

The Monthly Maize Market Report was developed by researchers at IFPRI Malawi with the goal of providing clear and accurate information on the variation of maize prices in selected markets throughout Malawi. The reports are intended as a resource for those interested in maize markets in Malawi, namely producers, traders, consumers, policy makers, and other agricultural stakeholders.

Highlights

- Retail prices of maize increased by 24 percent in February 2023.
- ADMARC sales were reported in 9 out of 26 markets monitored by IFPRI.
- No ADMARC purchases were reported in any of the markets monitored by IFPRI.
- Retail maize prices in Malawi were higher than in Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia, and South Africa.

Prices increased by 24 percent in February

Retail maize prices averaged at MWK 632/kg by the end of February 2023, 24 percent higher than January 2023 (Figure 1, 3 and Table 1) and 236 percent higher than February 2022. The highest average retail price (MWK 700/kg) was reported in Chiringa, Mpondabwino and Mbayani markets and the lowest price (MWK 531/kg) was reported in Mzimba market.

Rumphi market recorded the highest increase in average retail maize prices (44 percent) between the end of January 2023 and end of February 2023.

Figure 1 shows a trend in prices in the past 12 months ending in February 2023, and, for comparison, over the past 12 months ending in February 2022. At the beginning of May, we start reporting prices of newly harvested maize, which has a higher moisture content than maize from the previous harvest. High moisture content makes it unsuitable for storage or milling. During drying, it loses about 20 percent of its weight. Solid and dashed lines in Figure 1 represent observed maize prices. Dotted lines represent prices adjusted for moisture content and thus the true price trend.

Prices remain highest in the South

The average retail price of maize remains highest in the southern region. In the month of February, the average retail price of maize was MWK 646/kg in the South, 8 percent, and 24 percent higher than in the Center (MWK 600/kg) and the North (MWK 519/kg) respectively (Figure 2 and 3). Most maize traders reported scarcity of maize within their locality as the main reason for increasing prices.

Figure 1. Long-run trends in average maize retail prices

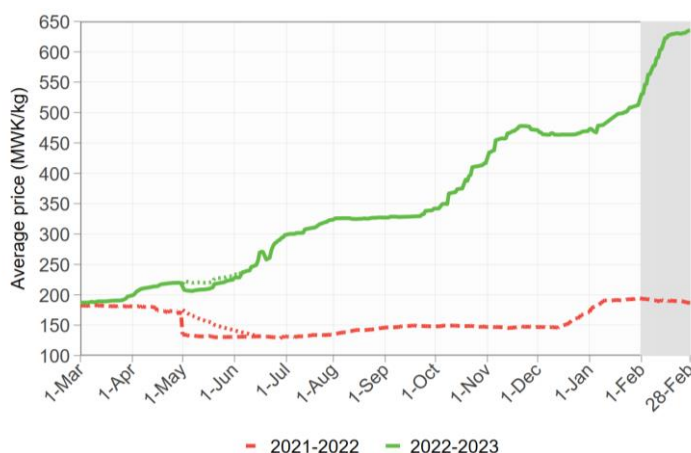


Figure 2. Average daily maize retail prices by region

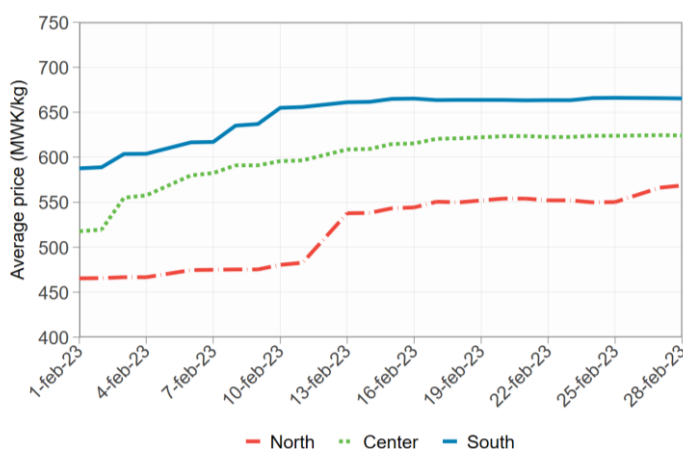
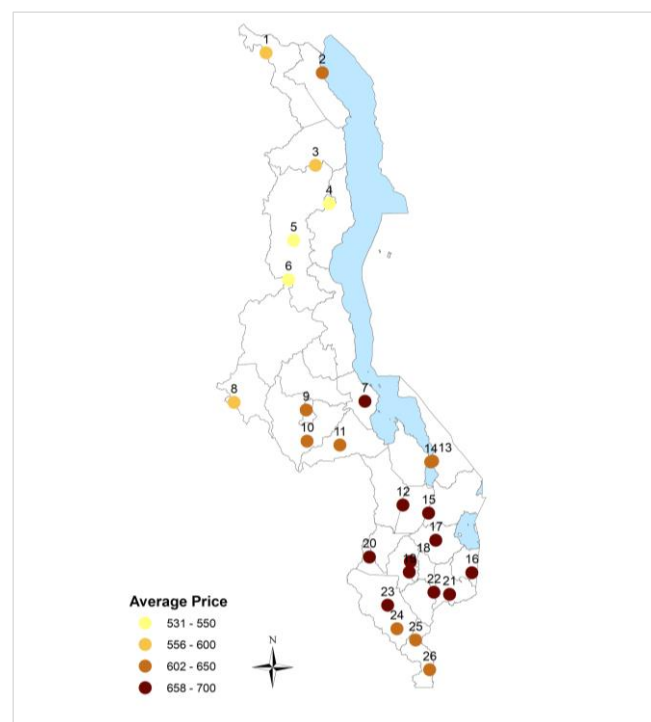


Table 1. Weekly average maize retail prices (MWK/kg) market

	Week ending on					Change
	28-Jan-23	7-Feb-23	14-Feb-23	21-Feb-23	28-Feb-23	
Chitipa ¹	507	498	546	568	556	📈 10%
Karonga ²	495	503	531	588	596	📈 20%
Rumphi ³	408	448	450	537	586	📈 44%
Mzuzu ⁴	449	450	492	536	533	📈 19%
Mzimba ⁵	450	456	464	518	531	📈 18%
Jenda ⁶	440	461	518	552	538	📈 22%
Salima ⁷	538	577	640	645	643	📈 20%
Mchinji ⁸	472	522	559	580	575	📈 22%
Nsungwi ⁹	486	569	612	637	640	📈 32%
Mitundu ¹⁰	485	544	587	600	617	📈 27%
Chimbiya ¹¹	477	561	598	638	643	📈 35%
Balaka ¹²	506	602	690	639	659	📈 30%
M'baluku ¹³	545	618	639	640	640	📈 18%
Mangochi ¹⁴	488	593	603	607	607	📈 24%
Liwonde ¹⁵	540	648	678	659	659	📈 22%
Chiringa ¹⁶	555	594	644	682	700	📈 26%
Mpondabwino ¹⁷	577	627	698	700	700	📈 21%
Lunzu ¹⁸	534	567	663	657	660	📈 24%
Mbayani ¹⁹	553	615	668	696	700	📈 27%
Mwanza ²⁰	494	568	658	699	695	📈 41%
Mulanje ²¹	550	603	639	700	700	📈 27%
Luchenza ²²	533	605	663	668	670	📈 26%
Chikwawa ²³	520	606	600	696	684	📈 32%
Ngabu ²⁴	540	600	608	613	630	📈 16%
Bangula ²⁵	531	612	669	670	635	📈 20%
Nsanje ²⁶	570	601	660	634	638	📈 12%
All markets	509	563	607	629	632	📈 24%

Figure 3. Location of markets



Note: The number on the map corresponds to a market in Table 1

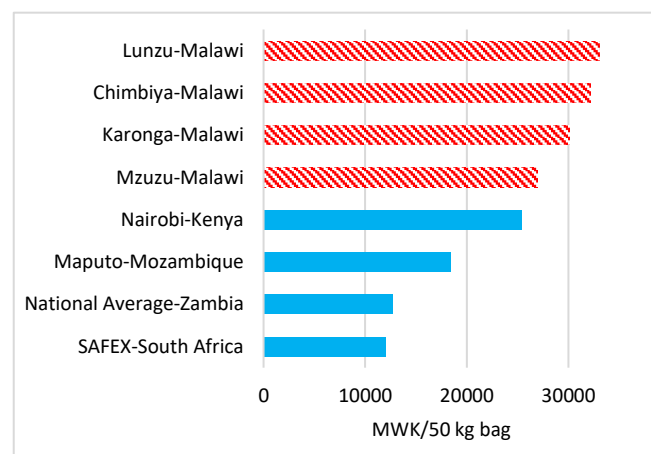
Regional prices

At regional level, the retail prices of maize in selected markets in Malawi, were higher than in Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia, and South Africa (Figure 4). Relative scarcity and high prices in Malawi are attracting maize from abroad, with some traders in the South and the Center reporting receiving informal imports from Mozambique and Zambia.

ADMARC Activities

ADMARC sales were reported for at least one day in 9 out of the 26 markets monitored by IFPRI (Chitipa, Chimbiya, Jenda, Karonga, Mchinji, Mpondabwino, Mzimba, Ngabu and Rumphi).

Figure 4. Regional comparison (January 2023)



Note: Price for Maputo-Mozambique is as of January 2023

How data was collected

IFPRI Malawi has been monitoring retail maize prices and ADMARC activities in selected markets since October 2016. Currently, data is collected from 26 markets across the country, with monitoring occurring six days per week, excluding Sundays. At least three monitors report data from each of these markets. Data is collected by means of phone calls to the monitors. Regional prices reported in Figure 4 are sourced from Food and Agriculture Organization’s Global Information and Early Warning System (FAO-GIEWS), IFPRI Malawi, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), and the Kenya Agricultural Management Information System (KAMIS).



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