

Market Monitor Report

MAF | GDS | WFP VAM | Food Security Analysis

Timor-Leste | Week 15/16 2021 (12th - 25th April)

Highlights

- Imported rice price hikes slowed down during the week of 15 and 16 of April 2021, but continues to remain relatively high. This could signal the beginning of a switch to rely on locally produced rice as harvesting is underway.
- Decrease in the nominal price of local rice after an uptick in early April as farmers turn to consume from own production. However, production losses due to floods is likely to tighten supply in the coming months.
- A downward trend continues to be observed for maize grain prices as the harvest season progresses while white flour prices level off.
- **Oecusse:** Irregular shipment schedule from Dili to the region of Oecusse, due to COVID-19 restrictions, continue to impact on price and stock levels for the imported commodities.
- Concerns remain that the current observed slow-down in grain prices, though remaining elevated, may be short-lived, unless there is significant market intervention due to the impending tight supply emanating from the impact of the floods on local production.

Retail price trend of cereals

Nominal price of local rice decreased on the local market, averaging 1.32 US\$ per kilogram, as observed in week 15 and 16 of April 2021. At the current price level, it is 5 percent lower than previous week but still 13 percent higher than 6 months ago. Across the monitored markets, prices ranged from 0.98 US\$ to 1.54 US\$ per kilogram, with lowest prices observed in Ainaro and highest prices observed in the capital Dili (Map 1)

During the week under-review, imported rice was sold at a national average of 0.58 US\$ per kilogram, almost the same as the first week of April. However, the current price is 14 percent higher than the same time last year.

Fig. 1: Price trend of local rice

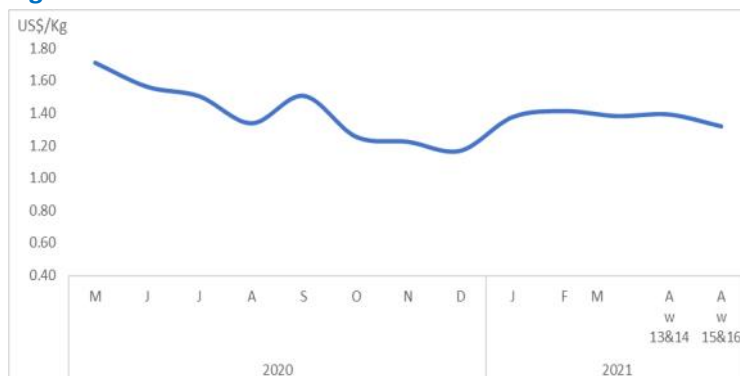
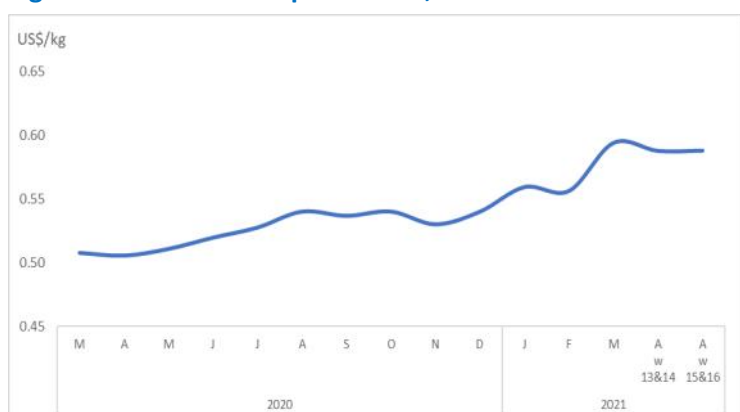


Fig. 2: Price trend of imported rice,



The nominal prices ranged from 0.55 US\$ to 0.65 US\$ per kilogram, with lowest prices observed in Ermera and highest prices in Bobonaro (Map 2).

The nominal price of maize grain has continued to fall since end of February, as the harvest season continues. The current price, at 0.87 US\$ per kilogram, fell by 6 percent compared to same time last month and further drop by nearly 30 percent compared to 6 months ago. The price of wheat flour continues to average around 0.95 US\$ for the last 10 weeks.

Looking ahead, the direction and magnitude of grain prices in the coming months will partly depend on the level of market intervention and food assistance programs from government and partners as they respond to the impact of floods and COVID-19 pandemic.

Retail price trend of non-cereals

On the back of on-going harvests, the last two weeks of April have also seen a decrease in sweet potatoes, potatoes, taro, and beans compared to the early April. Decreases were also observed for tomatoes, onions, and chillies. (Table 1).

Map. 1. Average price of local rice (US\$/kg)



Map. 2: Average price of imported rice (US\$/kg)



Table. 1: Price trend for non-cereals

	Current Price	% Change from previous period			
	Apr (wk 15&16)	2 Weeks	3 Months	6 Months	
Sweet Potato	1.06 ↓	-11 ↑	11 ↓	-27 ↓	
Potato	1.27 ↓	-7 ↓	0 ↓	0 ↑	
Taro	0.91 ↓	0 ↓	-2 ↓	-35 ↓	
Beans	2.41 ↓	-4 ↑	7 ↑	15 ↑	
Egg	0.21 ↓	-1 ↓	0 ↓	3 ↑	
Chicken	3.39 ↑	3 ↑	12 ↑	9 ↑	
Tomato	1.63 ↓	-7 ↑	0 ↑	49 ↑	
Onion	2.85 ↓	-6 ↑	28 ↑	30 ↑	
Cooking Oil	1.22 ↑	3 ↑	3 ↑	12 ↑	
Chili	3.75 ↓	-9 ↑	10 ↑	21 ↑	
Sugar	0.95 ↑	0 ↑	0 ↑	-1 ↓	
Salt	0.65 ↑	7 ↓	-9 ↓	5 ↑	



Flooded rice field-Oecusse



Flooded rice field-Oecusse



Flooded rice field-Oecusse



Open market-Aileu

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.