



The Food Price Monitor: Kenya is a monthly report developed for the Food Security Portal (FSP), facilitated by IFPRI, with the goal of providing clear and accurate information on commodity price trends and variations in selected markets throughout Kenya. The reports are intended as a resource for those interested in agricultural commodity markets in Kenya, namely producers, traders, consumers, or other agricultural stakeholders.

Highlights

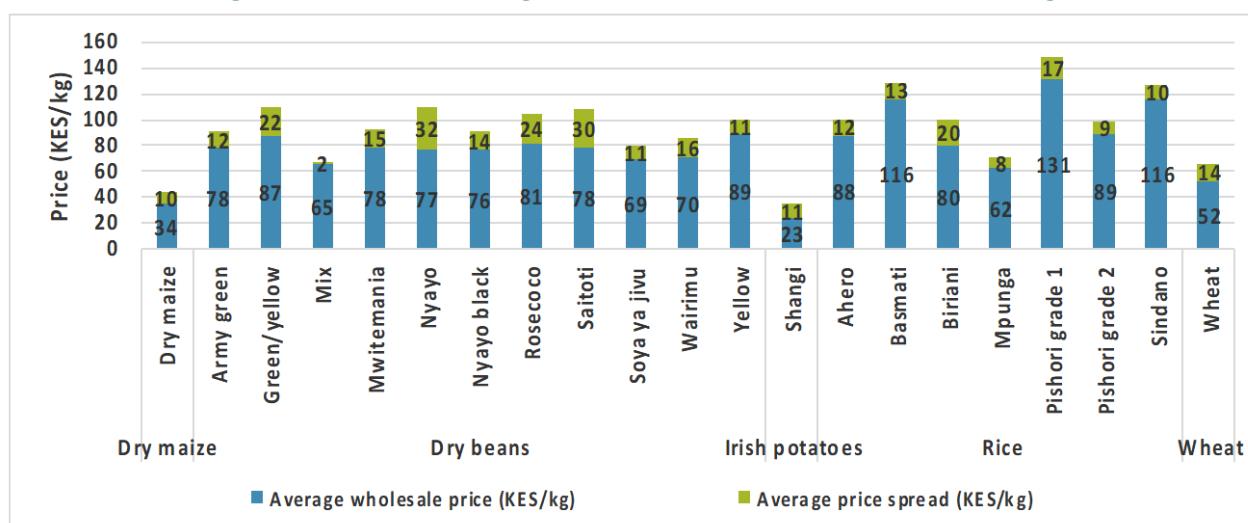
- ▶ In October, the prices of selected commodities varied by region. Variations were driven by demand, seasonality, varieties, and overall availability in the surveyed markets.
- ▶ The month of October coincides with start of the maize harvesting season in Kenya's major producing zones. The price of dry maize is thus expected to decline significantly until around February 2022. However, prices may be higher than normal, as Kenya continues to experience failed rains throughout most of the country. This decline in precipitation is likely to affect production.
- ▶ Overall, most commodities across the selected regions recorded stable prices. This is attributable to seasonality. Since most producing regions are in the harvesting periods, there is a surplus of commodities even in populous cities.

Overall Wholesale and Retail Prices for October

Figure 1 shows wholesale and retail prices, averaged across selected markets in Kenya for the month of October. Most commodities recorded moderate price margins of between 10% and 29%; these included most dry beans, dry maize (29%), all varieties of rice, and dry wheat (27%). While mixed beans (3%) and Sindano rice (9%) recorded

price margins of below 10%, these commodities were not commonly found in all selected regions. Notably, some commodities did record price margins of between 30% and 48%. These included *Nyayo* beans (42%), *Rosecoco* beans (30%), *Saitoti* beans (38%), and *Shangi* Irish potatoes (48%). Most of these commodities also recorded higher price margins in September; this can be attributed largely to increased fuel costs, which subsequently drove up the cost of food, transport, and production.

Figure 1: Overall average wholesale and retail prices (KES/Kg)



Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of October

Commodity prices varied regionally (Table 1-1). Compared to the national¹ average for October (KES 87/kg), wholesale prices of green/yellow beans were higher in Nairobi (90 KES/kg) and Nyeri (97KES/kg). Similarly, average retail prices were higher in Kisumu (131 KES/kg), Nairobi (118 KES/kg), and Nyeri (131 KES/kg) than the national average of 109 KES/kg. Most dry beans recorded lower wholesale prices in most selected regions apart from Nairobi, which recorded higher retail prices for green/yellow, *Mwitmania*, *Nyayo*, and *Rosecoco* bean varieties. Kisumu and Nairobi also recorded higher retail prices for most dry bean varieties, including green/yellow, *Mwitmania*, *Nyayo*, *Rosecoco* and *Wairimu*. Notably, all regions recorded lower wholesale prices for *Rosecoco* beans compared to the government recommended price of 93KES/kg. This can be attributed to seasonality; most producing areas in the Central and Rift Valley regions harvested in August and September, and thus market prices were lower in October due to surplus beans in markets.

Dry maize recorded slightly higher wholesale prices in Kisumu (36KES/kg), Nairobi (36KES/kg), and Nyeri (38KES/kg) compared to the national average wholesale price of 34KES/kg. Retail prices for dry maize were higher in Kisumu (49KES/kg), Nairobi (50KES/kg), and Nyeri (51KES/kg) compared to the overall average retail price (44KES/kg). Apart from Eldoret and Nakuru, all regions

recorded higher retail prices of dry maize compared to the government recommended price of 33KES/kg. These two regions are not only the major maize producing zones but are also surrounded by areas within the “breadbasket”² of the country. In addition, October marked the start of the maize harvesting period (October to January).

Irish potatoes were still in season in October, leading to stable supply and lower prices across most regions. The exceptions were Nairobi and Mombasa, which recorded higher wholesale (36 KES/kg and 25 KES/kg) and retail (65KES/kg and 35 KES/kg) prices compared to the national averages (23KES/kg wholesale and 34KES/kg retail). The higher prices in Nairobi and Mombasa can be attributed to increased fuel prices, involvement of many middlemen, and higher demand for the commodity, as these are Kenya’s major urban centers. As populous cities with limited agricultural activities, Nairobi and Mombasa are net importers of food items from surplus regions across the country. Further, all regions showed lower prices for Irish potatoes compared to the government recommended price of 50KES/kg. Again, the exception was Nairobi, where Irish potatoes retailed at 65KES/kg.

Several rice varieties were traded across the country, but Pishori³ rice was common to all regions. Compared to the national wholesale average price of 131 KES/kg, Pishori grade 1 rice recorded higher wholesale prices in most regions, including Eldoret (150 KES/kg), Mombasa (135 KES/kg), Nairobi (144 KES/kg), and Nyeri (152KES/kg). Similarly, the same regions recorded higher retail prices compared to the national retail average price of 148

¹ Prices from the six regions combined; Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kisumu, and Nyeri

² Implies the main food producing region of the country. In Kenya, food security is equated to the availability and affordability of dry maize.

³ Kenya’s version of Basmati rice

KES/kg. However, all rice varieties across all regions recorded lower prices than the government recommended price for Basmati rice of 170KES/kg.

Dry wheat saw higher wholesale prices in Kisumu (56 KES/kg), Mombasa (55 KES/kg), and Nairobi (59 KES/kg), as well as slightly higher retail prices in Eldoret (70 KES/kg), Kisumu (70 KES/kg), Nyeri (70KES/kg), and Nairobi (80

KES/kg), compared to the national average wholesale and retail prices of 52 KES/kg and 66 KES/kg, respectively. Notably, all regions recorded higher dry wheat prices compared to the government recommended price of 36KES/kg. As major producing regions harvest wheat in September, the high prices seen in October can be attributed to increases in fuel prices and involvement of middlemen.

Table 1: Average wholesale and retail prices (kes/kg) by region for October

Product	Variety	Average wholesale price (KES/kg)						Average retail price (KES/kg)						Total average wholesale price	Total average retail price
		Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri	Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri		
Dry beans	Army green			78						90				78	90
	Green/yellow	89	84	82	90	78	97	100	131	90	118	84	131	87	109
	Mix						65						67	65	67
	Mwitemania			82	88	65	77			90	120	71	92	78	93
	Nyayo		70	76	85				120	90	116			77	109
	Nyayo black			76						90				76	90
	Rosecoco	89	80		86	75	77	100	125		116	90	94	81	105
	Saitoti		75	80					127	90				78	108
	Soya ya jivu			69							80			69	80
	Wairimu	78	69	69	68	62	72	85	100	80	96	67	86	70	86
	Yellow	89						100					89	100	
Dry maize	Dry maize	31	36	33	36	31	38	39	49	40	50	35	51	34	44
Irish potatoes	Shangi	12	20	25	45	20	17	15	34	35	65	32	25	23	34
Rice	Ahero		88						100					88	100
	Basmati	112		108	120	116	128	120		120	130	130	147	116	129
	Biriani			80						100				80	100
	Mpunga			62						70				62	70
	Pishori grade 1	150		135	144	80	149	152		160	160	100	169	131	148
	Pishori grade 2	94	96			76		95	120			80		89	98
	Sindano	124		110		118	111	125		120		131	127	116	126
Wheat	Wheat	50	56	55	59	42	51	70	70	60	80	48	70	52	66

Wholesale and Retail Price Trends by Region

Disparities in weekly prices were seen across regions between week 1 and weeks 2 through 5. In Eldoret, all dry beans varieties, all rice varieties, and dry wheat showed stable wholesale and retail prices. On the other hand, dry maize and *Shangi* Irish potatoes recorded reductions in wholesale prices (18% and 10%, respectively) and retail prices (33% and 4%, respectively). In Eldoret, price reductions and stable prices can be attributable to seasonality of commodities, as most food commodities are in the harvest season within the region and in the neighboring regions.

A comparison between week 5 and week 1 in Kisumu showed stable wholesale prices for all dry beans, dry maize, and rice. *Shangi* Irish potatoes and wheat recorded significant increases in wholesale prices (26% and 67%, respectively). Although Kisumu is located in a food-deficit area where higher prices due to high transaction costs may be expected, stable prices were attributable to surplus produce from the neighboring producing regions. Most commodities showed a combination of stable, increased, or reduced retail prices, which is as a result of seasonality, involvement of middlemen, or increased fuel costs.

A comparison of wholesale prices between week 5 and week 1 in Mombasa showed stable prices for most commodities but slight increases in prices for *Mwitemania* beans (1%), green/yellow beans (1%), and *Shangi* Irish potatoes (11%). Stable retail prices were observed in the region for all selected commodities.

Nairobi recorded varied outcomes, with different commodities seeing either increased or stable prices. A comparison of wholesale prices between week 5 and week 1 showed a reduction of prices for most dry beans, including green/yellow (16%), *Nyayo* (11%), *Rosecoco* (8%), and *Wairimu* (14%). Dry maize, *Shangi* Irish potatoes, and dry wheat recorded stable wholesale prices, whereas *Mwitemania* beans and Pishori grade 1 rice showed slightly increased wholesale prices (3% and 7%, respectively). Similarly, retail prices saw either stable and reduced prices depending on commodities.

Nakuru recorded similar mixed results for the different commodities. A comparison of wholesale prices between week 5 and week 1 showed slight increases for most commodities: between 3% and 12%. Pishori grade 1 rice showed a reduction of 5%, while Pishori grade 2 rice recorded stable prices. Stable retail prices were recorded for most commodities across all weeks; the exceptions were green/yellow and *Wairimu* beans, which fell by 11% and 8%, respectively, and *Mwitemania* beans (3%), *Shangi* Irish potatoes (8%), and *Sindano* rice (8%), and dry wheat, all of

which saw slightly higher prices (3%, 8%, 8%, and 5%, respectively).

Mixed results were also recorded in Nyeri. A comparison of wholesale prices between week 5 and week 1 showed slight increases (between 3% and 15%) for all the commodities, with most commodities recording an increase of less than 5%. Pishori grade 1 rice showed a slight price reduction of 1%. Similarly, most commodities recorded slight increases in retail prices of between 3% and 8%. The exceptions were dry maize, which saw a 22% increase; dry wheat and Pishori grade 1 rice, which recorded stable prices; and *Wairimu* beans and *Shangi* Irish potatoes, which declined by 5% and 6%, respectively.

Overall, the generally stable prices seen in October are attributable to seasonality. As most producing regions are in the harvesting period, there is a surplus of commodities, even in the populous cities.

Comparison of National Average Prices Between September and October

A comparison of overall prices (national averages for all commodities) for September and October (Table I-3) shows a variable degree of change. All commodities saw stable prices apart from *Shangi* Irish potatoes and Pakistan rice which showed decreases for retail prices (6% and 8%, respectively) and yellow beans, which showed a significant decrease for both wholesale (18%) and retail (15%) prices. Pishori rice grade 2 and dry wheat showed increases of 5% for both wholesale and retail prices. Variations in prices between the two months can be attributed to seasonality, transportation costs, and import costs.

FOCUS ON WHEAT ACROSS SELECTED REGIONS

In Kenya, wheat is the second most important cereal grain crop after maize. Narok County is the leading wheat producer, followed by Laikipia County. Other wheat growing counties include Nakuru, Uasin Gishu, Nyandarua, Meru, Trans Nzoia, and Elgeyo Marakwet. Smaller quantities are also produced in Nyeri (Mweiga) and Kajiado Counties. The major variety of wheat grown in Kenya is Durum; however, several other wheat varieties grown in the country, including Robin, KS- Chui, Kenya eagle, Kenya kingbird, highland wheat, and barley. The planting season starts from February to early April, during the long rains. Wheat is generally ready for harvesting after about four months, although this varies across the different varieties.

During October, wheat recorded various prices across regions (Figure 2). Wholesale prices averaged 52KES/kg, while retail prices averaged 66KES/kg. Kisumu, Mombasa, and Nairobi recorded significantly higher wholesale and retail prices. These are populous cities which have marginal agricultural production; hence, the higher prices are attributable to higher demand, influence of middlemen, and transportation costs. Eldoret, Nakuru, and Nyeri recorded relatively lower wholesale prices due to their proximity to main wheat producing areas.

Figure 2: Average Wholesale and Retail Price (KES/kg) of Wheat in Selected Regions



Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of October

Table 2: Comparison of September and October prices

Product	Variety	Average Wholesale Price (Kes/Kg)			Average Retail Price (Kes/ Kg)		
		September	October	Percentage change	September	October	Percentage change
Dry maize	Dry maize	33	34	3%	43	44	2%
Dry beans	Army green	78	78	0%	90	90	0%
	Green/yellow	90	87	-3%	115	109	-5%
	Mwitmania	75	78	4%	93	93	0%
	Nyayo	78	77	-1%	109	109	0%
	Nyayo black	76	76	0%	90	90	0%
	Rosecoco	83	81	-2%	109	105	-4%
	Saitoti	77	78	1%	109	108	-1%
	Soya ya jivu	69	69	0%	80	80	0%
	Wairimu	68	70	3%	86	86	0%
	Yellow	109	89	-18%	118	100	-15%
Irish Potatoes	Shangi	23	23	0%	36	34	-6%
Rice	Basmati	114	116	2%	129	129	0%
	Biriani	80	80	0%	100	100	0%
	Pakistan	65	62	-5%	76	70	-8%
	Pishori grade 1	127	131	3%	144	148	3%
	Pishori grade 2	84	89	6%	99	98	-1%
	Sindano	112	116	4%	123	126	2%
Wheat	Wheat	49	52	6%	65	66	2%
				Key			
				>+5 but <+10	Increase		
				>-5 but <+5	Stable		
				>-5 but <-10	Slight decrease		
				<-10	Decreasing		

Source: Daily Market Survey for September and October

FOCUS ON NAKURU REGION

Nakuru is located in the heart of the Great Rift Valle and is the fourth largest urban center in Kenya. Agriculture, manufacturing and tourism are the backbones of the economy in the region. The main crops grown around Nakuru and marketed in the city include coffee, wheat, barley, maize, beans, Irish potatoes, and horticultural crops. The region has a dry, sub-humid equatorial climate with two rainy seasons: the long rains during March-May and the short rains during October-December.

Food commodities in the region come directly from local farmers and from neighboring counties; Irish potatoes are sourced from Mau Narok, Molo, Njoro, and Kuresoi sub-counties and from neighboring Nyandarua and Uasin Gishu Counties. Dry maize and beans are obtained from local producers and traded with neighboring counties (Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Bomet, and Elgeyo Marakwet); rice comes from Mwea and neighboring Tanzania; and wheat comes from local farmers (Kiambogo region) and Narok County.

Commodity prices are collected from Wakulima market, a wholesale and retail market located within the Central Business District. The market serves most of the neighboring sub-counties and counties in the region and is complemented by the neighboring Nakuru-Top market. Various agricultural products are sold in the wholesale market as well as the retail section. The market operates seven days a week, and on a typical day, the market is open from 5am. The market is mainly busy on Mondays and Saturdays in the morning hours between 6 am to 9am because this is when new stocks are received.

During October, price fluctuations were recorded for both average wholesale and average retail prices for all the commodities. Comparing week 5 to week 1, stable retail prices were recorded for most commodities across all weeks, except reductions in the price of green/yellow beans (11%) and *Wairimu* beans (8%).

Table 3: Average prices (KES/Kg) for commodities in Nakuru

Commodity	Average wholesale price (KES/kg)					Average retail price (KES/kg)					Total average wholesale price (KES/kg)	Total Average retail price (KES/kg)
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5		
Dry beans	68	68	69	71	72	80	80	78	77	77	70	78
Green/yellow	78	78	78	78	78	90	90	85	80	80	78	84
Mwitmania	62	62	62	66	70	70	70	70	71	72	65	71
Rosecoco	72	74	76	76	76	90	90	90	90	90	75	90
Wairimu	58	58	61	64	64	70	70	68	65	65	62	67
Dry maize	30	30	32	32	31	35	35	35	35	35	31	35
Irish potatoes	20	20	20	21	21	30	30	30	35	33	20	32
Shangi	20	20	20	21	21	30	30	30	35	33	20	32
Rice	96	96	98	99	99	109	109	110	111	111	98	110
Basmati	112	116	118	116	116	130	130	130	130	130	116	130
Pishori grade 1	84	81	80	80	80	100	100	100	100	100	80	100
Pishori grade 2	76	76	76	76	76	80	80	80	80	80	76	80
Sindano	112	112	117	122	122	125	125	130	135	135	118	131
Wheat	42	39	42	44	44	48	45	48	50	50	42	48

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of October.

Outlook for the Month of November

During the month of November, the following changes are expected:

- Maize prices are expected to decline as the crop becomes ready for harvesting in the major producing parts of the Rift Valley. However, prices are expected to remain slightly higher compared to previous years due to a projected reduction in production owing to rains and hailstorms).
- Rice prices are expected to increase, as the main production season in the Mwea irrigation scheme began in July and harvests are expected in December and January. However, imports may also increase, which would stabilize prices and temper price increases.
- Bean prices are expected to increase due to rising demand during the festive season of November and December.
- Irish potatoes prices are expected to increase due to a variety of factors. First, most regions will be past the main harvest season. Second, given the perishable nature of the crop, it does not permit long storage periods. Third, during the festive season of November and December, demand will outweigh supply.
- Wheat prices are expected to remain stable due to minimal, and mostly imported, current stocks. This trend is likely to continue until December when prices are then expected to increase as a result of increased demand associated with the festive season.

ABOUT THIS SERIES

The Food Security Portal (FSP), facilitated by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), aims to improve food security for the world's poor and increase the resilience of global food systems against food and financial crisis. The project brings together international, regional, and country-level data, news, and research aimed at meeting countries' immediate food security needs and building long-term global food security. The FSP is designed to pool information in structured ways to ensure high-quality, timely, and relevant data and to provide the opportunity for collaboration among policymakers, development professionals, and researchers.

This report is part of the FSP's efforts to monitor country-level food prices in order to improve the governments' ability to respond to and prevent food crises. It presents monthly price trends and movements for key food commodities, including dry beans, dry maize, rice, wheat, and Irish potatoes, in selected major regions and markets in Kenya.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kisumu, and Nyeri regions of Kenya. These regions comprise the key markets in major urban centers. The five selected commodities comprise the major staple foods in Kenya⁴.

Data assistants, some of whom were traders, collected average daily wholesale and retail prices from the main markets of the selected regions. Data was collected daily for six days (Mondays to Saturdays) from stockists/wholesalers and traders in the morning hours.

During the last week of the month, the following qualitative data were captured:

- General observations on food prices during the month, including price variations and the lowest, highest, and prevailing wholesale and retail prices

⁴ NB: While the report covers wheat, consumption of that commodity in Kenya is comprised mainly of wheat products (flours, pastries, and highly processed foods) rather than raw wheat itself.

- The source of food commodities and their availability throughout the month
- The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as government restrictions including curfews and cessation of movement, on food prices and availability (both supply and demand)
- Traders' adaptation strategies to the COVID-19 pandemic, including sourcing and selling

Additional secondary data was obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture, Kenya Government Food Security War Room (FSWR), Ministry of Agriculture Livestock and Fisheries (MoALF), and Regional Agriculture Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN).

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