

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 daily maize prices in selected markets throughout Malawi. The reports are intended as a resource for those interested in maize markets in Malawi, namely producers, sellers, consumers, or other agricultural stakeholders.

Highlights

- The average maize retail price per kg fell from **MK162** in late April to **MK139** at the end of May.
- The widest price range was recorded in Lunzu.
- ADMARC depots were open, but neither buying nor selling during the entire month.

Prices decline sustained across all markets

Retail maize prices continued to decline across all markets during the month of May (Table 1). An overall price decrease of 14%, or MK23/kg, was recorded from the end of April to the end of May. The highest price decrease was reported in Chimbiya (22%). Mwanza, which had recorded a price decrease of 32% in April, only registered a drop of 1% during May. The price decreases are mainly due to the ongoing harvest, together with remaining unsold stocks carried-over from last season.

Table 1. Maize retail prices (MK/kg) by market

Market	29-Apr-17	13-May-17	27-May-17	31-May-17	Monthly change
Karonga	210	168	168	168	↓ -20%
Rumphi	178	163	149	148	↓ -17%
Mzimba	169	150	144	143	↓ -15%
Mzuzu	172	147	139	139	↓ -19%
Nkhamenya	160	135	133	133	↓ -17%
Mchinji	149	144	144	138	↓ -8%
Mponela	168	157	140	135	↓ -20%
Mitundu	160	140	135	133	↓ -17%
Chimbiya	157	140	128	123	↓ -22%
Liwonde	145	142	133	133	↓ -8%
Lunzu	190	188	167	167	↓ -12%
Mulanje	158	142	142	142	↓ -11%
Mwanza	124	128	123	123	↓ -1%
Chikwawa	170	160	161	148	↓ -13%
Nsanje	125	127	120	120	↓ -4%
All markets	162	148	141	139	↓ -14%

Prices in Centre drop below South in May

There was a sustained decline in the average retail maize prices across all the three regions over the month of May, from MK162/kg at the end of April, to MK139/kg as at the end of May. Prices in the North, where harvesting starts later, remained consistently higher than prices in the Centre and the South (Figure 1). Prices in the Centre became lower than in the South after the first week of May and have remained below for the rest of the month. The average prices per kg as at the end of month were MK150, MK133, and MK138 for the North, Centre, and South, respectively.

Figure 1. Daily average maize prices since 29th April 2017

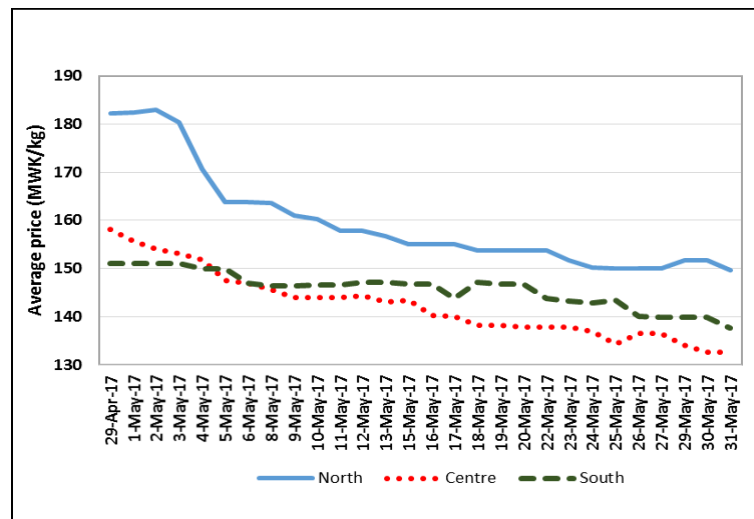
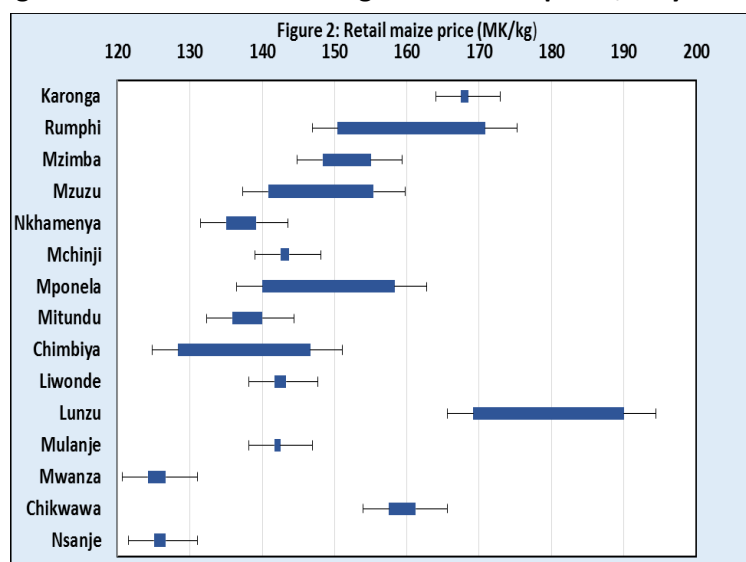


Figure 2. Distribution of average maize retail prices, May 2017



Lunzu had the widest price range

Figure 2 shows the distribution of average daily maize prices in each market during May 2017. The furthest-left and furthest-right points on each plot indicate the minimum and maximum prices during the month. The shaded box shows the first quartile and third quartiles of the price distribution for each market. In May 2017, Lunzu and Rumphi registered the widest price ranges, while Karonga and Mulanje reported the lowest ranges. In some markets, the wide price ranges observed are a reflection of maize harvested this season (new maize) which continues to trade at a discount compared to old stock (Table 2).

ADMARC neither buying nor selling

Since opening its markets across the country on 21st October 2016, ADMARC’s selling price has remained fixed at MK250/kg—much higher than the average market retail price. On 9th May 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development announced the minimum farm gate price was MK170/kg for the 2016/17 crop. However, reports received from traders and other sources state that ADMARC was neither selling nor buying maize throughout the month of May.

How data was collected

IFPRI has been monitoring retail maize prices in selected markets since November 2016. Currently, maize price data is collected from 15 markets across the country. The monitoring covers six days in a week, excluding Sundays. At least three monitors report in each of the markets. Data is collected by means of automated short message service (SMS) with follow-ups made by telephone if necessary.

Table 2. Old versus new maize prices

Market	Old stock	New stock	Discount
Karonga	210	125	85
Rumphi	212	112	100
Mzimba	193	107	86
Mzuzu	163	106	56
Nkhamenya	156	100	57
Mchinji	183	104	79
Mponela	167	95	72
Mitundu	183	96	87
Chimbiya	147	102	45
Liwonde	150	106	44
Lunzu	203	109	94
Mulanje	183	100	83
Mwanza	143	107	36
Chikwawa	178	106	72
Nsanje	132	100	32
All markets	174	105	68



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