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MONTHLY REPORT ON FOOD PRICE TRENDS

KEY MESSAGES

- International prices of wheat, maize, barley and rice declined in March, following sustained increases for several months, mostly reflecting generally good export availabilities as well as favourable production prospects for this year.
- In East Africa, prices of coarse grains generally followed mixed trends in March. In several countries, prices were around or below their year-earlier levels, except in the Sudan and South Sudan, where they were at near-record to record levels, underpinned by insufficient supplies and severe macro-economic difficulties, including local currency weakness fostering food inflation.
- In Southern Africa, prices of maize began to fall in several countries in March, slightly earlier than the historical seasonal trends, amid the generally excellent cereal production expectations in 2021 and, in anticipation of the new harvests, the release of old stocks that shored up market availabilities.

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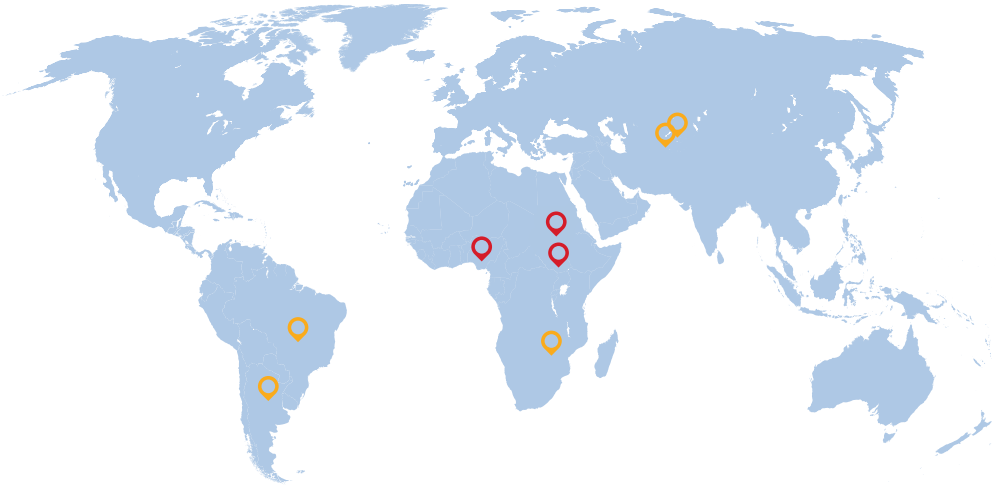
Domestic price warnings

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



Argentina | Food items
Brazil | Cereals
Kyrgyzstan | Wheat flour
Nigeria | Coarse grains
South Sudan | Staple foods
Sudan | Staple foods
Tajikistan | Wheat flour
Zimbabwe | Food items

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

Source: GIEWS, modified to comply with UN map, 2021.

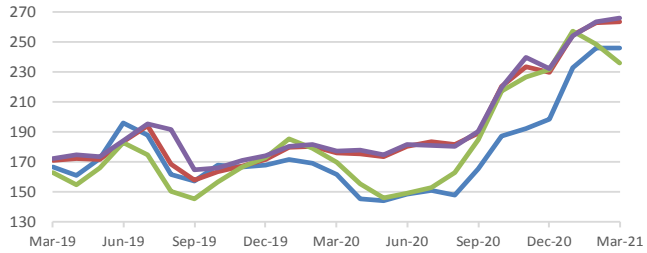
Prices of major cereals fell in March

International prices of **maize** declined in March, ending their nine-month rising streak, but remained well above their values one year ago. The decline was on account of downward pressure from the start of the harvest in Argentina, where the export price for Argentinian maize (Up River, f.o.b.) dropped by nearly 5 percent month on month. After leading the upward trend for several months among major export origins, the benchmark US maize (No.2, Yellow, f.o.b.) stabilized in March as another wave of purchases from China (mainland) and a rally at the end of the month in response to lower-than-expected planting intentions reported in the United States of America offset downward pressure from South American harvests. However, prices remained about 52 percent above their March 2020 values. By contrast, the price of Ukraine maize (offer, f.o.b) rose further, albeit slightly, mostly reflecting higher demand from China (mainland). While barley prices fell slightly since February in tandem with maize prices, international sorghum prices rose further, supported by strong demand from China (mainland).

Good supplies and favourable production prospects for 2021 crops put downward pressure on international prices of **wheat** in March. This, together with some slowdown in purchases and a strengthening of the US dollar, pushed the price of the benchmark US wheat (No. 2, HRW) down by 5.6 percent month on month. Export quotations from the Black Sea region also declined. A slowdown in exports from the Russian Federation, following the increased wheat export tax at the start of the month, contributed to the decline in Russian origin export quotations. Adequate export availabilities along with good production prospects pushed down the price of Ukraine origin milling wheat. Similarly, the European Union export prices (France, grade 1) fell by 2.6 percent in March, on slow export demand and expectation of a strong rebound in this year's production.

The FAO All **Rice** Price Index (2014-2016=100) averaged 113.9 points in March 2021, down 1.8 percent from February, but still 7.1 percent above its value a year earlier. With the exception of India, where steady demand continued to prop up quotations, prices were generally weaker during March, as fresh sales proved patchy and container shortages and soaring freight rates curbed trade. In Thailand, a Baht depreciation and the arrival of offseason crops into the market exacerbated the sluggish pace of sales, causing prices of white rice (Thai 100% B) to tumble by 5.0 percent month on month. Competition with India also weighed on Pakistani origin prices, outweighing support from a Rupee appreciation, as did low demand for milled rice in the United States of America. In Viet Nam declines were instead associated with the progress of the 2021 harvest, although losses were capped by dwindling cultivation of IR50404 given growers' continued preference of other varieties.

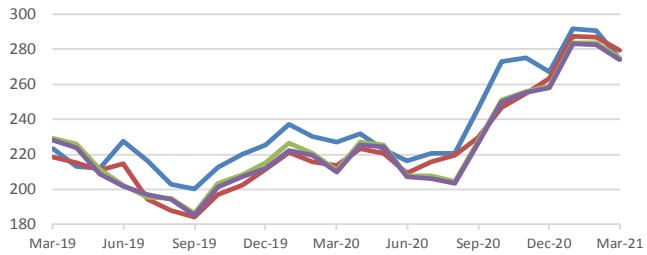
International maize prices



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
United States of America (Gulf), Maize (US No. 2, Yellow)	246.17	0.0	23.9	52.2
Black Sea, Maize (feed)	263.40	0.2	14.6	49.7
Argentina, Maize (Argentina, Up River, f.o.b.)	236.00	-4.9	1.8	39.2
Ukraine, Maize (offer, f.o.b.)	265.75	0.9	14.5	49.9

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

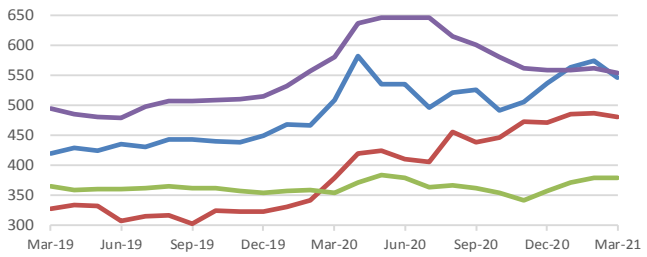
International wheat prices



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
United States of America (Gulf), Wheat (US No. 2, Hard Red Winter)	274.40	-5.6	2.6	20.9
European Union (France), Wheat (grade 1)	279.40	-2.6	6.1	30.8
Russian Federation, Wheat (milling, offer, f.o.b., deep-sea ports)	275.25	-3.1	6.2	30.3
Ukraine, Wheat (milling, offer, f.o.b.)	274.25	-3.0	6.3	30.8

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

International rice prices



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Thailand (Bangkok), Rice (Thai 100% B)	546.00	-5.0	1.7	7.2
Viet Nam, Rice (25% broken)	480.75	-1.4	2.0	26.9
India, Rice (25% broken)	378.75	0.0	5.9	6.7
United States of America, Rice (US Long Grain 2.4%)	553.50	-1.4	-0.9	-4.7

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

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 02/21	Same period average
3 months	2.5	1.6
12 months	0.9	0.5

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: Argentina, Greater Buenos Aires, Retail, Beef meat

Retail food prices on the rise in February

The inflation rate for **food items** and non-alcoholic beverages continued to rise in February, albeit to a lesser extent than the previous two months. Among food items, prices of fruits, vegetables, tubers and beans registered the highest monthly increases, while those of milk, eggs and meat increased marginally. Food prices increased despite the price ceiling programme put in place, amid a difficult macro-economic situation, including the sustained weakening of the local currency. The programme, first introduced in March 2020 to curb rising prices amid the COVID-19 pandemic, has had its maximum price levels revised upwards twice since then in view of the increasing inflation and was extended until 15 May 2021.

Brazil | Cereals

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/21	Same period average
3 months	4.4	4.2
12 months	3.8	1.2

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: Brazil, Mato Grosso, Wholesale, Maize (yellow)

Prices of maize and rice rose in March and at high levels

Prices of **yellow maize** continued to rise in March underpinned by concerns over the impact of the late sowing on the main crop yields and poorer-than-expected yields of the minor crop, currently being harvested. Prices were well above their year-earlier levels and are expected to remain high until the start of the main season harvest in July. The official forecast puts the 2021 maize output at a well above-average level, mainly reflecting record plantings. Prices of **rice** also strengthened in March despite the ongoing harvest, as the downward pressure from the harvest was more than offset by strong demand from the milling industry and slow sales by farmers. Prices were well above their values a year earlier following the sustained demand in the previous months. By contrast, prices of **wheat** stabilized following increases in the last two months, as sluggish demand offset lower market supplies. Prices remained higher year on year on account of the weaker local currency and the low level of imports between September 2020 and February 2021 compared to the same period a year earlier.

Kyrgyzstan | Wheat flour

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/21	Same period average
3 months	-1.8	-0.4
12 months	0.5	-0.1

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

Prices of wheat flour remained stable in March and well above their year-earlier levels

Retail prices of first grade **wheat flour** continued to hold steady in March, after the harvest of a near-average domestic wheat output in 2020 (GIEWS Country Brief) and the introduction, on 19 November 2020, of a new six-month ban on exports of some agricultural products, including wheat grain and flour (FPMA Food Policy). However, prices in March were on average about 15 percent above their values one year earlier, after sharply increasing in April 2020 following an upsurge in consumer demand due to concerns over the COVID-19 pandemic and export limitations in Kazakhstan, the main wheat supplier to the country. The depreciation of the local currency, which lost 14 percent of its value against the US dollar since March 2020 also supported the higher year-on-year level of prices.

Price warning level: High Moderate

For more information visit the FPMA website here

Nigeria | Coarse grains

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 02/21	Same period average
3 months	8.8	-0.1
12 months	3.9	-0.5

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: Nigeria, Lagos, Wholesale, Maize (white)

Coarse grains prices remain high although rates of increases eased in February

Prices of domestically produced **coarse grains** continued to increase in most markets in February, but at a slower rate compared to previous months. A slight improvement in macro-economic conditions as crude oil production increased in response to strengthening international crude oil prices contributed to curbing the price increases. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the annual inflation rate increased from 16.46 percent in January 2021 to 17.33 percent in February 2021, still above the 12 percent recorded in February 2020. The national currency, Naira, depreciated to NGN 484/USD on the parallel market in late March, up from the NGN 470/USD one month earlier, while the official exchange rate remains relatively stable at NGN 380/USD. Similarly, high transport costs as a result of the overall decline in crude oil production and lower import quantities for over one year due to an overall weaker currency, continued to support food prices which remained over 50 percent above their values in February last year. In the northern part of the country, continued civil insecurity resulted in widespread disruption in agricultural and marketing activities, putting further upward pressure on prices. The heavy rains in the 2020 cropping season (August-September) also caused localized but substantial crop production shortfalls in some areas, contributing to higher household demand and increases in the level of prices.

South Sudan | Staple foods

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/21	Same period average
3 months	-1.4	2.4
12 months	7.6	-0.7

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

Food prices remained firm in March at exceptionally high levels due to the continuous depreciation of the local currency

In the capital, Juba, prices of **maize**, **sorghum**, **cassava** and imported **wheat** remained firm in March, while prices of **groundnuts** increased by 7 percent. The nominal food prices were at exceptionally high levels in March, with those of sorghum and maize about three times the already high year-earlier values and more than 50 times those in July 2015, before the currency collapse. Underlying the high food prices is the continuously difficult macro-economic situation, related to low foreign currency reserves and the continued depreciation of the country's currency. In addition, in the past year, COVID-19-related disruptions to the local markets and trade, already adversely affected by the lingering impact of the prolonged conflict, provided further support. According to the preliminary findings of the 2020 FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission, the 2020 aggregate cereal production is estimated at about 874 400 tonnes, 7 percent above the 2019 average output, but still well below the pre-conflict levels. As a result, the overall cereal deficit in the January-December 2021 marketing year is expected to decline by 4 percent, but at about 465 600 tonnes it will remain substantial. Cereal production benefitted from an increase in the planted area due to security improvements and from abundant and well-distributed rains over most cropping areas, which boosted yields. However, torrential rains triggered floods, which resulted in varying degrees of crop damage mainly in Jonglei, Lakes and Upper Nile states.

Price warning level: High Moderate

For more information visit the FPMA website here

Sudan | Staple foods

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/21	Same period average
3 months	-12.5	3.4
12 months	-5.4	0.7

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: Sudan, El Gedarif, Wholesale, Sorghum (Feterita)

Prices of staple foods firmed up in March at very high levels

Prices of locally grown **sorghum** and **millet** firmed up in March as a devaluation of the Sudanese Pound from SDG 55/USD to SDG 375/USD in late February (FPMA Food Policy) substantially reduced the gap between the official and parallel market exchange rates, resulting in an increase of transactions of foreign currency in commercial banks and easing inflationary pressures. Prices in March were exceptionally high, up to three times the already elevated year-earlier levels, mainly due to the weakness of the local currency. Cereal prices began to follow a sustained increasing trend in late 2017 due to the difficult macro-economic situation, coupled with fuel shortages and the high prices of agricultural inputs inflating production and transportation costs. In 2020, disruptions to marketing and trading activities related to the measures implemented to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and to widespread floods provided further upward pressure to prices. According to the Government-led 2020 Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission, the 2020 coarse grains (sorghum and millet) production is estimated at about 7.07 million tonnes, 11 percent up from 2019 and 23 percent higher than the average of the previous five years, mainly due to an increase in planted area as a result of high market prices of grains, which prompted farmers to increase production. However, due to soaring input prices inflating production costs, the commercialization of 2020 coarse grain crops, gathered in late 2020/early 2021, did not translate so far in a reduction of market prices.

Tajikistan | Wheat flour

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/21	Same period average
3 months	-0.9	-0.6
12 months	1.3	0.2

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

Prices of wheat flour were stable in March at levels above those a year earlier

Retail prices of first grade **wheat flour**, after declining in December and January, remained overall stable in February and March, at levels on average 17 percent above those a year earlier. Prices had steeply increased in April and May 2020, due to an upsurge in consumer demand and market disruptions amid the COVID-19 pandemic, and export restrictions in Kazakhstan, the country's key supplier. Prices decreased from June to August, reflecting generally adequate market availabilities and the Government's price stabilization measures, including a temporary export ban on wheat grain and flour and the release of supplies from the strategic reserves, and rose again between September and November, in line with seasonal trends. The depreciation of the local currency, which lost 15 percent of its value against the US dollar since March 2020, also contributed to the year-on-year higher prices.

Zimbabwe | Food items

Growth Rate (%)		
	to 03/21	Same period average
3 months	n.a	n.a
12 months	n.a	n.a

Compound growth rate in real terms.
Refers to: Zimbabwe, Harare, Retail, Food items

Food price increases continued to slow, but remained at high levels on a yearly basis

The official monthly food inflation rate was estimated at 2.5 percent in March, lower than February's level and the exceptionally high rates registered in mid-2020 when the monthly food inflation rate peaked at 38 percent. Most of this slowdown reflects the relative stability of the official exchange rate since the last quarter of 2020 that has tempered imported inflation and the large quantities of grain imports, which have helped stabilize domestic supplies. Production prospects for the 2021 cereal crop are also favourable and, if a good harvest materializes, supply pressure is likely to ease further this year. However, on a yearly basis **food** prices remained significantly high. The yearly inflation rate was estimated at 300 percent in March. The elevated annual levels mostly resulted from the effects of a weak currency, rapid growth in money supply and poor harvests in the previous two years that caused a tight supply situation.

Price warning level: High Moderate

For more information visit the FPMA website here

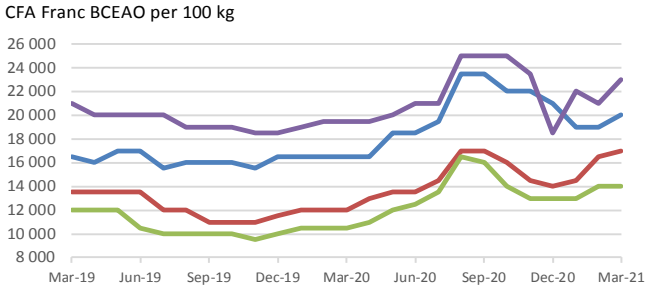
Prices of coarse grain generally increased in the subregion

In most countries of the subregion, prices of domestically produced coarse grains remained firm or further strengthened in some markets in March and were generally higher than one year earlier. The price increases were underpinned by stagnating macro-economic conditions, continuing strong demand for stock replenishment by traders and humanitarian agencies coupled with localized production shortfalls. Removal of the COVID-19-related border measures reintroduced in November 2020 to flatten the second wave is currently under discussion. Exceptionally high price levels continued to prevail in Lake Chad Basin, Liptako-Gourma Region, Tibesti Region, northeastern, northwestern and central Nigeria due to persistent insecurity which has constrained normal market functioning.

In **Burkina Faso**, **Mali** and **the Niger**, prices of coarse grains generally increased in March in line with seasonal patterns and were above their year-earlier levels. Although above-average cereal harvests completed in October 2020 continued to ensure solid market availability, persistent conflict led to localized market disruptions and ongoing institutional purchases to replenish stocks, also put an upward pressure on prices. In these countries, prices of imported rice remained overall stable. In **Senegal**, prices of coarse grains remained stable in February on account of the steady market supply from the 2020 above-average harvest. However, prices remained significantly above their year-earlier levels in some markets due to the impacts of the COVID-19 restrictive measures on internal trade flows. In **Chad**, prices of coarse grains generally increased in February and were higher year on year underpinned by below-average market supplies caused by market and trade disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic and insecurity, which also limited the flow of products imported from southern Libya via informal trade channels.

In coastal countries along the Gulf of Guinea, prices of maize in **Ghana** remained mostly stable in March reflecting good domestic supplies. Similarly, in **Benin** and **Togo**, prices of maize remained broadly stable in February as market supplies were adequate owing to the good harvest from the 2020 second season maize crop. However, prices were overall above their previous year's level due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the supply chain and strong export demand towards Sahelian countries. In **Nigeria**, prices of domestically produced coarse grains continued to increase in February but at a slower pace than in previous months following a slight improvement in the macro-economic conditions related to a partial recovery of international oil prices and increased oil output. However, civil insecurity in parts of the country, persistent depreciation of the Naira (national currency) and high transport costs supported price levels well above their year-earlier levels. Despite the official re-opening of land borders to allow imports of rice competing with domestic production as well as exports of coarse grains, trade flows with neighbouring countries remain constrained by persistent restrictions, including administrative requirements related to exports. In addition, above-average demand for cereals caused by the earlier depletion of household stocks in the areas with localized production deficits and large purchases from institutional bodies and local factories provided further support to prices.

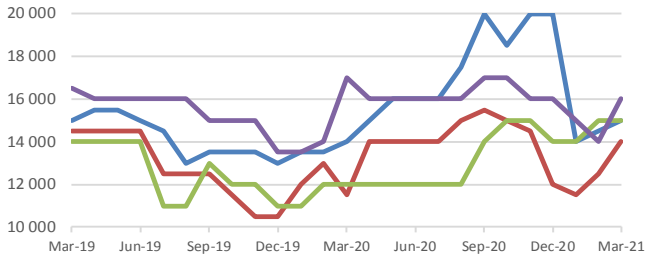
Wholesale prices of millet and sorghum in Burkina Faso



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Ouagadougou, Millet (local)	20 000.00	5.3	-4.8	21.2
Ouagadougou, Sorghum (local)	17 000.00	3.0	21.4	41.7
Dédougou, Sorghum (local)	14 000.00	0.0	7.7	33.3
Dori, Millet (local)	23 000.00	9.5	24.3	17.9

Source(s): Afrique verte

Wholesale prices of millet and sorghum in Mali



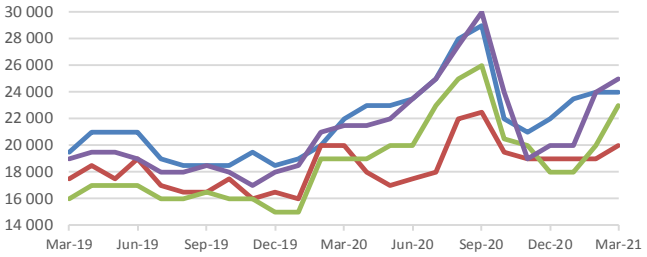
	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Bamako, Millet (local)	15 000.00	3.4	-25.0	7.1
Bamako, Sorghum (local)	14 000.00	12.0	16.7	21.7
Ségou, Millet (local)	15 000.00	0.0	7.1	25.0
Kayes, Sorghum (local)	16 000.00	14.3	0.0	-5.9

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

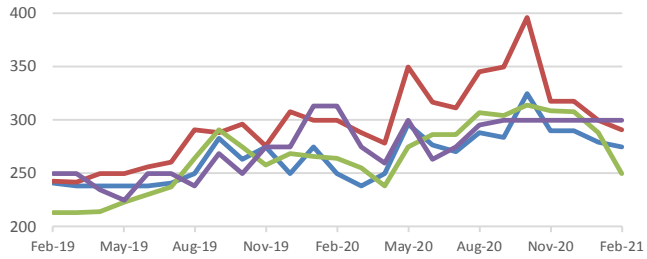


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Niamey, Millet (local)	24 000.00	0.0	9.1	9.1
Niamey, Sorghum (local)	20 000.00	5.3	5.3	0.0
Zinder, Sorghum (local)	23 000.00	15.0	27.8	21.1
Zinder, Millet (local)	25 000.00	4.2	25.0	16.3

Source(s): Afrique verte

Retail prices of millet in Senegal

CFA Franc BCEAO per kg

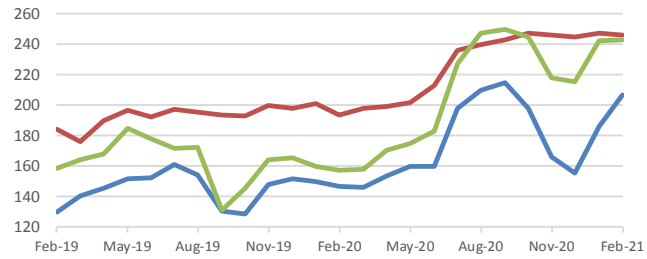


	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Dakar, Millet	275.00	-1.4	-5.2	10.0
Saint Louis, Millet	291.00	-3.0	-8.5	-3.0
Louga, Millet	250.00	-13.2	-19.1	-5.3
Matam, Millet	300.00	0.0	0.0	-4.2

Source(s): Agence Nationale de la Statistique et la Démographie (ANSD)

Retail prices of maize in Benin

CFA Franc BCEAO per kg

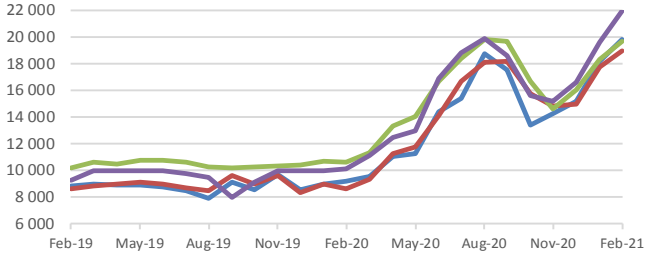


	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Natitingou, Maize	207.00	11.3	24.7	41.1
Cotonou, Maize	246.00	-0.4	0.0	27.0
Parakou, Maize	243.00	0.4	11.5	54.5

Source(s): Institut National de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Économique (INSAE)

Wholesale prices of white maize in Nigeria

Naira per 100 kg



	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Kano, Maize (white)	19 810.00	8.9	38.5	115.2
Maiduguri, Maize (white)	19 000.00	7.0	27.7	120.3
Lagos, Maize (white)	19 700.00	7.5	34.9	85.0
Ibadan, Maize (white)	22 000.00	12.1	44.5	117.3

Source(s): FEWSNET

For more information visit the FPMA website here

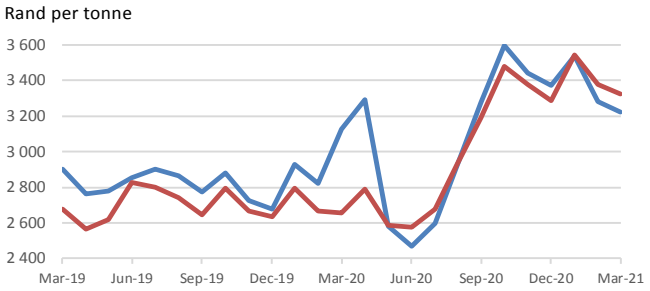
Prices of maize began to decline seasonally, slightly earlier than normal

Maize prices began to fall in several countries in March, slightly earlier than the historical seasonal trends, prior to the main harvest period starting in April. The early declines, in part, reflect the generally excellent cereal production expectations in 2021, while the release of old stocks has helped shore up market availabilities and ease supply pressure on prices.

In **South Africa**, wholesale prices of maize declined for a second consecutive month in March, as crop conditions continued to point to a near-record output in 2021, underpinned by an expansion of the planted area and good yield prospects. Although the favourable supply prospects have brought prices down in recent months, higher international prices and a weaker year-on-year national currency have kept wholesale prices of maize above their year-earlier levels. Prices of wheat were almost unchanged on a monthly basis and close to the values of one year earlier. In the import-dependent countries, **Botswana** and **Namibia**, prices of maize meal increased moderately in February reflecting earlier price increases in South Africa, the main source of grain supplies, which occurred in the second semester of 2020. Prices of maize products in both countries are anticipated to stabilize in the coming months reflecting improved domestic supplies from the soon-to-be harvested 2021 crops and incorporating the more recent price declines in South Africa. In **Zambia**, which is expected to harvest a bumper maize crop in 2021, prices of maize grain fell in March, about one month earlier than the historical seasonal trends. The good production prospects and off-loading of older stocks onto the market by traders contributed to the early price declines. On a yearly basis, prices of maize were also lower. Following a decline in the previous month, prices of maize grain in **Malawi** were mostly unchanged in March at the start of the harvest period; the country is also expected to harvest a well above-average maize crop in 2021.

In **Zimbabwe**, although the yearly food price inflation rate remained in three-digit figures, estimated by national authorities at 300 percent in March, the month-on-month rate persisted at significantly lower rates than those observed in mid-2020; the monthly food price inflation rate in March was 2.5 percent compared to a peak of 38 percent in July 2020. The continued relative stability of the official exchange rate, large quantities of maize imports from South Africa and, more recently, the good production expectations for this year's harvest, are factors that have contributed to curbing the increases in inflation rates. The national benchmark interest rate was also increased in February in an effort to contain inflationary pressure.

Wholesale prices of maize in South Africa



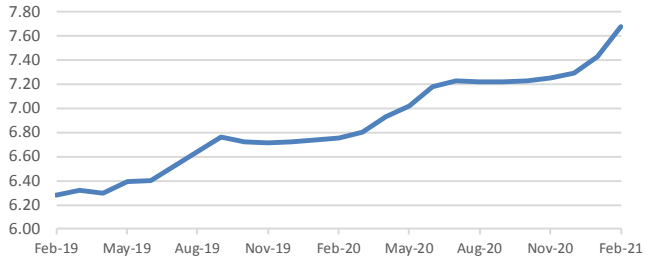
	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Randfontein, Maize (white)	3 221.83	-1.8	-4.5	3.0
Randfontein, Maize (yellow)	3 323.28	-1.6	1.1	25.0

Source(s): SAFEX Agricultural Products Division

For more information visit the FPMA website here

Retail prices of maize meal in Botswana

Pula per kg

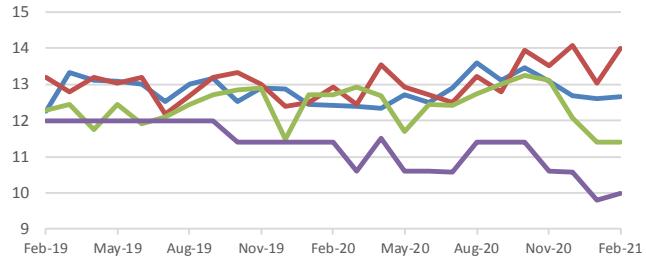


	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
National average, Maize meal	7.68	3.4	5.9	13.8

Source(s): Statistics Botswana

Retail prices of maize meal in Namibia

Namibia Dollar per kg

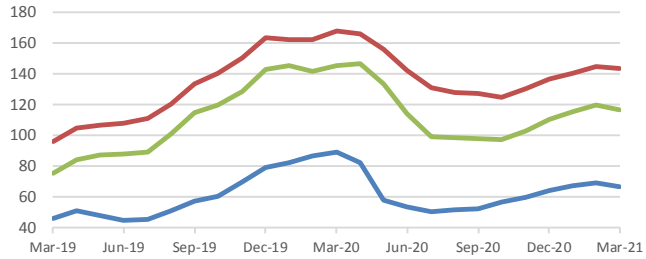


	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Windhoek, Maize meal	12.66	0.3	-3.2	2.0
Swakopmund, Maize meal	14.01	7.4	3.5	8.3
Otjiwarongo, Maize meal	11.40	0.0	-13.2	-10.4
Gobabis, Maize meal	10.00	2.0	-5.7	-12.3

Source(s): Namibia Statistics Agency

Retail prices of maize in Zambia

Kwacha per 17 kg

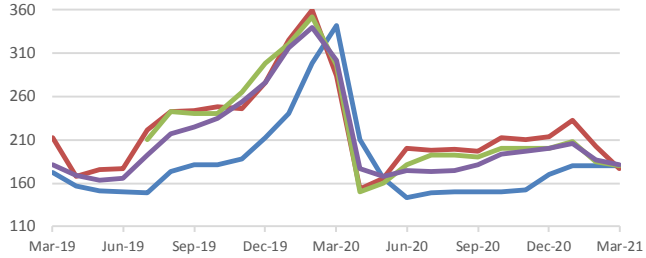


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
National Average, Maize (white)	66.76	-3.6	3.9	-25.2
National Average, Breakfast maize meal	143.36	-1.0	4.8	-14.7
National Average, White roller maize meal	116.80	-2.5	5.9	-19.7

Source(s): Central Statistical Office

Retail prices of maize in Malawi

Kwacha per kg



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Mzuzu, Maize	180.00	0.0	5.9	-47.3
Nsanje, Maize	176.50	-12.9	-17.3	-37.7
Liwonde, Maize	180.00	-2.7	-10.0	-39.3
National Average, Maize	181.50	-2.9	-9.5	-39.8

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

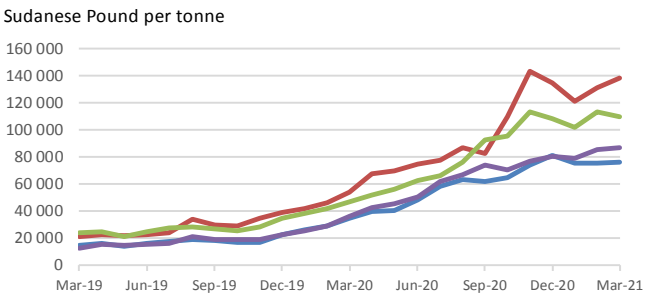
For more information visit the FPMA website here

Prices of coarse grains remain at exceptionally high levels in the Sudan and South Sudan

Prices of coarse grains followed mixed trends in March. In several countries, prices were below their year-earlier levels, reflecting above-average 2020 cereal outputs. Despite the phasing out in mid-2020 of a number of restrictive measures introduced to contain the spread of COVID-19 in some countries, economic recovery is slow and demand remains stagnant, continuing to exert a downward pressure on prices. By contrast, prices were at exceptionally high levels in South Sudan and in the Sudan, reinforced by insufficient supplies and severe macro-economic difficulties, including local currency weakness underpinning food inflation.

In **the Sudan**, prices of sorghum and millet firmed up in March as a marked devaluation of the Sudanese Pound in late February substantially reduced the gap between the official and parallel market exchange rates, resulting in an increase of foreign currency transactions in commercial banks and easing inflationary pressures. Prices in March remained at exceptionally high levels due to an overall difficult macro-economic situation and COVID-19-related restrictive measures resulting in transportation bottlenecks. In **South Sudan**, prices of maize and sorghum in the capital, Juba, remained firm in March at exceptionally high levels due to the lingering impact of the prolonged conflict and a weak currency. In **Uganda**, prices of maize unseasonally declined in March due to reduced exports to Kenya, which imposed in early March a temporary ban on maize imports from Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, before replacing it, later in the month, with enhanced food safety standards to control mycotoxin levels. March prices were well below their year-earlier levels also due to the measures implemented to contain the spread of COVID-19, which constrained livelihood opportunities and resulted in declining purchasing power depressing domestic demand since early 2020. In **Kenya**, prices of maize remained firm in March despite the recent completion of the secondary "short-rains" harvest in southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural areas, as cereal production is estimated at 25 and 45 percent below average, respectively, due to unfavourable weather conditions. However, prices remained below or around their year-earlier values due to adequate domestic availabilities from the above-average "long-rains" main harvest, accounting for the bulk of the aggregate cereal production, which concluded in early 2021 and is estimated at 10-15 percent above average. Similarly, in **the United Republic of Tanzania**, prices of maize were stable in March and were below their levels one year earlier in most monitored markets. In **Somalia**, prices of maize unseasonally increased in February, while prices of sorghum remained firm despite the recent completion of the secondary "Deyr" harvest, as cereal production was estimated at below-average levels due to erratic rains and desert locust attacks. Prices were generally higher than one year earlier on account of a below-average 2020 cereal output.

Wholesale prices of sorghum and millet in the Sudan



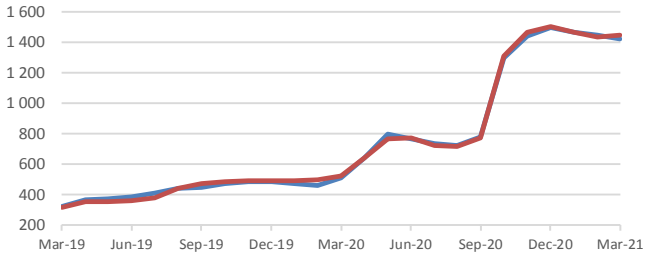
	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
El Gedarif, Sorghum (Feterita)	76 505.00	1.3	-5.5	120.6
El Obeid, Millet	138 600.00	5.5	2.9	156.1
El Gedarif, Millet	109 587.50	-3.1	1.0	134.4
El Obeid, Sorghum (Feterita)	87 120.00	2.2	8.2	138.6

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

For more information visit the FPMA website here

Retail prices of maize and sorghum in South Sudan

South Sudanese Pound per 3.5 kg

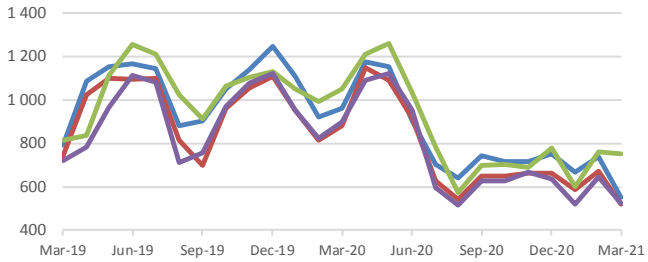


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Juba, Maize (white)	1 424.00	-1.7	-4.9	178.1
Juba, Sorghum (Feterita)	1 447.00	0.9	-3.6	177.2

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

Wholesale prices of maize in Uganda

Uganda Shilling per kg

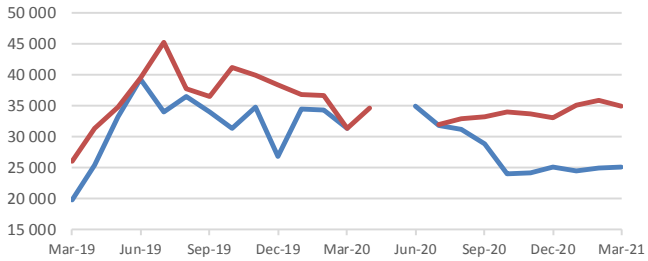


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Kampala, Maize	550.19	-25.6	-26.8	-42.7
Lira, Maize	520.23	-22.5	-21.4	-40.9
Kabale, Maize	750.33	-1.6	-3.7	-28.6
Masindi, Maize	522.58	-19.0	-17.8	-41.7

Source(s): Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network

Wholesale prices of maize in Kenya

Kenyan Shilling per tonne

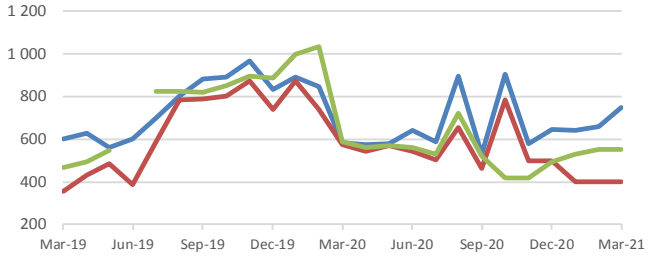


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Eldoret, Maize	25 188.00	0.7	0.2	-19.9
Nairobi, Maize	34 989.00	-2.6	5.7	11.5

Source(s): Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network

Wholesale prices of maize in the United Republic of Tanzania

Tanzanian Shilling per kg



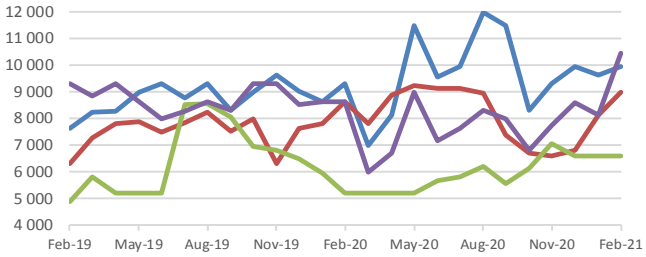
	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Dar es Salaam	750.03	14.0	16.0	29.1
Iringa	400.02	0.0	-19.8	-30.1
Arusha	550.02	0.1	11.5	-6.2

Source(s): Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network

For more information visit the FPMA website here

Retail prices of maize and sorghum in Somalia

Somali Shilling per kg



	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Mogadishu, Maize (white)	9 950.00	3.4	7.0	7.0
Marka, Maize (white)	8 992.00	10.3	36.2	4.0
Baidoa, Sorghum (red)	6 600.00	0.0	-6.4	26.9
Mogadishu, Sorghum (red)	10 467.00	28.4	35.1	21.0

Source(s): Food Security Analysis Unit

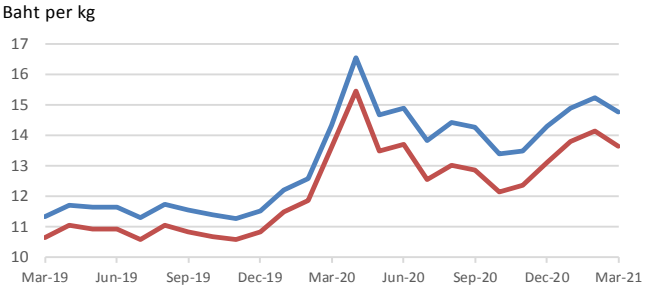
For more information visit the FPMA website here

Prices of rice decreased in the main exporters and were generally stable elsewhere, prices of wheat overall unchanged in March

Domestic prices of rice declined in the subregion's main exporters, mostly reflecting improved supplies from the new harvests, and were generally stable elsewhere across the subregion. However, prices remained well above their year-earlier levels after the recurrent increases throughout most of 2020 and early 2021. In **Viet Nam**, domestic rice prices declined for the second consecutive month in March reflecting improved supplies from the 2021 "winter/spring" harvest. Similarly, prices decreased in **Thailand**, with the onset of the 2020 secondary harvest and slow demand for the export market. However, prices remained 15 percent above their year-earlier levels following the steady increases between October 2020 and February 2021, in response to unfavourable prospects for the ongoing secondary crop. Prices were generally stable or decreased in some markets in **India**, reflecting the start of the 2021 secondary "Rabi" harvest, which follows the record 2020 main "Kharif" output. However, a large government procurement programme, targeting to purchase 61.5 million tonnes of rice (or about 33 percent of this year's production), limited the downward pressure. Prices of rice changed little in **China (mainland)** and **Cambodia**, amid adequate market availabilities from the 2020 harvests. Bumper 2021 harvests kept prices stable also in **Sri Lanka** and **the Philippines**. In **Bangladesh**, in Dhaka market, prices of rice held steady in March ahead of the 2021 main "Boro" harvest, forecast at a bumper level. Overall, prices remained well above their year-earlier levels after the continuous increases throughout 2020 reflecting tight market availabilities following stagnant production, limited imports and the surge in domestic demand related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In an effort to ease the prices of rice, the Government issued several tenders since mid-November 2020, reduced custom duties to encourage private sector imports and increased the quantities of open market sales.

As for wheat grain and wheat flour, prices remained generally stable. In **China (mainland)**, the subregion's main producer, prices of wheat held steady in March supported by steady demand for food consumption and from the feed industry. In **India**, prices of wheat were stable or decreased in some markets with the onset in early March of the "Rabi" wheat harvest, forecast at a record level. However, during this marketing season to start from April, the Government is targeting to purchase 42.7 million tonnes of wheat (or about 40 percent of this year's production), 10 percent more than last year and at a higher price year on year, which limited the seasonal decrease in prices associated with the start of the harvest. In **Pakistan**, prices of wheat grain generally increased reflecting seasonal patterns ahead of the 2021 harvest, estimated at an above-average level. By contrast, prices of wheat flour showed signs of softening, reflecting adequate market supplies from large imports. In wheat importing countries, prices remained stable in **Bangladesh**, while they decreased slightly in **Sri Lanka** reflecting adequate imports.

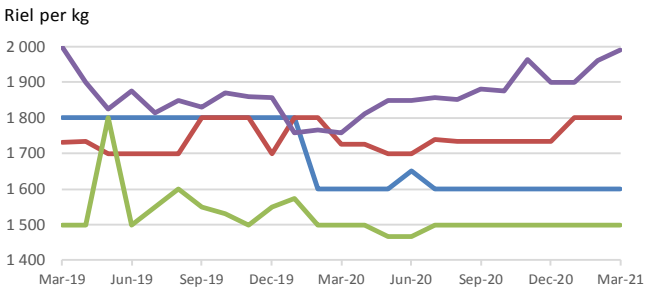
Wholesale prices of rice in Thailand



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Bangkok, Rice (5% broken)	14.76	-3.1	3.2	3.1
Bangkok, Rice (25% broken)	13.66	-3.4	4.0	0.3

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

Wholesale prices of rice in Cambodia



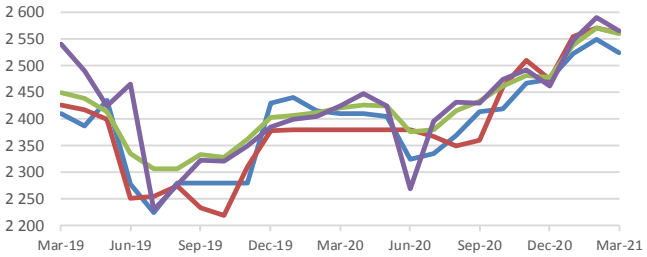
	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Phnom Penh, Rice (Mix)	1 600.00	0.0	0.0	0.0
Banteay Meanchey, Rice (Mix)	1 800.00	0.0	3.7	4.3
Battambang, Rice (Mix)	1 500.00	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kampong Chhnang, Rice (Mix)	1 990.00	1.4	4.7	13.3

Source(s): Cambodia Agricultural Market Information System

For more information visit the FPMA website here

Wholesale prices of wheat in China (mainland)

Yuan Renminbi per tonne

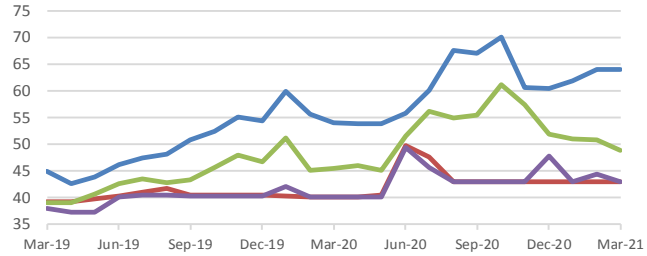


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Zhengzhou, Wheat	2 524.00	-1.0	2.0	4.7
Linyi, Wheat	2 561.20	-0.3	3.5	7.6
National Average, Wheat	2 559.60	-0.4	3.3	5.7
Sijiazhuang, Wheat	2 566.00	-0.9	4.2	5.8

Source(s): CnAgri - China Agriculture Consultant

Retail prices of wheat flour in Pakistan

Pakistan Rupee per kg

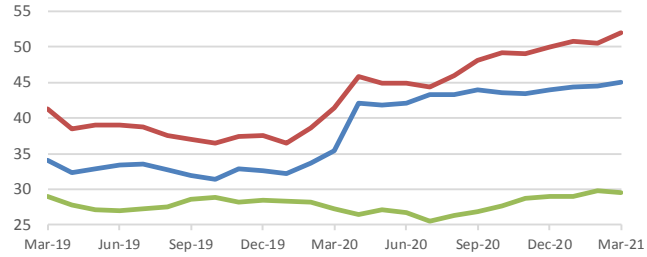


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Karachi, Wheat (flour)	64.02	0.0	5.8	18.2
Lahore, Wheat (flour)	43.00	0.0	0.0	6.8
Peshawar, Wheat (flour)	48.87	-4.0	-5.9	7.2
Multan, Wheat (flour)	43.00	-3.1	-10.0	6.8

Source(s): Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

Retail prices of rice and wheat flour in Bangladesh

Taka per kg

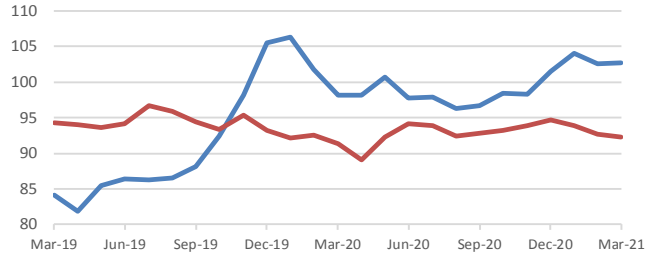


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Dhaka, Rice (coarse- BR-8/ 11/ Guti/ Sharna)	45.00	0.9	2.3	26.9
Dhaka, Rice (Medium)	52.00	2.9	3.9	25.7
Dhaka, Wheat (flour)	29.50	-1.0	1.7	8.4

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

Retail prices of rice and wheat flour in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka Rupee per kg



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Colombo, Rice (white)	102.71	0.1	1.2	4.6
Colombo, Wheat (flour)	92.33	-0.5	-2.5	1.0

Source(s): Department of Census and Statistics

For more information visit the FPMA website here

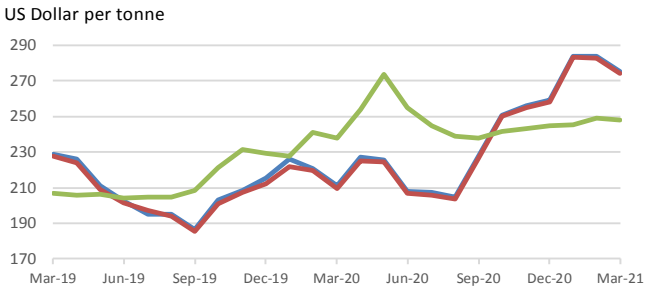
Export prices of wheat declined in March in the Russian Federation and Ukraine, while they remained stable in Kazakhstan

In the exporting countries of the subregion, export prices of milling wheat slightly declined in March in **the Russian Federation** and **Ukraine**, in line with trends in international markets. The downward price pressure was mainly due to weak demand from importing countries and improved production prospects for the 2021 winter wheat crop in the Black Sea region as well as in the United States of America and Europe. Prices, however, remained well above their levels one year earlier. In **Kazakhstan**, export prices remained overall stable in March due to moderate trade activity, at values slightly above those one year before. In the domestic markets, wholesale prices of milling wheat decreased in March in **the Russian Federation**, following the introduction of taxes on wheat exports aimed at halting the sustained upward trend of domestic prices in the past months (FPMA Food Policy) and in **Ukraine**. Prices remained above their year-earlier levels in both countries, particularly in Ukraine, due to the harvest of a smaller output in 2020. In **Kazakhstan**, domestic retail prices held steady or strengthened seasonally and were mostly above their values in March one year before.

In the importing countries of the subregion, prices of wheat flour were broadly above their year-earlier levels. In **Kyrgyzstan** and in **Tajikistan**, prices in March remained overall stable at year-on-year higher levels, following the steep increases recorded in April and May 2020 and supported by the depreciation of the local currencies over the last 12 months. Prices strengthened in **Armenia** and **Georgia**, in March, and in **Azerbaijan**, in February, following the introduction of taxes and a quota on wheat exports in the Russian Federation, the main wheat supplier to the three countries. Prices were above their year-earlier levels in all three countries reflecting higher Russian export quotations. In **Belarus**, prices remained stable in February at values around those one year before.

Regarding potatoes, another staple food in the subregion, prices remained virtually unchanged in **Kazakhstan** in March, at levels above those recorded 12 months earlier. Prices held steady at values below those one year before in **Armenia**, following the harvest of a year-on-year larger output, and in **Georgia**. By contrast, in **Kyrgyzstan**, prices of potatoes increased to levels well above those in March 2020 due to a reduced harvest. Prices increased seasonally in **the Russian Federation** and in **Tajikistan** in March to values above those one year earlier and increased in **Azerbaijan** and **Belarus** in February.

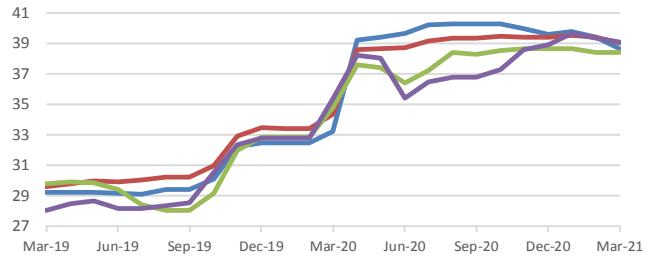
Export prices of milling wheat in CIS countries



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Russian Federation, Wheat (milling, offer, f.o.b., deep-sea ports)	275.25	-3.1	6.2	30.3
Ukraine, Wheat (milling, offer, f.o.b.)	274.25	-3.0	6.3	30.8
Kazakhstan, Wheat (milling, d.a.p. Saryagash station)	248.00	-0.5	1.2	4.3

Source(s): APK-Inform Agency

Retail prices of wheat flour in Kyrgyzstan

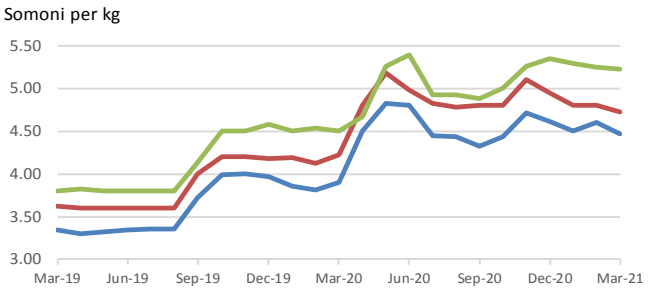


	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Bishkek, Wheat (flour, first grade)	38.67	-1.9	-2.4	16.3
National Average, Wheat (flour, first grade)	39.06	-0.9	-0.9	13.7
Batken, Wheat (flour, first grade)	38.41	0.0	-0.6	10.5
Jalal-Abad, Wheat (flour, first grade)	39.13	-0.6	0.6	10.7

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

For more information visit the FPMA website here

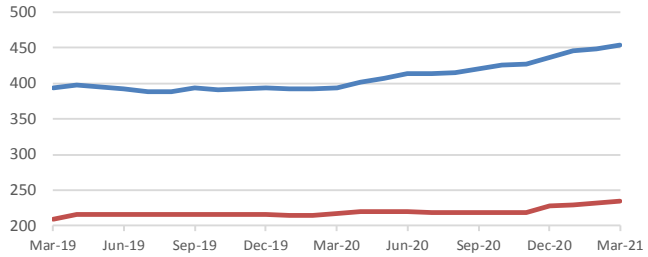
Retail prices of wheat flour in Tajikistan



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Khujand, Wheat (flour, first grade)	4.47	-2.8	-3.2	14.6
Kurgonteppa, Wheat (flour, first grade)	4.73	-1.5	-4.4	11.8
Khorugh, Wheat (flour, first grade)	5.23	-0.4	-2.2	16.2

Source(s): Statistical Agency under President of the Republic of Tajikistan

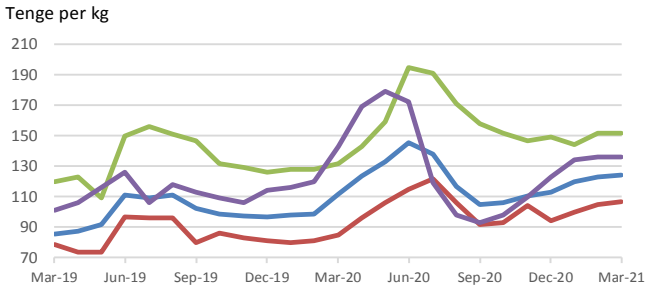
Retail prices of wheat flour in Armenia



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
National Average, Wheat (flour, high grade)	454.30	1.2	4.0	15.2
National Average, Wheat (flour, first grade)	234.60	0.9	3.1	8.1

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

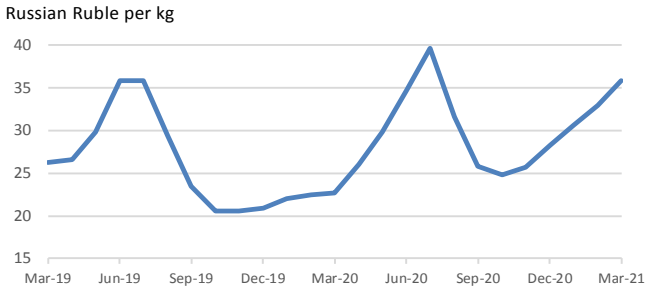
Retail prices of potatoes in Kazakhstan



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
National Average, Potatoes	124.00	0.8	9.6	10.7
Kostanay, Potatoes	107.00	1.9	13.8	25.9
Aktau, Potatoes	152.00	0.0	2.0	15.2
Almaty, Potatoes	136.00	0.0	10.6	-4.9

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

Retail prices of potatoes in the Russian Federation



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
National Average, Potatoes	35.81	8.6	26.9	58.1

Source(s): Federal State Statistics Service

For more information visit the FPMA website here

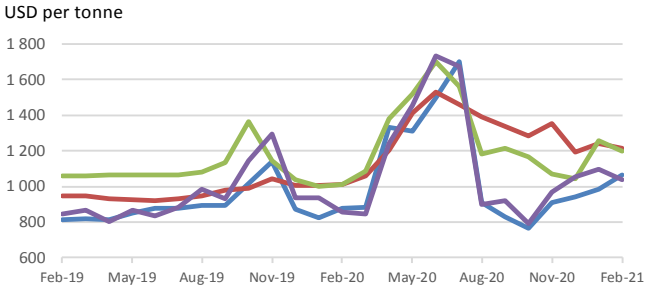
Prices of red beans declined seasonally but remained higher than a year earlier

In most countries of the subregion, prices of red beans generally declined in March with the 2020 third season harvest nearing completion but remained well above their year-earlier levels reflecting the adverse impact of two hurricanes in November on the second season crop. In **Nicaragua**, the major producer and exporter of red beans, prices declined for the second consecutive month in March as the ongoing "Apante" season harvest improved market availabilities. Similarly, in **El Salvador**, prices decreased following larger imports between December 2020 and February 2021 compared to the same period a year earlier. The weakening of prices of its major supplier, Nicaragua, exerted additional downward pressure. Prices also declined in **Honduras**, as increased supplies from the "Postrera tardía" season harvest eased the previous upward pressure caused by the November hurricanes. Regarding black beans, prices increased in **Guatemala** reflecting reduced market supplies in line with seasonal trends and prices were well above those a year earlier. In **Mexico**, prices of black beans were stable or strengthened despite the ongoing 2021 minor season harvest, reflecting concerns over crop yields, as dry weather conditions delayed the start of harvesting operations. The crops harvested as of February reportedly yielded less than their levels a year earlier. Overall, prices of beans in the subregion were on average 10 percent higher year on year.

Regarding maize, prices generally increased in March following seasonal trends in **El Salvador**, **Honduras** and **Nicaragua** and were about 10 percent lower year on year, reflecting the good 2020 harvests. Prices also increased in **Guatemala** for the second consecutive month, supported by high retail demand amid low market supplies. Similarly, prices continued to increase in most markets in **Mexico** despite the recently completed main season harvest, estimated at an average level, and were higher year on year on account of elevated production costs due to a weakening of the local currency during the cropping season.

In the Caribbean, retail prices of black and red beans weakened in **the Dominican Republic** with improved market supplies from the ongoing 2021 main season harvest, but prices were higher year on year due to the reduced 2020 harvest. Prices of rice strengthened seasonally, ahead of the main season harvest in April, which is expected to be similar to the high level of 2020. In **Haiti**, prices of maize meal and black beans were stable or increased in February, following the below average 2020 third season harvest. Prices of rice, mostly imported, held steady in the capital city market, reflecting the relatively stable local currency in February. Prices were more than 10 percent below their year-earlier levels, reflecting large imports in the last quarter of 2020 and the year-on-year stronger local currency. The ongoing civil unrest and insecurity have reportedly disrupted market activities, especially in the capital city, with negative effects on access to food.

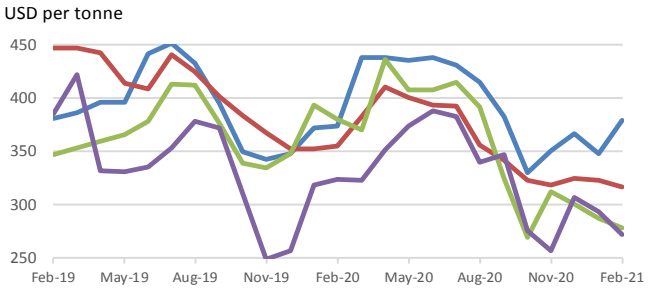
Wholesale prices of beans in Central America



	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Honduras, Tegucigalpa, Beans (red)	1 063.48	7.9	16.6	21.1
Guatemala, Guatemala City, Beans (black)	1 216.38	-2.0	-10.3	20.1
El Salvador, San Salvador, Beans (red)	1 197.68	-4.7	11.7	18.4
Nicaragua, Managua (oriental), Beans (red)	1 038.84	-5.3	7.1	20.9

Source(s): SIMPAH; Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación; Dirección General de Economía Agropecuaria, MAG

Wholesale prices of white maize in Central America



	Latest Price Feb-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Guatemala, Guatemala City, Maize (white)	379.50	9.2	8.2	1.5
El Salvador, San Salvador, Maize (white)	317.02	-1.9	-0.6	-10.8
Honduras, Tegucigalpa, Maize (white)	278.74	-2.9	-10.8	-26.6
Nicaragua, Managua (oriental), Maize (white)	272.36	-7.2	5.8	-15.9

Source(s): Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación; Dirección General de Economía Agropecuaria, MAG; SIMPAH

For more information visit the FPMA website here

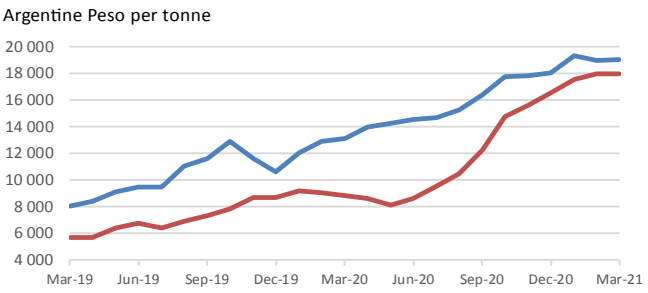
Prices of wheat and maize showed mixed trends and were higher year on year

Prices of wheat followed mixed trends in March. In **Argentina**, the major wheat producer of the subregion, prices were stable in March reflecting adequate market supplies from the 2020 harvest, completed in January. However, prices remained nearly 45 percent higher than one year earlier due to the year-on-year reduced output estimated in 2020 because of dry weather conditions in centrenorth producing regions. Similarly, in **Brazil**, following increases in the last two months, prices stabilized in March as sluggish demand offset lower market supplies. However, prices remained higher year on year on account of the weaker local currency and the low level of imports between September 2020 and February 2021 compared to the same period one year earlier. In **Uruguay**, prices continued to increase and reached all-time highs, supported by strong export demand of the 2020 crops recently harvested. Export sales of wheat grain between October 2020 and January 2021 were nearly double the previous five-year average. In **Chile** and **Peru**, prices strengthened in March, mainly reflecting higher import costs due to the increase in international prices of the grain. In other importing countries, **Colombia** and **Ecuador**, prices held steady and were generally around their year-earlier levels.

Regarding maize, prices remained higher year on year in most countries of the subregion. In **Brazil**, prices continued to increase in March and were underpinned by concerns over the impact of the late sowings and the dry conditions forecast in the second quarter of 2021 on the main crop yields. Prices were well above their year-earlier levels and are expected to remain high until the start of the main season harvest in July. Prices also strengthened in **Colombia** despite the ongoing 2021 first season harvest, forecast to be down from the previous year's output due to a contraction in plantings. By contrast, in **Argentina**, after the sustained increases since June 2020, prices were stable in March, as downward pressure from the start of the 2021 harvest offset the strong export demand. While the 2021 production is expected at a well above-average level due to the near-record planted area, prices were nearly twice their values one year earlier in nominal terms, mainly reflecting trends in the international market and sustained demand. In **Uruguay**, prices weakened in March with the start of the 2021 harvest but remained about 25 percent higher than one year earlier. The high price level reflects the reduced imports in the second half of 2020 and concerns over the impact of dry weather conditions in the last quarter of 2020 on crop yields. Similarly, in **Peru**, prices declined for the first time in seven months, as the ongoing 2021 minor season harvest and the weak demand from the domestic feed industry exerted downward pressure. In **Ecuador**, prices of yellow maize kept stable in March and were on average about 15 percent above their levels one year earlier. In **Chile**, prices were more than 30 percent higher year on year reflecting the reduced output of the ongoing harvest as well as the high prices of imported maize.

Regarding rice, in **Brazil**, prices strengthened in March despite the ongoing harvest, as the downward pressure from the harvest was more than offset by the strong demand from the milling industry and the slow sales by farmers. Prices were well above their values one year earlier following sustained increases in the previous months, which resulted from the strong domestic and foreign demand. In **Uruguay**, prices also increased unseasonally due to the strong export demand and were about 15 percent higher year on year. Prices strengthened or were stable in **Ecuador** ahead of the start of the 2021 main season harvest in April. By contrast, prices continued to decrease in **Colombia** and were on average 20 percent below their levels in March last year reflecting ample carryover stocks from the good 2020 harvests.

Wholesale prices of cereals in Argentina



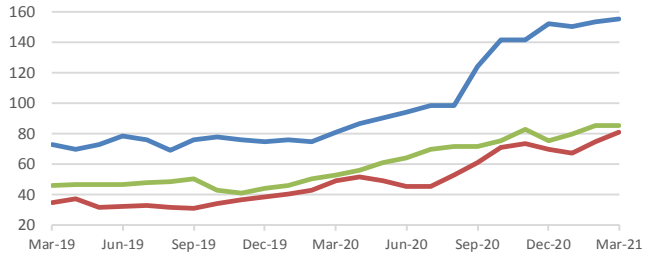
	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Buenos Aires, Wheat	19 043.22	0.3	5.5	44.8
Rosario, Maize (yellow)	17 988.09	0.0	8.5	103.6

Source(s): Bolsa de Cereales

For more information visit the FPMA website here

Wholesale prices of cereals in Brazil

Brazilian Real per 30 kg



	Latest Price Mar-21	Percent Change 1M	3M	1Y
Rio Grande do Sul, Rice (milled, fine long-grain, type 1)	155.60	1.2	2.0	91.7
Mato Grosso, Maize (yellow)	81.00	8.4	15.6	64.9
Rio Grande do Sul, Wheat	85.64	0.3	13.7	61.4

Source(s): Companhia Nacional de Abastecimento (Conab)

For more information visit the FPMA website here

This bulletin was 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 Markets and Trade 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 2021, collected from various sources.

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

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

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