

Market Monitor Report

MAF | GDS | WFP VAM | Food Security Analysis

Timor-Leste | Week 13/14 2021 (29th March - 11th April)

Highlights

- An uptick in the price of local rice in the first week of April, atypical for this time of the year, is likely due to devastating floods that have left significant 'near-harvest' rice fields destroyed and rendered supply routes impassable.
- Imported rice price showed a marginal increase in the week after the floods compared to the weeks just before the floods and remains significantly above year-earlier levels.
- Maize grain prices continued to decrease seasonally at the start of the 2021/2022 consumption season; however, the impact of the recent floods on the harvested and 'near-harvest' crop fields remain a threat.
- **Oecusse:** The COVID-19 restrictions coupled with the recent flooding in Dili (local transshipment hub) continues impact on rice stock levels due to irregular shipment.

Retail price trend of cereals

The month of April is normally the start of the downward trend in cereal prices as start to harvest and produce locally for consumption. However, in the first week of April, local rice increased by 7 percent compared to the previous two weeks, likely due to the devastating floods that have left 'near-harvest' rice fields destroyed and rendered supply routes impassable. At the national average of 1.39 US\$/kg, the current price is almost the same as three months ago and 4 percent higher over the six-month period. At municipal level, relatively high prices were observed in Covalima (Map 1).

Imported rice marginally increased over the reference period, national average was observed at 0.59 US\$/kg. The current price is almost 10 percent higher than six months ago and a further 20 percent higher than year-earlier levels .

Fig. 1: Price trend of local rice

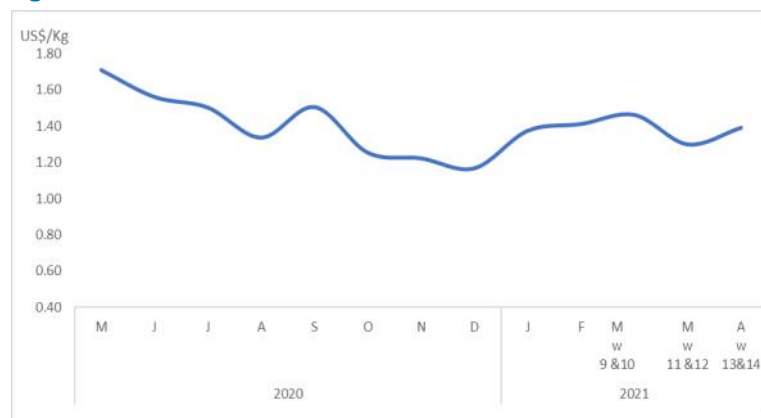
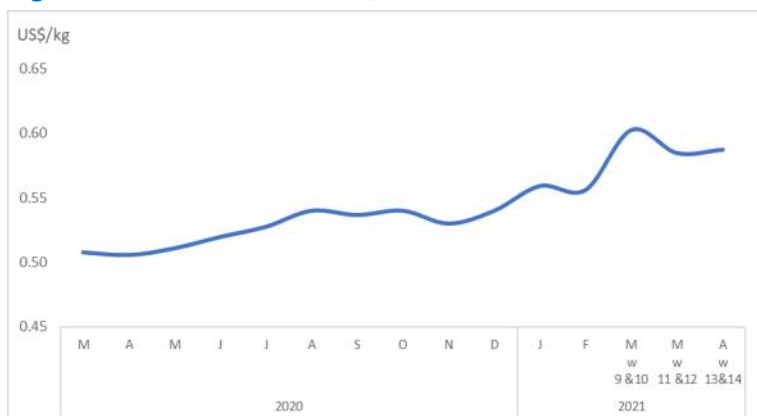


Fig. 2: Price trend of local rice,



Principally, the elevated prices of imported rice emanate from the supply chain constraints in the face of confinement rules as well as through imported inflation. As the latest FAO All Rice Price Index (2014-2016=100) average 113.9 points in March 2021, though down by 1.8 percent from the previous month, but its 7.1 percent above its value a year earlier.

In contrast, maize grain prices continued the downward trend, decreasing by 6 percent compared to the previous two weeks and a further drop of around 25 percent compared to six months ago. However, earlier production estimates are likely to be scaled down in the wake of floods which will likely tighten supply. While the price of wheat continues to remain relatively stable.

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



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



Retail price trend of non-cereals

Compared to the previous two weeks, price increases were observed for all monitored commodities except cooking oil, sugar, and salt that had decreases (Table 1).

Table. 1: Price trend for non-cereals

	Current Price	% Change from previous period			
	Apr (wk 13&14)	2 Weeks	3 Months	6 Months	
Sweet Potato	1.19	↑ 14	↓ 0	↑ 7	
Potato	1.37	↑ 4	↓ -3	↑ 16	
Taro	0.91	↑ 7	↓ -15	↓ -7	
Beans	2.52	↑ 11	↑ 19	↑ 16	
Egg	0.21	↑ 8	↑ 20	↑ 8	
Chicken	3.30	↑ 6	↑ 7	↑ 8	
Tomato	1.75	↑ 7	↓ -17	↑ 50	
Onion	3.04	↑ 2	↑ 38	↑ 31	
Cooking Oil	1.18	↓ -19	↑ 3	↑ 9	
Chili	4.11	↑ 6	↑ 9	↑ 35	
Sugar	0.95	↓ -2	↓ -12	↓ -2	
Salt	0.61	↓ -9	↓ 0	↑ 10	



Flooded rice field-Oecusse



Flooded rice field-Oecusse



Flooded rice field-Oecusse



Flooded maize field-Oecusse

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.