

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 **MK194** at the end of March to **MK161** in late April.
- The widest price range was recorded in Mwanza.
- ADMARC depots were open, but inactive during the entire month.

Prices declined across all markets

All markets reported steady decreases in retail maize prices during the month of April (Table 1). An overall price decrease of 17% or MK33/kg was recorded between the end of March and the end of April. The highest decrease was reported in Mwanza (32%), while Karonga reported the lowest price decrease (6%). The decline is mainly due to the onset of this year's main harvest.

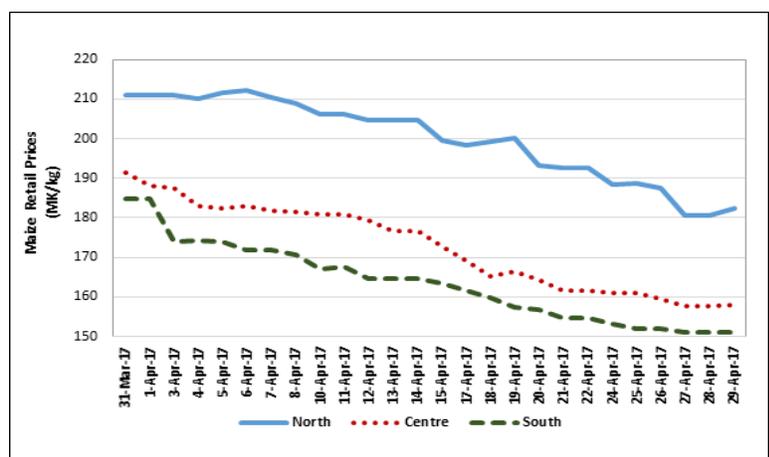
Sustained price decrease in April

There was a gradual decline in the average retail maize prices across all the three regions over the month of April from K194/kg at the end of March to K161/kg as at the end of April. Prices in the North, where harvesting starts later, remained consistently higher than prices in the Centre and the South, where the main maize harvest is already well underway (Figure 1). The average prices per kg by the end of month were K182, K158, and K151 for the North, Centre, and South, respectively. A 50 kg bag of maize was trading at an average of around K8,828 across the three regions.

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

Market	31-Mar-17	7-Apr-17	14-Apr-17	21-Apr-17	28-Apr-17	Monthly change
Karonga	223	220	213	213	210	↓ -6%
Rumphi	227	235	218	199	172	↓ -24%
Mzimba	200	197	197	174	169	↓ -15%
Mzuzu	193	190	190	183	172	↓ -11%
Nkhamenya	193	185	182	157	157	↓ -19%
Mponela	203	197	190	170	170	↓ -16%
Mchinji	184	164	154	149	149	↓ -19%
Mitundu	187	180	175	160	160	↓ -14%
Chimbiya	193	190	190	177	157	↓ -19%
Mwanza	183	168	145	131	124	↓ -32%
Lunzu	230	223	213	203	190	↓ -17%
Liwonde	170	150	157	145	145	↓ -15%
Mulanje	197	172	165	158	158	↓ -19%
Chikwawa	190	180	170	170	170	↓ -11%
Nsanje	140	140	140	127	125	↓ -11%
All markets	194	186	180	167	161	↓ -17%

Figure 1. Daily average maize prices since 31st March 2017



Mwanza had the widest price range

Figure 2 shows the distribution of average daily maize prices in each market during April 2017. The furthest-left and furthest-right points on each plot indicate the minimum and maximum prices during the month. The box shows the first quartile and third quartiles of the price distribution. In April 2017, Mwanza registered the widest price range, followed by Nkhamenya, Rumphi, and Mzimba. The wider range of maize prices reported in April reflects the fact that maize harvested this season (new maize) was trading at a substantial discount in comparison to old stock in 12 of the 15 markets (Table 2).

ADMARC continued to sell only

Since opening its markets across the country on 21st October 2016, the main ADMARC depots in these markets have been reported to be selling maize only. As the ADMARC sales price has remained higher than market prices, very few sales by ADMARC have occurred. However, prices as high as MK250/kg, the ADMARC sales price, were reported for the old stock by some traders in Rumphi during the month. No buying activity by ADMARC has been recorded since October 2016.

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.

Figure 2. Distribution of average maize retail prices, April

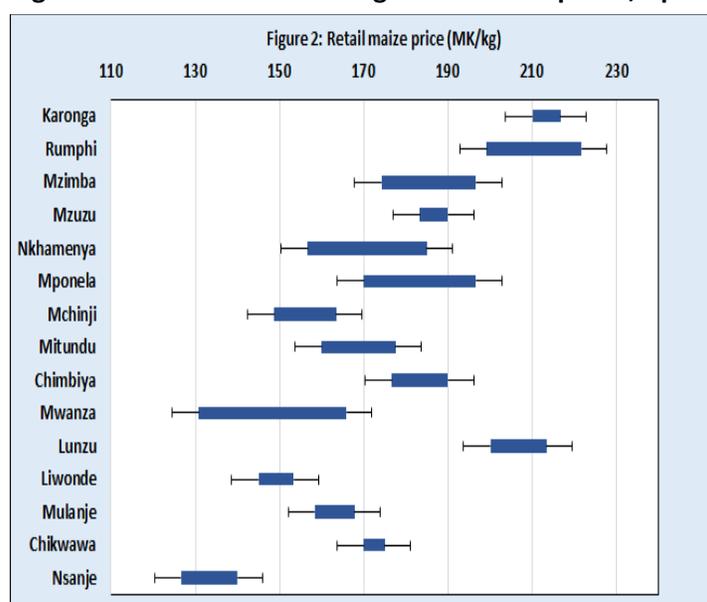


Table 2. Old stock vs. new maize

Market	Average price (old stock)	Average price (new maize)
Karonga	215	
Rumphi	221	158
Mzimba	193	130
Mzuzu	185	
Nkhamenya	179	100
Mponela	188	149
Mchinji	182	121
Mitundu	196	115
Chimbiya	183	
Mwanza	157	99
Lunzu	214	140
Liwonde	153	120
Mulanje	188	106
Chikwawa	192	100
Nsanje	136	100
All markets	185	118



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