FOOD SECURITY PORTAL FACILITATED BY IFPRI

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FOOD PRICE MONITOR: KENYA

DECEMBER 2024

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.

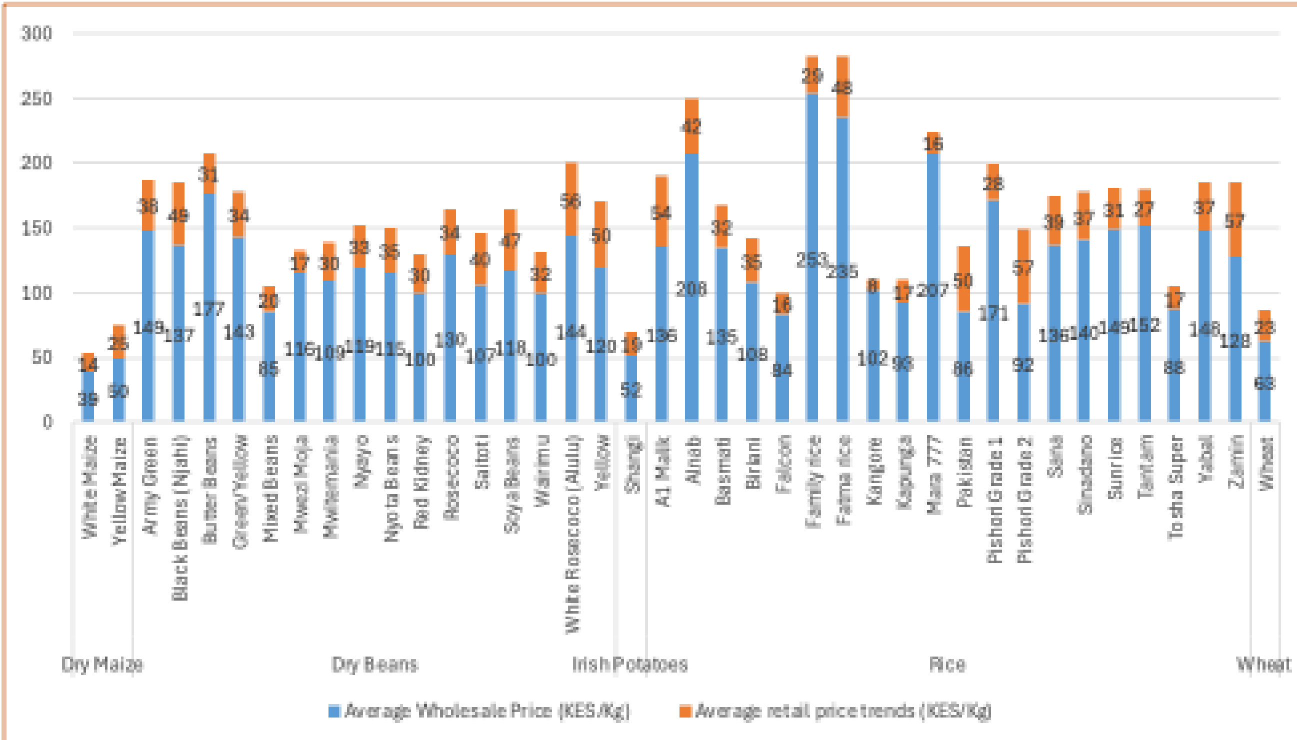
Highlights

- Fluctuations in wholesale and retail prices are shaped by various market factors, including the dynamics of supply and demand, the role of intermediaries, and rising transportation expenses exacerbated by increasing fuel costs.
- The high cost of bean varieties recorded across various regions can be directly attributed to the end of the production season, high demand especially during the festivities that exceeds the supply.
- The increase in rice varieties prices in densely populated areas is driven by heightened demand, the impact of middlemen considering that most varieties are imported, and escalating transportation costs fueled by rising fuel prices.
- The surge in commodity prices in Mombasa can equally be attributed to seasonal supply shortages which tend to be common as harvest cycles conclude, while heightened demand during the holiday season further drives up prices. Additionally, increased transportation costs from inland production areas could drive up prices of commodities.
- The lower commodity prices in Nakuru can be because of proximity to agricultural hubs, reducing transportation costs.

Overall Wholesale and Retail Prices for December

The chart, presented as Figure 1, illustrates the standard wholesale and retail prices for maize, beans, potatoes, rice, and wheat in the primary Kenyan marketplaces during the month of December. Certain commodities such as White maize and Kangore rice variety exhibited leaner price differentials between 14% and 8% respectively. Some commodities particularly yellow maize (25%), Mixed beans (20%) Shangi Irish potatoes, (19%), Falcon rice (16%), Kapunga rice (17%), Mara 777 (16%), Pishori grade 1 (28%) and wheat (23%) had price differentials ranging from 16% to 30%. Most of the commodities exhibited wider price differentials above 30% with Pishori grade 2 (57%), Zamin rice (57%), White Rosecoco (56%) and A1 Malik rice variety (54%) exhibiting the highest price differentials. These disparities in pricing margins between wholesale and retail can be attributed to heightened local demand owing to the festivities season.

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



Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of December 2024

Wholesale and Retail Commodity Prices

Several varieties of dry beans were identified across different locations, with Black beans (Njahi), Nyayo, Rosecoco, and Wairimu consistently present in all selected regions (see Table 1). Certain bean varieties were region-specific; for example, Butter beans were found exclusively in Eldoret, Nairobi, and Nakuru, while Mwezi Moja was unique to Eldoret and Kisumu. Saitoti beans were restricted to Eldoret, Mombasa, and Nakuru, and Soya beans were only identified in Nakuru and Nyeri. Eldoret, Mombasa, Nakuru, and Nairobi exhibited the highest diversity of bean types.

As expected, retail prices for all bean varieties were consistently higher than their wholesale counterparts. Both wholesale and retail prices exceeded the national averages across all varieties, with Nairobi and Nyeri reporting significantly higher prices in both categories. Conversely, Nakuru recorded the lowest wholesale and retail prices relative to the national averages. The high bean prices across regions can be attributed to reduced supply caused by seasonality. Increased transportation costs due to rising fuel prices may have further escalated the overall cost of distribution. Additionally, heightened demand during the festive season likely exerted upward pressure on prices across major markets.

All regions reported the availability of dry white maize, with Kisumu additionally recording the presence of yellow maize. Compared to the national average wholesale price of (39 KES/kg) and retail price of (54 KES/kg) for dry white maize, Kisumu (48 KES/kg), Mombasa (39 KES/kg), and Nairobi (41 KES/kg) exhibited higher wholesale prices. Similarly, Kisumu (65 KES/kg) and Mombasa (58 KES/kg) recorded elevated retail prices. The higher prices in Kisumu and Mombasa can be attributed to increased transportation costs linked to their distance from major production areas and ports. Additionally, heightened local demand, coupled with constrained supply in these regions, may have further contributed to the observed price differences.

Irish potatoes were considerably more expensive in Nairobi and Nyeri, with wholesale prices reaching (84 KES/kg) and (62 KES/kg), respectively, compared to the national average of 52 KES/kg. Retail prices in Nairobi were also significantly higher, at (92 KES/kg), against the national average of 71 KES/kg. In contrast, Eldoret recorded the lowest prices, with wholesale and retail rates at (36 KES/kg) and (31 KES/kg), respectively. The higher prices in Nairobi and Nyeri can be attributed to their dense populations, which drive increased demand for the commodity. Additionally, the perishable nature of potatoes, coupled with limited supply, the influence of middlemen, and rising transportation costs due to higher fuel prices, have further exacerbated price levels in these regions.

All regions reported the availability of Biriani and Pishori rice, while Sindano rice was present in all areas except Nairobi. Mombasa offered additional varieties, including Tamtam, Mpunga, Fatma, and Sunrice; Eldoret featured Falcon; and Kisumu had Basmati and Pakistan rice. Basmati rice, a non-aromatic variety, was available in all regions except Nakuru. Wholesale prices for Biriani rice were notably higher in Eldoret (112 KES/kg), Kisumu (135 KES/kg), and Nairobi (117 KES/kg) compared to the national average of 108 KES/kg. Retail prices followed a similar trend, with Eldoret (150 KES/kg) and Kisumu (203 KES/kg) significantly exceeding the national average of (142 KES/kg). Despite being the third most consumed cereal in Kenya after maize and wheat, rice remains the least cultivated. The high cost of rice in Kenya is driven by a heavy reliance on imports, limited domestic production, increasing demand, supply chain inefficiencies, elevated transportation costs, taxes and import duties, and fluctuations in global market prices.

Kisumu (63 KES/kg), Mombasa (69 KES/kg), Nairobi (71 KES/kg), and Nyeri (64 KES/kg) reported higher wholesale prices for dry wheat compared to the national average of 63 KES/kg. Retail prices also exceeded the national average of 86 KES/kg in Eldoret (94 KES/kg), Kisumu (100 KES/kg), and Nairobi (90 KES/kg). The elevated wheat prices in these regions can be attributed to increased demand in urban areas and higher transportation costs, particularly for regions farther from production hubs. Additionally, supply chain inefficiencies and the reliance on imported wheat due to limited domestic production contribute to the price disparities.

Table 1: Average wholesale and retail prices (kes/kg) by region for December 2024

		Average Wholesale Price per Kg						Average Retail Price per Kg						Total Average W/Sale price per kg	Total Average Retail price per kg
Product	Variety	Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri	Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri		
Dry Beans	Army Green	147		155	165	137	139	207		200	180	173	174	149	187
	Black Beans (Njahi)	150	180	158	166	87	79	240	300	172	180	120	100	137	185
	Butter Beans	178			201	153		240			207	177		177	208
	Green/Yellow	140		127	166	139	144	200		157	180	172	180	143	178
	Mixed Beans	60	111	75		78	103	80	119	90		117	120	85	105
	Mwezi Moja	111	120					140	125					116	133
	Mwitemania	109		92	155	80	111	140		123	172	120	140	109	139
	Nyayo	115	98	109	157	120	117	148	150	142	173	150	150	119	152
	Rosecoco	110	126	109	166	114	156	150	180	151	180	156	170	130	164
	Saitoti	119		125		76		150		139		150		107	146
	Soya Beans					103	132					150	180	118	165
	Wairimu	85	111	110	105	81	106	115	150	142	123	111	150	100	132
	Yellow	124	137	120		100	119	160	230	162		150	150	120	170
Dry Maize	White Maize	32	48	39	41	38	37	45	65	58	50	50	53	39	54
	Yellow Maize		50						75					50	75
Irish Potatoes	Shangi	31	37	50	84	49	62	36	60	83	92	61	80	52	71
Rice	Basmati	144	128	136	156		112	218	150	174	167		130	135	168
	Biriani	112	135	97	117	85	102	150	203	122	130	120	130	108	142
	Fatma rice	200		271				280		286				235	283
	Mara 777			267		148				278		170		207	224
	Pakistan		65				106		152				120	86	136
	Pishori Grade 1	168		154	189	180	183	220		187	204	200	200	171	200
	Pishori Grade 2	96	88					150	148					92	149
	Sana	144				129		200				150		136	175
	Sinadano	149	162	140		124	128	198	203	187		160	140	140	178
	Yabal	156				140		200				170		148	185
Wheat	Wheat	62	63	69	71	50	64	94	100	74	90	80	80	63	86

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of December 2024

Wholesale and Retail Price Trends by Region

Between the first and third week, notable weekly price fluctuations were observed across various regions. In Eldoret, most commodities maintained stable wholesale and retail prices, with a few exceptions that experienced increases or decreases. Wholesale prices for dry beans, including varieties like Green/Yellow, Mwitemania, Nyayo, Saitoti, and Wairimu, rose by 0.7% to 10%. Conversely, retail prices for Shangi Irish potatoes dropped significantly by 24%. Meanwhile, most dry rice varieties, such as Basmati, Al Malik, Biriani, Falcon, Fatma, Pishori Grade 1, Yabal, and Zamin, remain unchanged. Additionally, dry white maize saw a 3.5% increase in wholesale prices, whereas wheat prices stayed consistent throughout the three weeks. The price trends are influenced by supply and demand dynamics, where fluctuations in availability, transportation costs, or harvest yields can lead to increases or decreases in prices for specific commodities. Stable prices for commodities, such as rice and wheat, may indicate steady supply chains or less seasonal variability in production and consumption.

In Kisumu, a comparison of prices between week 1 and week 3 revealed that most food commodities maintained stable prices, with only a few showing fluctuations in wholesale and retail prices. Retail prices for all dry bean varieties remained stable, except for mixed beans, which recorded a 4% increase. Prices for dry white and yellow maize also remained unchanged, while most rice varieties, including Biriani, Pakistan, Pishori, and Sindano, experienced increases ranging from 3% to 7%. Shangi Irish potatoes saw a notable price surge of 26%. The stability in food commodity prices in the region can be attributed to increased supply, heightened market competition, and the influx of cheaper imports due to cross-border trade.

In the Mombasa region, most commodities experienced rising wholesale and retail prices, with a few exceptions among bean varieties, such as Green/Yellow, Nyayo, and Rosecoco, which saw wholesale price increases between 6% to 23%. Wholesale prices for white maize, Irish potatoes, wheat, and all rice varieties (excluding Sunrice) rose by 2% to 22%. Notably, the retail prices of white maize saw a sharp increase of 95% which can be attributed to disruptions in supply chains, such as poor harvests, high transportation costs, or limited imports due to trade restrictions. Additionally, increased demand from local and regional markets may have further driven up prices.

FOCUS ON IRISH POTATOES ACROSS SELECTED REGIONS

Irish potatoes are among the most important food and cash crops in Kenya, thriving in areas with altitudes ranging between 1,500 and 3,000 meters above sea level and temperatures of 10–23°C. These conditions favor the production of high-quality tubers, particularly in regions with fertile, well-drained soils and reliable rainfall. The leading potato-producing counties in Kenya include Nyandarua, Nakuru, Meru, Elgeyo-Marakwet, Bomet, and Narok, which together account for the bulk of the country's annual production. Kenya produces an estimated 2–3 million tons of Irish potatoes annually, making it the second most important staple crop after maize. Despite this, demand often surpasses supply due to population growth, urbanization, and changing dietary preferences.

Irish potatoes are a versatile food staple in Kenyan households, prepared through a variety of cooking methods. Popular dishes include boiled potatoes served with stews, mashed potatoes, French fries (locally known as "chips"), roasted potatoes, and the traditional style, as "mukimo" where potatoes are mashed together with greens, maize and beans. Major markets for potatoes are found in urban centers such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, and Nakuru, where demand is driven by households, restaurants, and fast-food outlets. When local production falls short, Kenya imports potatoes primarily from neighboring countries such as Tanzania and Uganda to bridge the gap. These imports play a crucial role in maintaining steady supply chains and ensuring food security during periods of local shortfall.

During the month of December, Irish potatoes were present across all the regions with Eldoret recording both the lowest average wholesale and retail prices of KES 31 and KES 36 per Kg respectively. On the other hand, Nairobi region recorded both the highest average wholesale and retail prices of 84 KES and 92 KES per Kg respectively. The high prices in Nairobi can be attributed to the high local demand especially due to the growing urban population.

Figure 1: Average wholesale and retail prices of rice (KES/kg) in selected regions

Variety	Average W/Sale Price per Kg						Average Retail Price per Kg					
	Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri	Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri
Shangi	31	37	50	84	49	62	36	60	83	92	61	80

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of December 2024.

In Nairobi, most food commodities experienced rising prices, while a few maintained stable or declining wholesale and retail prices. Between week 1 and week 3, dry beans (Army Green, Butter Beans, Mwitemania, Nyayo, Rosecoco, and Wairimu) saw price increases of 1% to 11%, while Black Beans and Green/Yellow Beans recorded slight wholesale price decreases of 0.7% and 1.3%, respectively. Dry maize prices rose by 2.7%, and all rice varieties experienced wholesale price increases of 2.8% to 9%, similar to wheat prices, which increased by 2.8%. The rising commodity prices can be attributed to increased urban demand, coupled with logistical challenges such as transportation disruptions.

In Nakuru, between week one and week three, wholesale and retail prices for most food commodities remained stable or declined. Wholesale prices for dry beans (Army Green, Njahi, Rosecoco, and Wairimu) dropped by 1% to 8%, while maize prices remained stable. All rice varieties maintained steady retail prices, as did wheat, which showed no change in either wholesale or retail prices. The stability and decline in prices can be linked to Nakuru's position as a major agricultural hub, supported by surrounding farming areas.

Between week one and week three, retail prices for all commodities in Nyeri remained stable, except for Army Green beans, which decreased by 6.8%, and white maize, which saw a 10% price increase. Wholesale prices were mostly stable for most commodities, with a few exceptions: Black beans and Mixed beans experienced price drops, while Army Green and Soya beans saw price increases. White maize also saw a 3% rise in wholesale prices, while Shangi and wheat prices decreased by 4% and 1%, respectively. The price trends in Nyeri can be attributed to a combination of local production cycles and supply-demand dynamics. The increase in white maize prices may be due to seasonal shortages or increased demand, while the price decreases in Army Green beans, Black beans, and Mixed beans could reflect oversupply in the region. The stability or decline in prices for Shangi and wheat may be a result of steady production and supply from local agricultural activities.

Comparison of National Average Prices between November and December

A comparison of overall prices (national averages for all commodities) for November and December 2024 (see Table 2) shows that both the wholesale and retail prices of most food commodities had decreased, remained constant, had a slight increase while only a handful had a substantial increase in prices. Most food commodities exhibited stable prices of between 2% and -2% notably a majority of rice varieties including: Pishori Grade 1, Pishori Grade 2, Sana, Sindano, Sunrice, Tamtam, Kapunga, Family, Basmati & Yabal while a few commodities exhibited a decrease in prices between -5% and -8%. On the other hand, a handful of commodities saw an increase in prices ranging between 3% and 14% with yellow beans, mixed beans, Saitoti and butter beans exhibiting the lowest increase at 3% and white maize exhibiting the highest at 14% under this category. Only one commodity namely yellow maize exhibited a notable high increase in the average retail price of 21%.

Table 2: Comparison of November and December prices

Product	Variety	Average W/Sale price (KES/Kg)		Percentage Change	Average Retail price (KES/Kg)		Percentage Change
		November	December		November	December	
Dry Maize	White Maize	35	39	9%	46	54	14%
	Yellow Maize	44	50	12%	60	75	21%
Dry Beans	Army Green	150	149	-1%	189	187	-1%
	Black Beans (Njahi)	135	137	1%	182	185	2%
	Butter Beans	171	177	3%	208	208	0%
	Green/Yellow	142	143	1%	170	178	4%
	Mixed Beans	83	85	3%	105	105	0%
	Mwezi Moja	114	116	1%	135	133	-2%
	Mwitemania	105	109	4%	133	139	4%
	Nyayo	119	119	0%	146	152	4%
	Nyota Beans	104	115	10%	138	150	8%
	Rosecoco	132	130	-1%	163	164	1%
	Saitoti	107	107	0%	143	146	3%
	Wairimu	93	100	6%	122	132	7%
	White Rosecoco (Alulu)	145	144	0%	192	200	4%
	Yellow	119	120	1%	166	170	3%
Irish Potatoes	Shangi	55	52	-5%	76	71	-8%
Rice	Basmati	133	135	1%	169	168	-1%
	Biriani	103	108	5%	140	142	2%
	Family Rice	250	253	1%	277	283	2%
	Fatma Rice	235	235	0%	281	283	1%
	Kangore	98	102	4%	110	110	0%
	Kapunga	93	93	-1%	110	110	0%
	Mara 777	191	207	8%	209	224	7%
	Pakistan	93	86	-8%	129	136	5%
	Pishori Grade 1	167	171	2%	192	200	4%
	Pishori Grade 2	92	92	0%	141	149	6%
	Sana	139	136	-2%	175	175	0%
	Sindano	140	140	1%	175	178	1%
	Sunrice	150	149	0%	177	181	2%
	Tamtam	152	152	0%	183	180	-2%
	Yabal	150	148	-1%	182	185	1%
Wheat	Wheat	64	63	-1%	86	86	0%

Key	
<2 but>=-2	Stable
>-2 but <-8	Decrease
>2 but < 15	Increasing
> 15	Highly increasing

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of December 2024

Outlook for the Month of January 2025

- For January 2025, the outlook for key food commodities in Kenya will be shaped by factors such as demand, weather conditions, production levels, regional trade, and new government-imposed levies.

- Maize prices in January 2025 are expected to remain relatively stable, driven by the completion of the main harvest season in key producing regions such as the Rift Valley (Nakuru, Uasin Gishu, Nandi, and Trans Nzoia). The increased supply during this period generally helps to moderate market prices. Furthermore, the anticipated fertilizer subsidy program is likely to establish a price floor by reducing input and production costs.

- Bean prices may experience a modest increase in January. This trend could result from a combination of limited short rain season harvests. Although cross-border imports will likely cushion local supply deficits, higher importation costs stemming from the levies may gradually push prices higher. Demand for beans as a staple food in urban and rural areas could further exacerbate this trend.

- Rice prices are expected to decline, reflecting the recent relaxation of Asian countries export restrictions since Kenya heavily relies on imported rice varieties. Local rice production from regions like Mwea is expected to play a crucial role in supplementing the domestic demand.

- Wheat prices are anticipated to climb in January, driven by Kenya's dependency on imports to meet domestic demand. Global market conditions, such as wheat production trends in key exporting countries like Russia and Ukraine, could further influence prices. Domestic inflationary pressures on bread and wheat-based products are expected as a result.

- Rising input and transportation costs may lead to minor price increases in urban markets. This is expected to further be exacerbated by increasing demand in urban settings where majority of Irish potatoes is sold and consumed in institutions such as: schools and hotels.

- According to a blog by Oxford Economics, significant changes are anticipated in food commodity prices in 2025, driven by geopolitical developments, economic policies, and global demand trends. Rice prices are expected to decline on an annual basis, reflecting the recent relaxation of Asian countries export restrictions.

FOCUS ON NAKURU REGION

Nakuru County, located in the central part of Kenya's Rift Valley region, spans an area of approximately 7,495.1 square kilometers. It is strategically positioned, bordered by seven other counties, including Baringo to the north, Laikipia to the northeast, and Narok to the south. Known for its diverse landscapes, the county features a mix of fertile highlands, expansive plains, and significant geographical landmarks. With a population of over 2.1 million people, Nakuru is among Kenya's most densely populated counties, hosting vibrant urban centers and thriving rural communities.

Agriculture forms the backbone of Nakuru's economy, with the county renowned for its production of cereals such as maize, beans, and wheat, as well as potatoes, which thrive in its fertile soils and favorable climate. Additionally, agribusiness activities such as dairy farming, floriculture, and horticulture significantly contribute to the local and national economy. Nakuru serves as a key supplier to major food markets, including Nairobi, Mombasa, and other urban centers, facilitated by well-developed transport networks. Conversely, the county sources various food commodities, especially rice, vegetables, and tropical fruits, from regions such as Mwea, Kisumu, and the coastal areas. Its strategic location and robust agricultural framework make Nakuru a critical hub for Kenya's food security and economic stability.

Nakuru County, located in Kenya's Rift Valley region, hosts several key food commodity markets that play a vital role in the local economy and food distribution. Key notable markets include: Wakulima market, Molo market and Naivasha market.

Food commodity prices in Nakuru region between week 1 and week 3 either declined or remained stable an observation highly attributable to a sufficient supply of food products from the surrounding regions and other countries.

Table 3: Average Wholesale and Retail Prices, Nakuru Region

Product	Variety	Average w/sale price (KES/Kg)			Average retail price (KES/Kg)			Total average w/sale price (KES/ kg)	Total average retail price (KES/ kg)
		Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3		
Dry Beans	Army Green	140	133	138	180	170	170	137	173
	Black Beans (Njahi)	90	85	85	120	120	120	87	120
	Butter Beans	155	148	155	179	171	180	153	177
	Green/Yellow	140	138	140	170	170	175	139	172
	Mixed Beans	80	75	80	120	112	120	78	117
	Mwitemania	80	80	80	120	120	120	80	120
	Nyayo	120	120	120	150	150	150	120	150
	Red Kidney	100	100	100	130	130	130	100	130
	Rosecoco	120	113	110	160	157	150	114	156
	Saitoti	76	76	76	150	150	150	76	150
	Soya Beans	100	100	110	150	150	150	103	150
	Wairimu	85	82	78	120	113	100	81	111
	Yellow	100	100	100	150	150	150	100	150
Dry Maize	White Maize	38	38	38	50	50	50	38	50
Irish Potatoes	Shangi	50	50	48	60	60	63	49	61
Rice	Alnab	208	208	208	250	250	250	208	250
	Biriani	85	85	85	120	120	120	85	120
	Mara 777	148	148	149	170	170	170	148	170
	Pishori Grade 1	180	180	180	200	200	200	180	200
	Sana	129	129	129	150	150	150	129	150
	Sindano	124	124	124	160	160	160	124	160
	Yabal	140	140	140	170	170	170	140	170
Wheat	Wheat	50	50	50	80	80	80	50	80

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of December 2024.

Synthesis for 2024

This section presents the wholesale and retail price trends for five key food commodities including dry beans, dry maize, Irish potatoes, rice, and wheat, covering the period from January to December 2024. It highlights seasonal price fluctuations, supply chain influences, and market dynamics that affected these staple foods throughout the year. Understanding these trends is crucial for policymakers, traders, and consumers in planning for food security and price stabilization measures. The accompanying graphs provide a visual representation of the monthly price fluctuations, illustrating the effects of seasonal changes, supply chain dynamics, and market forces on food prices

Key Highlights

- Seasonal fluctuations and market dynamics influenced price variations for key food commodities throughout 2024.
- Dry maize prices declined mid-year due to peak harvest but rose in some regions in November due to increased urban demand and transport costs.
- Irish potatoes and dry beans experienced notable price spikes in early 2024 due to seasonal shortages but stabilized post-harvest.
- Rice and wheat prices showed relative stability, with declines in late 2024 due to increased imports.
- Regional price differences were driven by disparities in supply, demand, intermediary activities, and transport costs.
- Festive season demand led to price surges in certain bean varieties, rice, and Irish potatoes

Overall Price Trends

The prices of key food commodities fluctuated throughout the year, reflecting seasonal changes and shifts in supply and demand. Dry beans experienced notable price peaks in the first quarter, with a decline observed after the main harvest season. Dry maize prices trended downward for most of the year, hitting the lowest point in October before experiencing a slight rebound in December. Irish potatoes, being highly perishable, exhibited significant fluctuations, peaking in March and April due to seasonal shortages before stabilizing after harvests. Rice and wheat prices remained relatively stable throughout the year, with some declines observed in the latter months due to increased imports and market stabilization efforts.

Regional Price Variations

Commodity prices varied significantly across different regions, influenced by supply availability, transportation costs, and market dynamics. In urban centers like Nairobi and Mombasa, prices were generally higher due to increased demand and logistical expenses. Kisumu and Eldoret also saw fluctuations, particularly for perishable commodities like Irish potatoes and dry beans, where transportation and storage constraints played a crucial role. Nakuru and Nyeri experienced relatively stable pricing trends, reflecting more consistent supply chains and localized production of some commodities. Regional price differences underscore the importance of transport infrastructure and intermediary market activities in shaping consumer prices.

Monthly Commodity Price Trends and Key Insights

From Table 4, dry beans experienced price fluctuations throughout the year. Wholesale prices ranged from 121 KES/kg in November to a peak of 176 KES/kg in April, while retail prices followed a similar pattern, peaking at 176 KES/kg in February and June before declining towards the end of the year. The high prices in the first half of the year were likely due to limited supply before the main harvest seasons. As harvesting progressed, prices declined due to increased availability in the market

The price of dry maize followed a downward trend for most of the year. Wholesale prices dropped from 62 KES/kg in January to a low of 37 KES/kg in October and November, with a slight increase to 41 KES/kg in December. Retail prices followed a similar trend, reaching their lowest point at 46 KES/kg in October before rebounding to 57 KES/kg in December. The decline in prices from mid-year to October aligns with major maize harvesting periods when supply is at its peak.

Irish potatoes exhibited notable price fluctuations due to their perishable nature. Prices peaked in March and April, with wholesale prices reaching 64 KES/kg and retail prices hitting 89 KES/kg, coinciding with seasonal shortages. The decline in later months can be attributed to increased supply from harvesting in major potato-producing regions. The fluctuation in prices underscores the impact of supply variations and storage challenges on perishable commodities.

Rice prices remained relatively stable during the first half of the year, with wholesale prices fluctuating between 163 KES/kg and 166 KES/kg. However, in the latter half, prices declined, reaching 140 KES/kg in November. Retail prices followed a similar trend, peaking at 191 KES/kg in January and February before declining to 172 KES/kg in October. The decline in prices in the latter part of the year suggests an increased supply of imported rice, which contributed to market stabilization and lower prices.

Wheat prices exhibited minimal fluctuations throughout the year. Wholesale prices ranged between 63 KES/kg and 71 KES/kg, while retail prices fluctuated between 80 KES/kg and 93 KES/kg. The highest retail price of 93 KES/kg was recorded in October, likely due to supply chain constraints and increased import costs. Price stability in the wheat market suggests that despite global market influences, supply conditions remained relatively consistent.

Factors Influencing Price Fluctuations

Several factors contributed to the observed price trends across the year. Seasonality played a critical role, with prices peaking during off-season months when supply was low and declining during post-harvest periods when availability increased. Market intermediaries influenced price variations across different regions as traders and middlemen added markups, increasing costs for consumers. Transportation costs also had a significant impact, particularly in urban areas such as Nairobi, Kisumu, and Mombasa, where higher logistics expenses contributed to price increases. Additionally, rice and wheat prices were influenced by global import trends and local production deficits, leading to periodic market instability.

Conclusion

This synthesis report highlights the seasonal price trends, supply chain dynamics, and external factors that influenced food commodity prices in 2024. The findings underscore the importance of strategic interventions such as improved storage facilities, efficient transportation systems, and production incentives to mitigate price volatility. Continuous monitoring of these price patterns will help stakeholders anticipate market fluctuations and develop policies that ensure stable food supplies and affordability for consumers.

Table 4: 2024 Monthly commodity price trends

Commodity	Dry beans		Dry Maize		Irish Potatoes		Rice		Wheat	
Month	Wholesale	Retail	Wholesale	Retail	Wholesale	Retail	Wholesale	Retail	Wholesale	Retai
Jan	150	170	62	75	50	65	160	190	65	85
Feb	155	175	60	72	55	70	163	191	66	86
Mar	160	176	55	70	60	85	165	190	67	87
Apr	176	148	50	65	64	89	166	188	68	88
May	158	160	48	63	58	80	164	185	67	87
Jun	152	162	45	60	57	78	160	180	66	86
Jul	150	160	44	58	55	76	158	178	65	85
Aug	148	158	42	55	53	75	156	175	64	84
Sep	145	155	40	52	52	74	150	170	63	82
Oct	140	150	37	46	50	70	145	165	63	93
Nov	121	140	37	48	48	68	140	160	63	90
Dec	130	145	41	57	50	70	145	165	65	88

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 Kenya[1].

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
- 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).

[1] 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.

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