

# Market Monitor Report

MAF | GDS | WFP VAM | Food Security Analysis

## Timor-Leste | Week 9/10 2021 ( 1st - 12th March)

### Highlights

- In general, the price of rice has been on an upward trend in the last six months, however, the current confinement rules may likely cause some lag in the supply chain and further increase prices.
- **Cereals:** Local rice prices increased by around 10 percent compared to this same time last month, while imported rice increased by around 3 percent over the same period. Maize grain prices remained relatively low over the six-month period.
- **Non-Cereal Foods:** Compared to the first two weeks of February 2021, prices of sweet potatoes, potatoes, whole frozen chicken, tomatoes and onion increased; decreased for Taro, and subdued for beans, eggs, and cooking oil.
- Retailers, especially in Bobonaro, Covalima, and Dili expressed concern over the relatively low stock levels of both imported and local products, as the situation likely to have an impact on price levels in the coming weeks .

### Retail price trend of cereals

The nominal prices of imported rice continued an upward trend in the first two weeks of March 2021. Prices ranged from 0.54 USD/kg to 0.79 USD/kg, with an average increase of around 3 percent compared to this same time last month. Over the six-month period, imported rice has increased by around 15 percent. (Figure 1)

Similarly, local rice price ranged from 1 USD to 4 USD, an average increase of around 10 percent compared to this same time last month. Over the six-month period, local rice has increased by more than 30 percent.

At the municipality level, high prices were observed in Covalima, Bobonaro and Ainaro for imported rice (Map 1); Viqueque for local rice (Map 2).

The high prices are partly due to, firstly, the constraints experienced in bringing commodities from the source markets, as the confinement rules require prior authorisation for suppliers to move from one municipality to the other.

Fig. 1: Price trend of imported rice

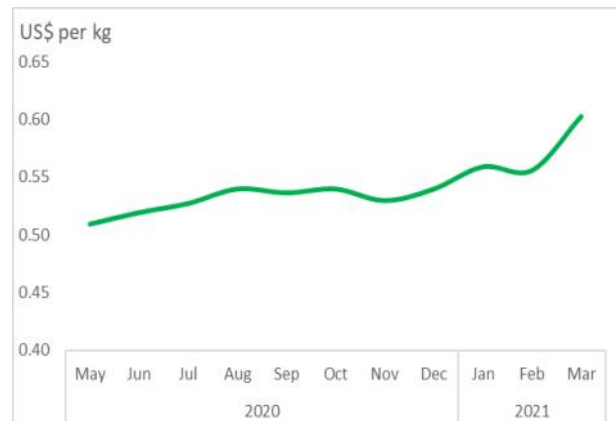
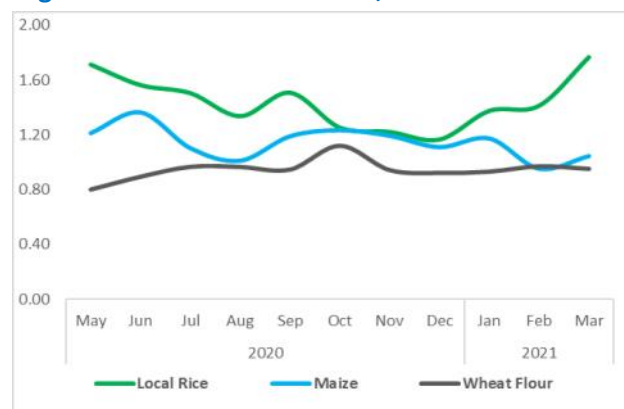


Fig. 2: Price trend of local rice, maize and wheat



Secondly, partly due to imported inflation as the FAO Rice Price Index (2014-2016=100) rose for the third successive month in February 2021, to reach 116.0 points, up 1.5 percent from January and 11.4 percent from a year earlier. More importantly, the Thai and Vietnamese rice, key imported commodity to Timor-Leste, remained at an upward curve due to limited supplies.

Maize grain price also experienced an uptick in the last four weeks but remained lower over the 3-month and 6-month period. On the contrary, wheat prices decreased over the reference period .

Map. 1. Average price of Imported rice (US\$ per kg)



Map. 2: Average price of local rice

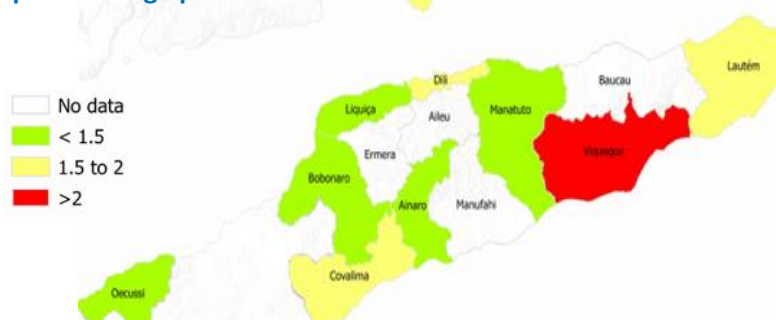


Table. 1: Price trend for non-cereals

	Latest Price	Percent Change from previous period (%)		
	Mar (Wk1-Wk2)	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months
Sweet Potato	1.13	↑ 9	↑ 8	↑ 13
Potato	1.38	↑ 15	↑ 8	↑ 3
Taro	0.86	↓ -34	↓ -8	↑ 1
Beans	2.26	↓ -2	↑ 3	↑ 11
Egg	0.21	↑ 2	↑ 7	↑ 26
Chicken	3.12	↑ 4	↓ 0	↑ 3
Tomato	1.66	↑ 11	↑ 37	↑ 17
Onion	2.41	↑ 101	↑ 3	↑ 11
Cooking Oil	1.21	↑ 1	↑ 11	↑ 12
Chili	3.57	↓ -10	↑ 22	↑ 14
Sugar	0.96	↓ -1	↑ 2	↑ 1
Salt	0.61	↑ 6	↑ 9	↑ 8

### Retail price trend of non-cereals

Compared to this same time last month, notable increase in retail prices were observed for sweet potatoes (1.13 USD/kg), potatoes (1.38 USD/kg), whole frozen chicken (3.12 USD/kg), tomatoes (1.66 US\$) and onions (2.41 USD/kg); while decreases were observed for taro (0.86 USD/kg). The retail price of beans (2.26 USD/kg), eggs (0.21 USD/kg) and cooking oil (1.21 USD/kg) were subdued ( Table 1).



Openmarket-Aileu



Maize field-Covalima



Openmarket-Covalima



Price monitoring-Dili

**Methodology :** To monitor the impact of COVID-19 on market prices, WFP in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and the General Directorate of Statistics collect food price data on a weekly basis across the country's main markets from 11 municipalities (Ainaro, Aileu, Bobonaro, Dili, Ermera, Lautem, Liquica, Manatuto, Viqueque, Covalima and Oecusse). On average, around 6 traders per market are surveyed, targeted food commodities weighed, and its price averaged per kilogram. Imported rice price are based on the most consumed brand per retailers.