7	-0.5	7.1
Hhohho	10.40	0.0	8.3	8.3
Lubombo	8.00	0.0	0.0	8.1
Shiselweni	10.40	0.0	0.0	8.3

Prices of coarse grains at high levels in most countries of the subregion

In some countries of the subregion, movement restrictions affecting trade activity and panic buying related to the COVID-19 pandemic caused food prices to rise in March. Prices of coarse grains were already generally well above those a year earlier due to the below-average 2019 cereal outputs and difficult macro-economic conditions. In **Uganda**, prices of maize increased in March after the sharp declines in the previous two months, with seasonal patterns compounded by panic buying following the containment measures amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Prices in March were above their year-earlier levels, mainly due to the below-average 2019 cereal production coupled with sustained exports in the past months. In **Ethiopia**, food price increases were also reported in March due to insecurity and movement restrictions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In general, prices were well above their year-earlier levels, mainly due to the depreciation of the country's currency, which resulted in increased transport and production costs. In **South Sudan**, prices of maize and sorghum changed little in March in the capital, Juba. By contrast, prices of imported wheat flour increased as screening measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, implemented by the Government of Uganda, affected trade activities and reduced food imports. A weakening of the currency in the parallel market, in mid-March, added support. Overall, prices of cereals in March were at exceptionally high levels, mainly due to the difficult macro economic situation and the lingering impact of the prolonged conflict. In **the**

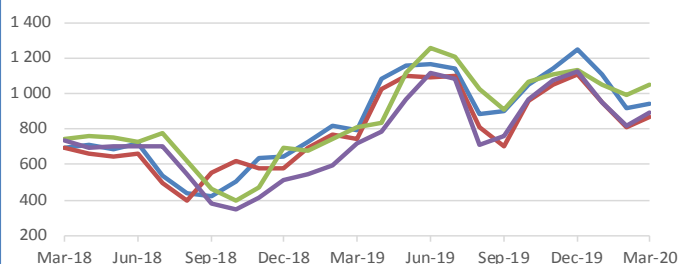
Sudan, prices of sorghum and millet continued to soar in March supported by a further depreciation of the country's currency. Prices reached record highs due to the poor 2019 harvest and the weak currency, coupled with fuel shortages and high prices of agricultural inputs inflating production and transportation costs. Elsewhere in the subregion, prices generally declined with the new harvests. In **Rwanda** and **Burundi**, prices of maize continued to decrease in March as the "2020A" season crops continued to boost market supplies, although some food price increases were reported in urban areas due to panic buying from the pandemic. Similarly, in **Kenya**, prices of maize declined in several markets in March with the recent "short-rains" harvest and imports, although they remained well above their year-earlier levels due to a below-average 2019 cereal output. In **the United Republic of Tanzania**, prices of maize declined sharply in March as newly harvested "Vuli" crops increased market availabilities. Despite the recent declines, however, prices in March remained generally higher than a year earlier, due to the reduced 2019 cereal production coupled with sustained demand from East and Southern African countries. In **Somalia**, prices of sorghum declined further in February in the key producing areas and were around their year-earlier values reflecting improved supplies from the above-average secondary "Deyr" harvest. By contrast, prices of maize increased and were higher year on year in the main producing areas of the Lower Shabelle Region, where floods resulted in substantial production shortfalls.

National policy responses to limit the impact of COVID-19 on food markets

- **Ethiopia** implemented price control measures for staple foods.
- **Kenya** authorized the import of 4 million 90 kg-bags of maize for food and feed use to ensure sufficient market availabilities during the pandemic.
- **Rwanda** fixed the retail prices of rice and, on 28 March, launched a food distribution initiative for vulnerable households.
- **Uganda** announced the distribution of food items to vulnerable households.

Wholesale prices of maize in Uganda

Uganda Shilling per kg

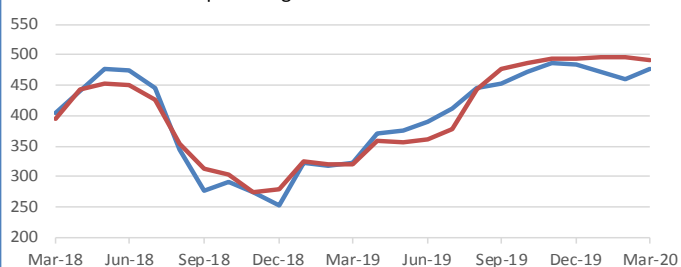


Source(s): Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Retail prices of maize and sorghum in South Sudan

South Sudanese Pound per 3.5 kg

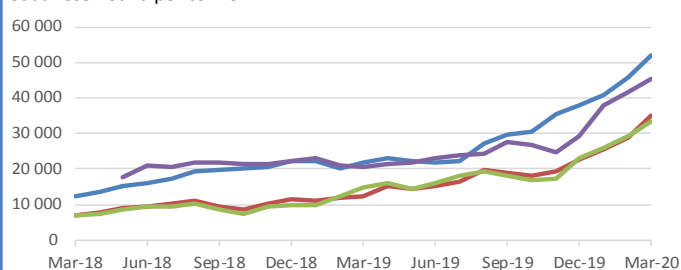


Source(s): Crop & Livestock Market Information System (CLIMIS)

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Juba, Maize (white)	477.00	3.7	-1.6	48.1
Juba, Sorghum (Feterita)	490.00	-1.4	-0.8	52.6

Wholesale prices of millet and sorghum in the Sudan

Sudanese Pound per tonne

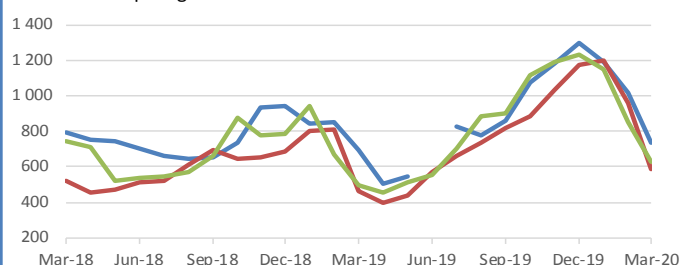


Source(s): Food Security information for Action (SIFSA)

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Khartoum, Millet	51 837.50	13.6	36.1	138.6
Khartoum, Sorghum (Feterita)	34 925.00	20.4	54.9	182.2
El Gedarif, Sorghum (Feterita)	33 431.75	14.2	45.2	128.3
Nyala, Millet	45 393.37	9.0	55.0	118.6

Wholesale prices of maize in Burundi

Burundi Franc per kg

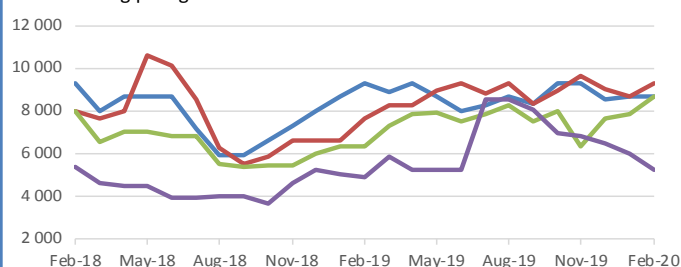


Source(s): Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network

	Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Bujumbura	733.84	-28.0	-43.5	6.2
Gitega	585.10	-38.9	-50.3	27.3
Ngozi	628.98	-26.2	-49.0	25.8

Retail prices of maize and sorghum in Somalia

Somali Shilling per kg



Source(s): Food Security Analysis Unit

	Latest Price Feb-20	Percent Change		
		1M	3M	1Y
Mogadishu, Sorghum (red)	8 650.00	0.0	-7.0	-7.0
Mogadishu, Maize (white)	9 300.00	7.5	-3.4	21.6
Marka, Maize (white)	8 650.00	10.5	37.3	36.6
Baidoa, Sorghum (red)	5 200.00	-13.0	-23.5	6.1

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Prices of rice and wheat flour generally increased in March

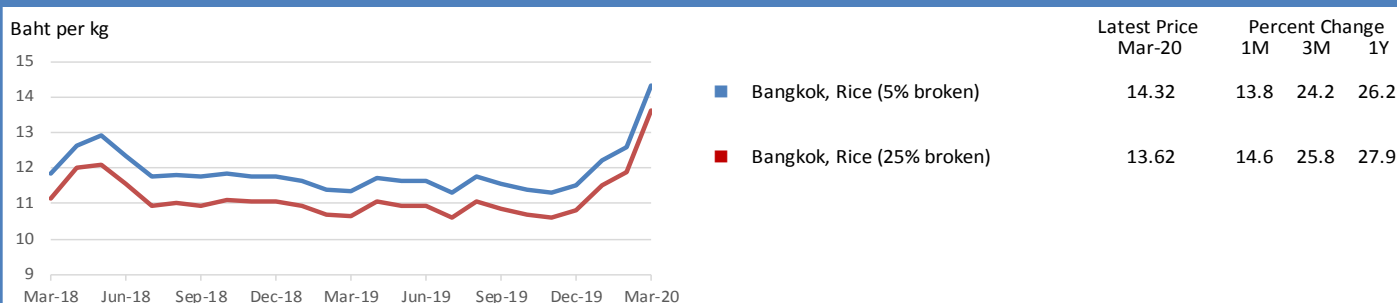
Prices of rice generally increased in the subregion's main exporters ahead of the arrival of new supplies from the 2020 harvests. Further support was provided by stronger domestic and foreign demand due to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant price increases were recorded in **Thailand**, where prices rose by 15 percent on a monthly basis and reached the highest level since July 2013 on expectations of a sharply reduced 2019/20 secondary crop, which follows a below-average 2019 main season. More recently, increasing foreign demand amid the COVID-19 outbreak also provided upward pressure. Prices rose significantly also in **Viet Nam** in March supported by increased domestic and foreign buying amid concerns over the pandemic. Worries over the 2020 "winter/spring" output due to salt water intrusion and a below-average 2019 main season output provided further upward pressure. The combination of these factors prompted an halt in the signing of new export contracts in late March (FPMA Food Policies). Similarly, in **Myanmar**, prices of rice increased with seasonal pressure compounded by a below-average 2019 harvest and stronger domestic demand due to the pandemic. In **India**, panic buying and movement restrictions have reportedly led to an increase in the prices of rice and other food items in several markets. In **China (Mainland)**, wholesale prices of rice remained relatively

stable reflecting adequate market availabilities. In the importing countries of the subregion, prices increased sharply in **Bangladesh**, mainly in response to a surge in demand amid the pandemic. In **the Philippines**, prices remained broadly stable in the first half of the month as market supplies were adequate owing to the ongoing 2020 secondary season crop and imports. Slight seasonal price decreases were recorded in the first week of March in **Sri Lanka** although they were about 15 percent higher than a year earlier. As for wheat, prices of wheat flour increased in the second half of the month in **Pakistan** on account of stronger domestic demand and transport disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, in **Afghanistan** panic buying and border restrictions, affecting normal commodity flows, led to higher prices of wheat flour and bread in March. In **India**, further upward pressure on prices of flour was provided by concerns over the 2020 "Rabi" wheat crop, as harvesting operations, which normally take place between March and May, could be delayed as a result of COVID-19-related movement restrictions. In **China (Mainland)**, wholesale prices of wheat and wheat flour remained stable and below their levels in March last year. Prices declined in **Bangladesh** with the start of the 2020 wheat harvest, estimated at an above-average level, and large imports in recent months.

National policy responses to limit the impact of COVID-19 on food markets

- **Cambodia** suspended exports of white and paddy rice from 5 April 2020 to ensure sufficient domestic supplies during the pandemic.
- **India** stepped up deliveries of wheat and rice under the Public Distribution Scheme (PDS).
- In **Indonesia** and **the Philippines**, staple food items, including rice, are being rationed.
- **The Philippines** announced, on 30 March, its plans to import 300 000 tonnes of rice to boost stocks.

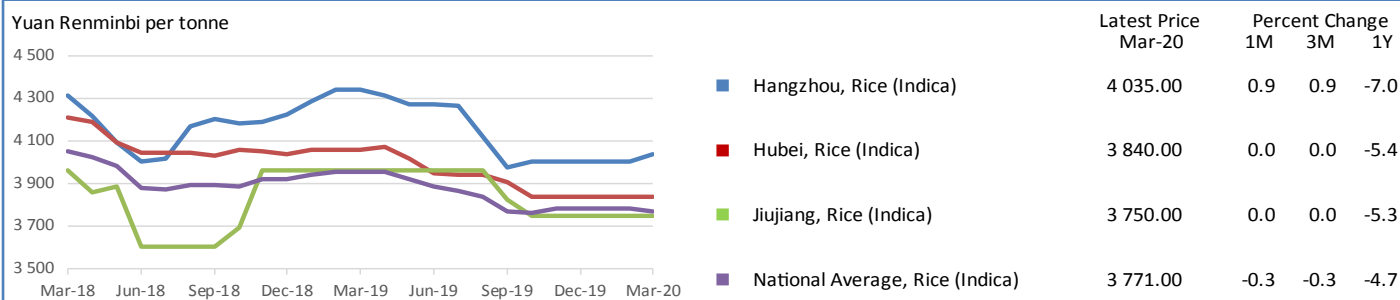
Wholesale prices of rice in Thailand



Source(s): Department of Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce

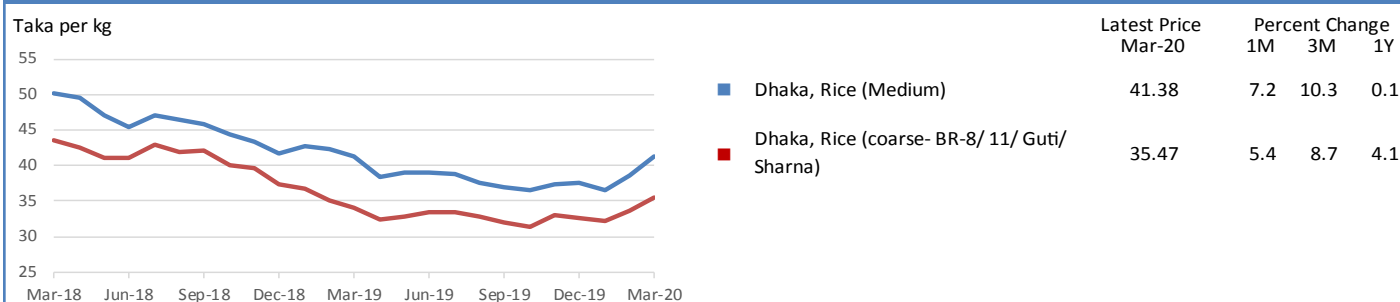
For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Wholesale prices of rice in China (Mainland)



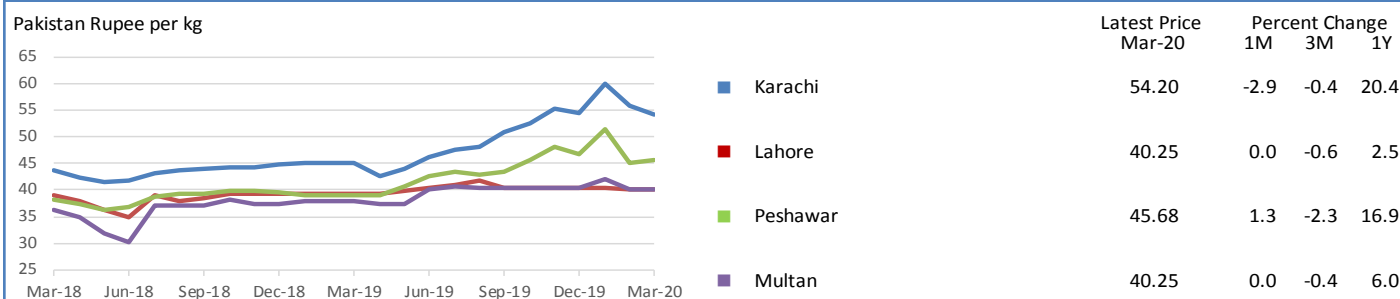
Source(s): CnAgri - China Agriculture Consultant

Retail prices of rice in Bangladesh



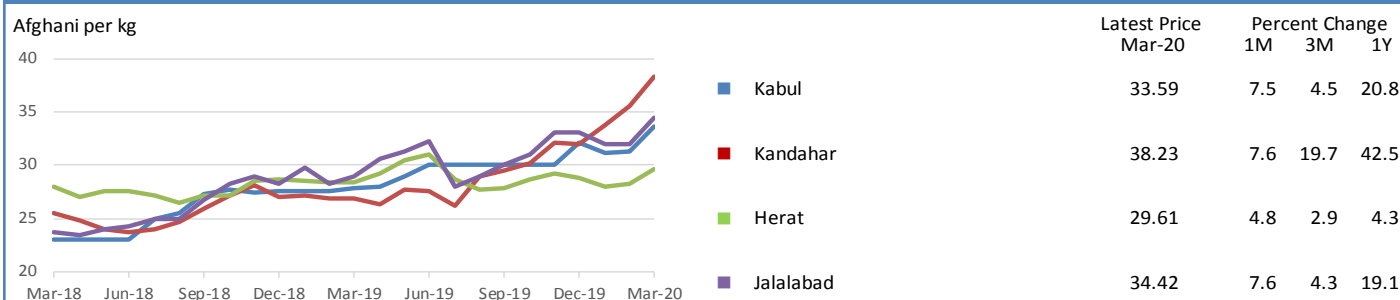
Source(s): Department of Agriculture Marketing (DAM), Bangladesh

Retail prices of wheat flour in Pakistan



Source(s): Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

Retail prices of wheat flour in Afghanistan



Source(s): Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) - WFP

Domestic prices of wheat flour and potatoes on the increase

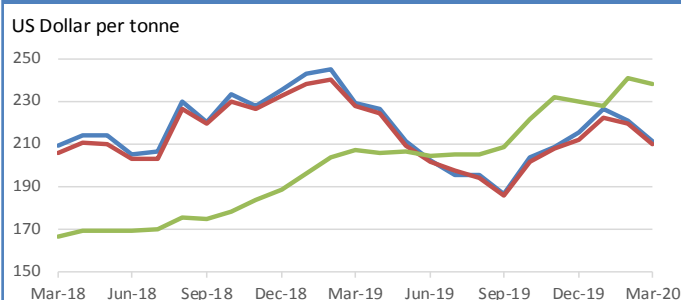
In the exporting countries of the subregion, export prices of milling wheat averaged lower in March, with reduced trade activity weighing on prices in the first half of the month. However, weakening currencies during the month, particularly in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, contributed to a fall in US dollar-denominated export quotations and increased foreign buying interest which underpinned prices in the second half of the month. The announcement of the introduction of COVID-19-related export limitations in the subregion ([FPMA Food Policies](#)), contributed to the upward pressure. In the Russian Federation and Ukraine, wheat prices remained around 8 percent below those in March 2019 amid good availabilities while, in Kazakhstan, prices were about 15 percent higher due to the below-average harvest last year. In the domestic markets, wholesale prices of wheat grain were mainly supported by the depreciation of the local currencies and, while they remained lower year on year, in the Russian Federation and in Ukraine, retail prices of wheat flour in Kazakhstan were higher mostly due to the reduced wheat output last year. In the importing

countries of the subregion, retail prices of wheat flour in **Kyrgyzstan** and **Tajikistan** averaged to levels above those in March last year. Prices increased in the second half of the month due to an upsurge in domestic demand amid concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic and the announcement of export limitations from Kazakhstan, the countries' main wheat supplier. By contrast, prices of wheat flour decreased slightly in **Georgia** amid Government's efforts to control prices of wheat products. Prices remained broadly stable in **Armenia** in March and also in **Azerbaijan** in February. With regard to potatoes, another staple food in the subregion, prices generally increased in March mainly due to stronger demand amid concerns over the pandemic. Prices rose sharply in **Georgia**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Kazakhstan** and **Tajikistan** and reached levels well above those a year earlier. Prices of potatoes increased also in the **Russian Federation** due to reduced availabilities of high quality crops and stronger domestic demand, but remained lower than their values in March last year. Prices increased seasonally in **Azerbaijan** in February, while they remained stable in **Belarus**.

National policy responses to limit the impact of COVID-19 on food markets

- A number of countries implemented trade limitations in an effort to ensure sufficient domestic supplies and avoid price increases of staple foods ([FPMA Food Policies](#)).
- **The Russian Federation** announced the sale of 1.5 million tonnes of grains from State reserves into the domestic market starting from 13 April.
- **Ukraine** announced, on 27 March, the sale of 160 000 tonnes of milling wheat from State-owned agricultural companies into the local market.
- **Georgia** introduced a temporary emergency price control mechanism on imported food items, including rice, buckwheat, wheat grain and flour, pasta, sunflower oil, sugar, milk powder and legumes.
- **Kyrgyzstan** set maximum levels of wholesale and retail prices for a number of food items, including wheat flour and potatoes, which vary according to region. The measure was introduced on 16 March and will remain in place for a period of 90 days.

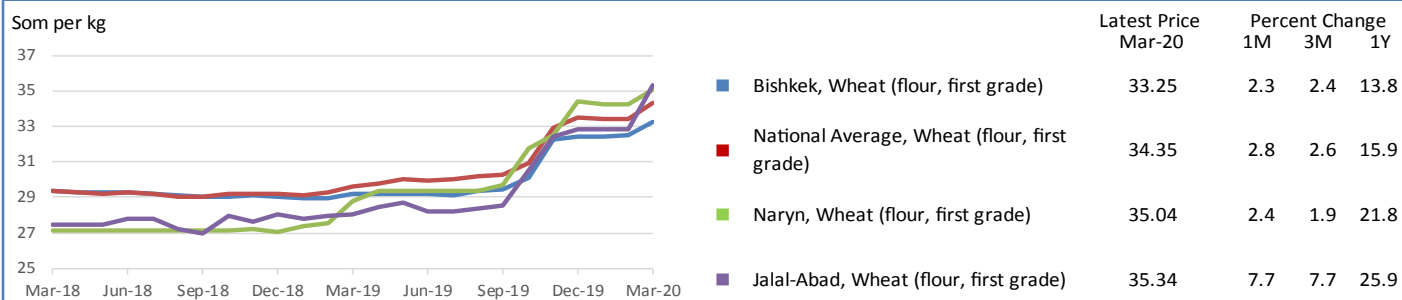
Export prices of milling wheat in CIS countries



Source(s): APK-Inform Agency

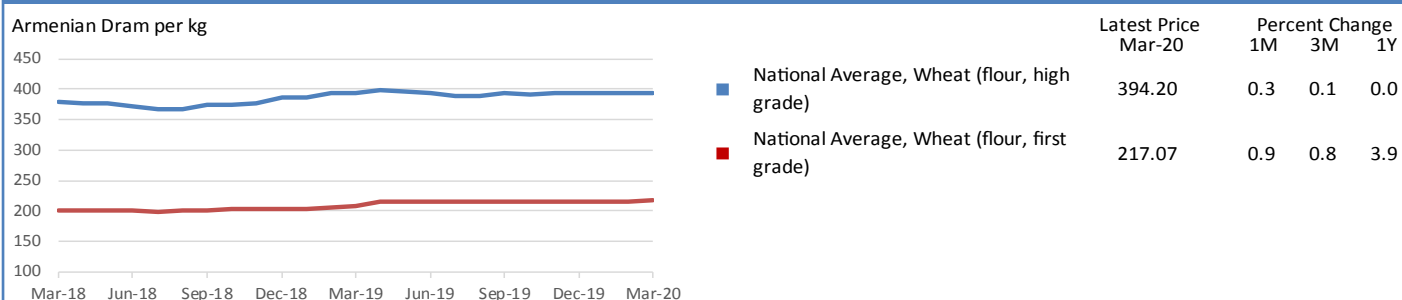
For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Retail prices of wheat flour in Kyrgyzstan



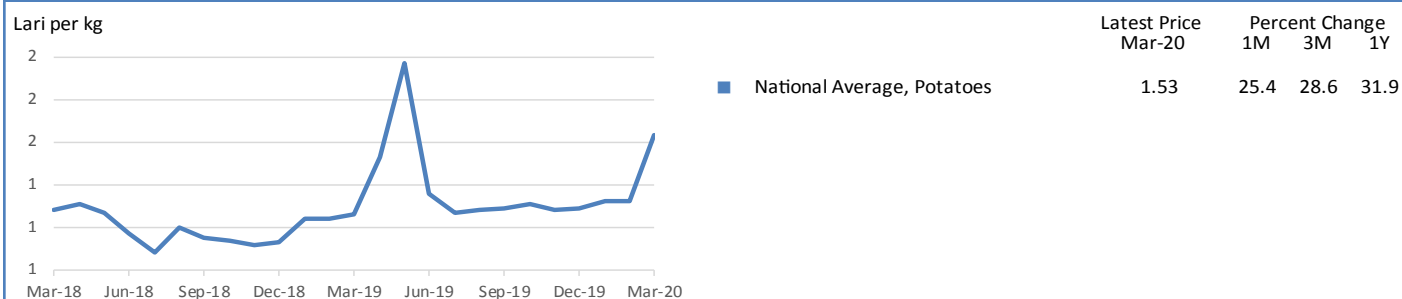
Source(s): National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic

Retail prices of wheat flour in Armenia



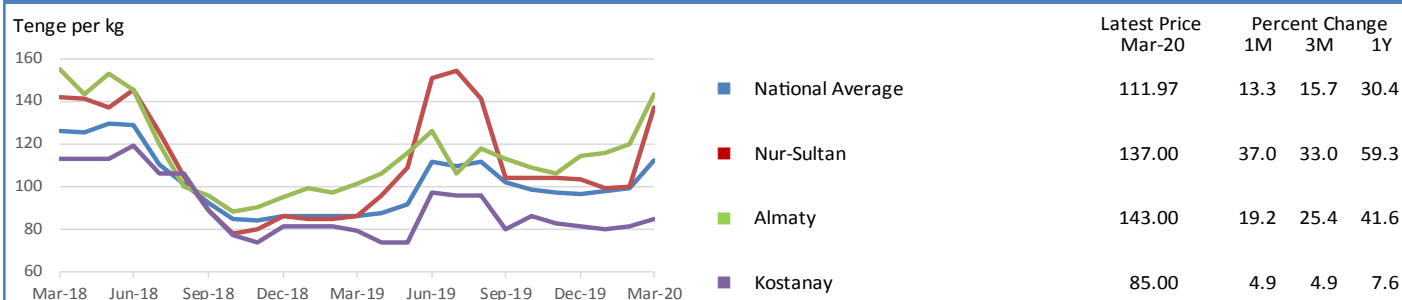
Source(s): National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia

Retail prices of potatoes in Georgia



Source(s): National Statistics Office of Georgia

Retail prices of potatoes in Kazakhstan



Source(s): Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Committee on Statistics

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Prices of white maize and beans increased in March

In several countries of the subregion, prices of maize increased in March with seasonal pressure exacerbated by an upsurge in demand in the second half of the month triggered by concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic. In **Guatemala**, prices spiked in mid-March after the declaration of COVID-19-related confinement measures but they eased towards the end of month and overall, averaged 18 percent higher than in February. Similarly, in **El Salvador**, prices increased in the second half of the month and were 8 percent higher month on month. In **Mexico**, prices of white maize increased by 6 percent in March, contributing to higher prices of the staple food, "tortilla". The increase largely reflected concerns over a reduced minor season output expected, which would follow an already reduced main season crop, gathered earlier in the year. Further upward pressure on prices was provided by year on year higher export quotations of white maize and a sharp depreciation of the country's currency in March, related to the impact of the COVID-19

pandemic on the domestic and global economies. In **Nicaragua**, prices of basic food items were reported to have remained broadly stable throughout the month, while in **Honduras**, prices of some food products increased in late March following the closure of the wholesale markets at the country level, a measure introduced in response to the pandemic. In the Caribbean, prices of maize and other food staples in **Haiti** remained generally stable in February but were higher than a year earlier. Increases in food prices were, however, reported in March in some markets due to massive buying. With regard to beans, prices generally rose in March and were higher than in the corresponding month last year. In **Guatemala**, prices of black beans increased despite adequate domestic availabilities due to a sudden increase in demand amid worries over the pandemic. Similarly, prices of red beans increased significantly in **El Salvador**, while they declined in the first weeks of the month in **Nicaragua** with the main "apante" harvest.

National policy responses to limit the impact of COVID-19 on food markets

- **Honduras**, on 21 March, introduced price ceilings on essential food items, including rice, tortillas, beans, milk, fruits and vegetables. The measure applies to both markets and supermarkets and runs until 18 April 2020.
- **El Salvador**, on 22 March, introduced price ceilings on essential products, including maize, rice and beans. Earlier, on 20 March, the country [suspended import duties](#) on white maize, red beans and rice for the duration of the pandemic.
- In other countries of the subregion, including **Guatemala** and **Mexico**, measures have been put in place to counter over-pricing of food items.

Wholesale prices of maize in Guatemala

Quetzal per tonne



■ Guatemala City, Maize (white)

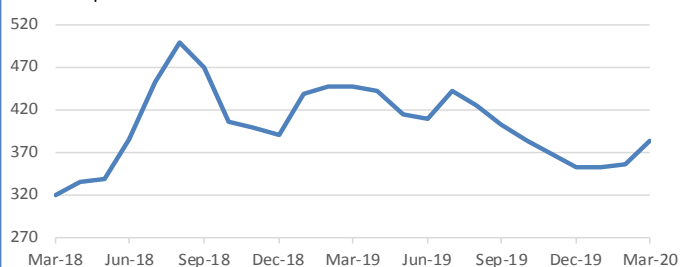
Latest Price Mar-20	Percent Change		
	1M	3M	1Y
3 363.36	17.6	25.7	13.1

Source(s): Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Wholesale prices of maize in El Salvador

US Dollar per tonne



■ San Salvador, Maize (white)

Latest Price
Mar-20

382.80

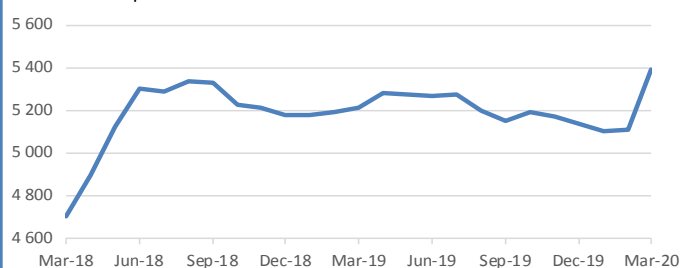
Percent Change
1M 3M 1Y

7.6 8.7 -14.4

Source(s): Dirección General de Economía Agropecuaria, MAG

Wholesale prices of maize in Mexico

Mexican Peso per tonne



■ Mexico City, Maize (white, sifted, packed, at mill)

Latest Price
Mar-20

5 392.40

Percent Change
1M 3M 1Y

5.6 5.0 3.5

Source(s): Agencia de Servicios a la Comercialización y Desarrollo de Mercados Agropecuarios (ASERCA)

Wholesale prices of black beans in Guatemala

Quetzal per tonne



■ Guatemala City, Beans (black)

Latest Price
Mar-20

8 120.20

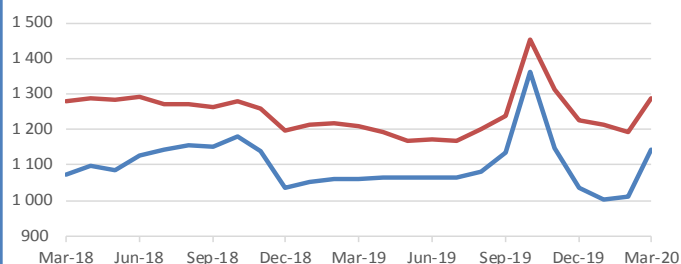
Percent Change
1M 3M 1Y

4.9 5.3 11.7

Source(s): Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación

Wholesale prices of red beans in El Salvador

US Dollar per tonne



■ San Salvador, Beans (red)

Latest Price
Mar-20

1 141.36

Percent Change
1M 3M 1Y

12.9 10.1 7.5

■ San Salvador, Beans (red, seda)

1 287.00

7.9 5.0 6.5

Source(s): Dirección General de Economía Agropecuaria, MAG

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

Prices of rice and wheat generally increased in March, those of maize declined seasonally

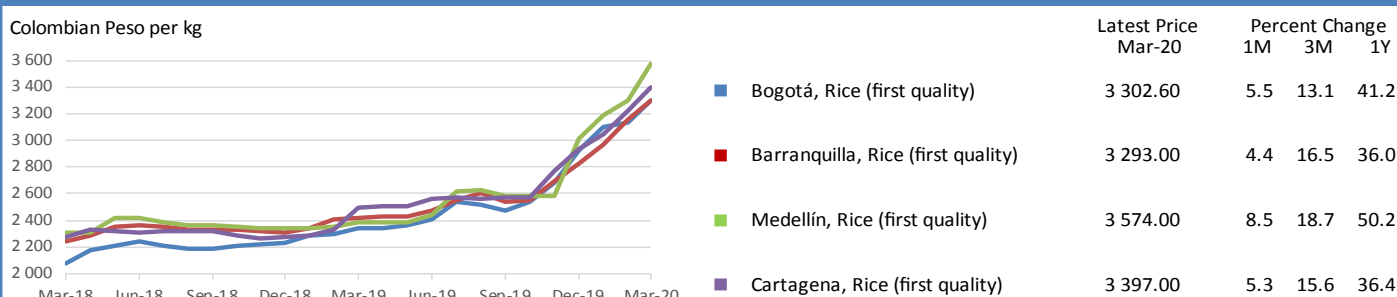
Prices of rice increased in March in countries of the subregion in response to an upsurge in domestic demand amid worries over the COVID-19 pandemic and the enforcement of containment measures. In **Brazil**, despite the ongoing harvest, stronger demand for domestic consumption led to an increase in the prices of rice in the second half of March. In **Colombia**, where prices have already been on the rise for several months due to higher input costs, supported by a weaker currency, they increased further in March with the addition of stronger domestic demand amid the containment measures at national level. Also in **Peru**, despite the good prospects for the ongoing harvest, significant increases of rice prices were recorded in March due to strong demand and likewise in some markets in **Bolivia (Plurinational State of)**, higher demand pushed prices up. Regarding wheat, prices increased in March and were higher year on year. In **Argentina**, prices of wheat grain strengthened for the third consecutive month in line with historical trends and were well above those a year earlier mainly due to large export sales during the season. In **Chile**, prices of wheat grain also increased and were higher than in March last year mainly due to the depreciation of the country's currency, which lost around one-fifth of its value in the past year. In net importer, **Brazil**, the strong depreciation of the currency in March, related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the domestic and global economies, making imports not viable and generally tight domestic supplies kept prices of wheat under upward pressure in the past month and above their year-earlier values. In other importing countries, prices held relatively stable in

March and were below or around their year-earlier levels in **Bolivia (Plurinational State of)** and **Peru**, while in **Colombia**, where the currency value dropped markedly in March, prices of wheat flour were up from a year earlier. With regard to maize, prices of yellow maize declined seasonally in **Argentina** with the progress of the new harvest, forecast to be close to last year's bumper level. However, strong demand for export amid a slow-down in port deliveries due to COVID-19-related restrictions kept prices more than 50 percent higher than their values a year earlier. Similarly, in **Bolivia (Plurinational State of)**, prices of yellow maize declined in the main producing state of Santa Cruz, with the early start of the 2020 main "summer" harvest. However, prices remained higher than a year earlier on account of the reduced 2019 harvest. Also in **Ecuador**, prices of maize declined in most markets with the start of the main harvest. By contrast, in **Brazil**, where planting of the main season is complete, prices of yellow maize continued to increase in March and were more than 30 percent higher on a yearly basis. The high prices mainly reflect firm foreign demand, with ports reported to function normally, and a weak currency increasing the country's competitiveness. Prices of maize were further supported by the reduced yields reported from the first season harvest, virtually completed in Rio Grande do Sul, due to unfavourable hot and dry weather. In importers, **Chile** and **Colombia**, prices of yellow maize remained relatively stable in March but the weak currencies kept prices above their year-earlier levels. In **Peru**, wholesale prices of yellow maize remained at the same level of the past three months.

National policy responses to limit the impact of COVID-19 on food markets

- **Argentina**, on 20 March, introduced [price ceilings](#) on basic food items and drinks for a period of 30 days, which apply to markets and hyper/super/mini-markets. Under the restriction, prices cannot be higher than their values on 6 March.
- In other countries of the subregion, including **Bolivia (Plurinational State of)**, **Colombia** and **Ecuador**, measures have been put in place to counter over-pricing of food items.

Wholesale prices of rice in Colombia



Source(s): Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE)

For more information visit the FPMA website [here](#)

This bulletin is prepared by the **Food Price Monitoring and Analysis (FPMA)** Team of the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) in the Trade and Markets Division of FAO. It contains latest information and analysis on domestic prices of basic foods mainly in developing countries, complementing FAO analysis on international markets. It provides early warning on high food prices at country level that may negatively affect food security.

This report is based on information available up to early April 2020, collected from various sources.

All the data used in the analysis can be found in the **FPMA Tool** at: www.fao.org/giews/food-prices/tool/public/index.html#/home.

For more information visit the **FPMA Website** at: www.fao.org/giews/food-prices.

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