

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 price 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 to **MK194** at the end of March from **MK213** in late February.
- The widest price range was recorded in Nsanje.
- ADMARC depots were open, but inactive during the entire month.

### Large price decrease in March

Retail maize prices were fairly stable during the first week of March, after which they started to decline, reaching MK194/kg by the end of the month (Table 1). An overall price decrease of 9% or MK19 was recorded between the end of February and the end of March, with the price falling most rapidly in the South (Figure 1). The overall decrease is due to several factors, including: the onset of this year's harvest in the south, new maize trading at a discount, off-loading of stocks by traders in anticipation of the main harvest, and around 50 trucks being prevented from exporting maize to Tanzania towards the end of the month. However, fears about the impact of the Fall Armyworm outbreak on production has reduced downward pressure on prices in some markets.

### Prices fell in most markets during March

Ten out of 15 markets reported maize price decreases during the month, with the largest decreases occurring in the Southern region districts of Nsanje (39%) and Chikwawa (17%) (Table 1). In four other markets, prices were stable. A marginal price increase of 1% was reported in Rumphu.

Figure 1. Daily average maize prices since 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017

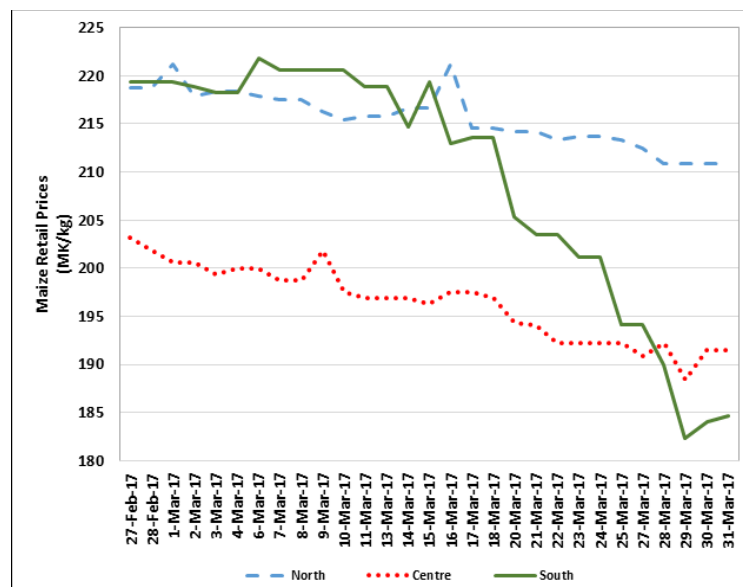


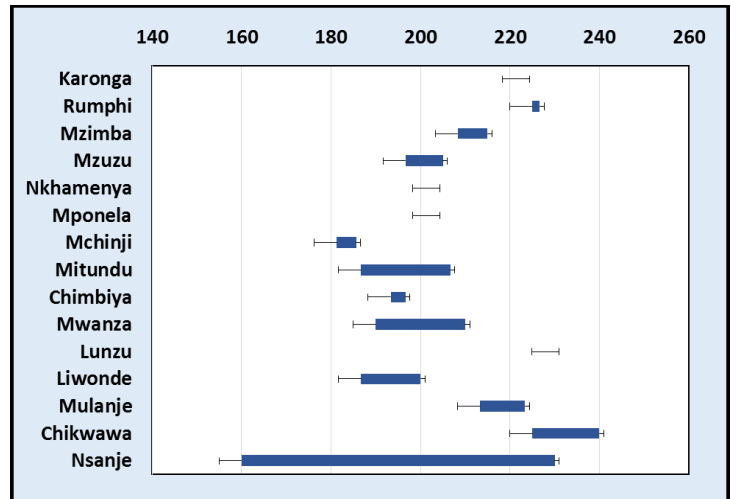
Table 1. Maize retail prices (MK/kg) by market

Market	28-Feb-17	3-Mar-17	10-Mar-17	17-Mar-17	24-Mar-17	31-Mar-17	Monthly change
Karonga	223	225	222	223	223	223	0%
Rumphu	223	225	223	227	227	227	1%
Mzimba	223	218	212	208	208	200	-10%
Mzuzu	205	205	205	200	197	193	-6%
Nkhamenya	203	203	203	203	203	193	-5%
Mchinji	190	185	188	185	179	184	-3%
Mponela	203	203	203	203	203	203	0%
Mitundu	223	217	200	203	187	187	-16%
Chimbiya	193	193	197	197	193	193	0%
Liwonde	200	193	200	200	187	170	-15%
Lunzu	230	230	230	230	230	230	0%
Mulanje	223	223	223	213	213	197	-12%
Mwanza	207	207	217	190	190	183	-11%
Chikwawa	230	230	225	245	240	190	-17%
Nsanje	230	230	230	213	160	140	-39%
<b>All markets</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>-9%</b>

### *Nsanje's price range was the widest*

Figure 2 shows the distribution of average daily maize prices in each market during March 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 March 2017, Nsanje registered by far the widest price range. By the end of the month, the minimum average price dropped to MK140/kg in Nsanje, compared to MK190/kg in neighbouring Chikwawa, where average prices as high as MK245/kg were reported.

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



### *ADMARC continued to sell only*

Since opening its markets across the country on 21<sup>st</sup> 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 by some traders in Mitundu, Chikwawa, and Nsanje during the month. No buying activity by ADMARC has been recorded since October 2016.

Figure 3. Location of markets



### *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 (Figure 3). 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.



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