



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

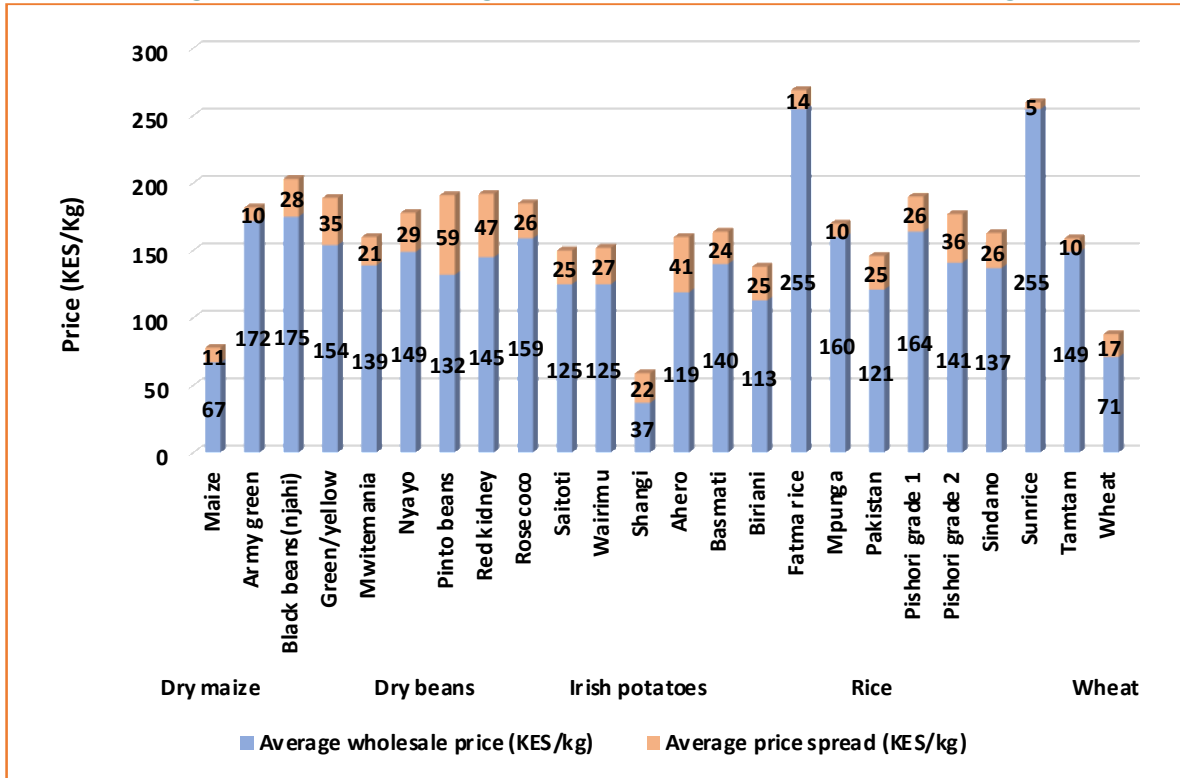
- ▶ Most food commodity prices decreased in August due to the availability of fresh supplies from harvests.
- ▶ A few commodities' recorded price increases in the populous cities of Nairobi and Kisumu may be due to rising fuel costs, which result in high transportation costs along with increased demand.
- ▶ Pumper harvests experienced in the Western parts of Kenya is attributable to lower maize prices in most regions.
- ▶ The increasing demand, the involvement of multiple middlemen and increased fuel prices, which result in high transportation costs, are the main causes of increased Irish potato prices in major cities.
- ▶ Reliance on imports, High demand which is impacted by rising import costs due to the ongoing depreciation of the Kenyan shilling versus the dollar, and rising fuel prices, which have an impact on transportation costs, are all factors causing rice and wheat prices to increase.

## Overall Wholesale and Retail Prices for August

The average retail and wholesale prices for maize, beans, potatoes, rice, and wheat in the major Kenyan food markets in August 2023 are shown in Figure 1. Some commodities such as; maize (15%), green yellow beans (14%), Wairimu beans (9%), some rice varieties [Tamtam (7%), Fatma (5%), Mpunga (6%), and Sunrice (2%)], recorded lower price margins of between 2% and 15%. Most commodities showed price margins ranging from 16% to 26% comprising most dry beans [Army green (16%), Black beans-Njahi (20%), Mwitmania (21%), Red Kidney (18%), Rosecoco

(16%), and Saitoti beans (22%)], some rice varieties [Basmati (17%), Biriani (22%), Pakistan (21%), Pishori grade 1(16%), and Sindano (19%)] and wheat (24%). A few commodities recorded higher price margins of between 34% and 57% including; Nyayo beans, (40%), Pinto beans (36%), Shangi Irish potatoes (59%), and Ahero rice (34%). A few commodities' recorded price increases may be due to rising fuel costs, which result in high transportation costs along with increased demand. However, due to the availability of fresh supplies from harvests, most food commodity prices decreased in August.

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



Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of August 2023

## Wholesale and Retail Commodity Prices

Numerous dry bean varieties have been recorded in different regions, but only green/yellow, Nyayo, and Wairimu beans were present in all the areas that were studied (Table 1). Black beans (Njahi) and Mwitmania beans were widely available everywhere else besides Kisumu. Apart from the Saitoti bean variety, which was only found in the Mombasa region, Eldoret reported the highest number of bean types in August. As might be predicted, retail prices for all bean varieties were higher than wholesale costs. All beans in Eldoret, except for Army Green, had wholesale costs that were greater than the national average. In comparison to national average retail pricing, all readily available bean varieties in the Kisumu region had high retail prices whereas Nakuru and Nyeri had lower average wholesale prices for all bean varieties than the average retail prices across the country. The observed price variation can be attributed to seasonality, transportation costs due high fuel prices, and supply chain challenges.

Dry maize recorded higher wholesale prices in Mombasa (75KES/kg) and Nairobi (71KES/kg) compared to the national average wholesale prices of 67 KES/kg. In

comparison to the national retail price of 78 KES/kg, retail prices were marginally higher in Nairobi (90 KES/kg) and Nyeri (89 KES/kg). Low maize prices witnessed in most regions is attributable to seasonality whereby some parts of the country are experiencing pumper harvests for instance the Western parts of Kenya as the grain basket zones are about to harvest as from October. According to the People's Daily Newspaper, August 2023, the decline in maize prices is expected following the onset of the harvest from the lower Eastern, Western and South Rift regions.

In Nairobi, Irish potatoes were sold for 78KES/kg, significantly higher than the 37KES/kg national average wholesale price. Similarly, Kisumu, Nairobi and Nakuru had substantially higher retail prices of 73KES/kg, 89KES/kg, and 74KES/kg respectively, than the national average of 59KES/kg. Price increases in populous cities are a result of a high demand, increased fuel hence high transportation cost and involvement of various middlemen.

Pishori rice was common to all regions, although Mombasa had Tamtam, Fatma, Sunrice, and Mpunga rice and Kisumu had Ahero and Pakistan rice. All regions have access to basmati rice (nonaromatic rice), except for Kisumu and Mombasa. For Pishori grade 1 rice types, all regions except Nakuru and Nyeri saw increased wholesale prices. The strong demand for rice in the populated cities, the

dependence on imports, which is affected by rising import costs because of the ongoing depreciation of the Kenyan shilling versus the dollar, and rising fuel prices, which affect transportation costs, are all factors contributing to higher rice prices. According to USDA Economic Research Service, August 2023, Kenya reduced the import forecast in August based on India's recent ban on nonaromatic and non-parboiled milled-rice exports. India is currently the largest supplier of rice to Kenya.

Eldoret, Kisumu, and Nyeri all had dry wheat wholesale prices that were higher than the national average of 71KES/kg (77KES/kg, 80KES/kg, and 78KES/kg, respectively). Like Kisumu, Eldoret had significantly higher retail expenses per kilogram at 100KES than the national average of 88KES/kg. The main cause of high wheat prices in populated and non-producing areas is market dynamics where supply is less than demand.

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

Product	Variety	Average wholesale price (KES/kg)						Average retail price (KES/kg)						Total average wholesale price (KES/kg)	Total average retail price (KES/kg)	
		Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri	Eldoret	Kisumu	Mombasa	Nairobi	Nakuru	Nyeri			
Dry beans	Amy green	173		180		162		200		185		163		172	182	
	Black beans(Njahi)	206		160	170	173	171	235		170	190	180	246	175	203	
	Green/yellow	173	160	165	172	145	110	200	231	170	189	170	174	154	189	
	Mwitmania	171		140	150	135	103	177		150	172	151	156	139	160	
	Nyayo	194	139	165	154	150	97	200	204	170	179	160	161	149	178	
	Pinto beans	168	143				91	190	230					153	132	191
	Red kidney	200	144			100		210	219			150		145	192	
	Rosecoco	171	152	170	172	132		200	212	180	190	146		159	185	
	Saitoti			125						150				125	150	
Wairimu	148	139	135	138	104	90	150	179	140	160	127	153	125	152		
Dry maize	Maize	64	61	75	71	61	69	71	77	75	90	65	89	67	78	
Irish potatoes	Shangi	16	32	33	78	30	30	20	73	55	89	74	34	37	59	
Rice	Ahero		119						160					119	160	
	Basmati	108			139	160	149	130			160	183	178	140	164	
	Biriani		107	109	94	126			147	119	130	150		113	138	
	Fatma rice			255						269				255	269	
	Mpunga			160						170				160	170	
	Pakistan		121						146					121	146	
	Pishori grade 1	175		175	179	148	162	200		180	204	182	193	164	190	
	Pishori grade 2	128	152					150	200					141	177	
	Sindano	134		145	102	146	147	160		150	127	180	178	137	163	
	Sunrice			255						260				255	260	
Tamtam			149						159				149	159		
Wheat	Wheat	77	80	60	67	70	78	100	100	75	90	77	95	71	88	

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of August 2023

## Wholesale and Retail Price Trends by Region

Regional differences in weekly prices were noted between weeks 1 and 5. Eldoret had a combination of constant and decreasing prices, with most food commodities displaying steady prices. All available dry beans varieties recorded constant wholesale and retail prices except Mwiternia which recorded declining wholesale and retail prices of 12% and 15% respectively when week 5 prices were compared to week 1 prices. All other available food commodities in the region including; maize, Shangi Irish potatoes, all available rice varieties, and wheat portrayed constant wholesale and retail prices. Due to seasonal availability of food items in the area and neighboring counties, prices have been steadily falling.

In Kisumu, a comparison between the fifth week and first week of August showed that almost all food commodities saw constant wholesale and retail prices with exception of a few which recorded increased wholesale prices including green yellow beans (0.28%), Pinto beans (0.89%), and Shangi Irish potatoes (25%). Irish potatoes are higher in price at the wholesale and retail levels. This is because the area has low agricultural production, which when combined with high demand and scarcity within the region drives up prices.

In Mombasa, a comparison of wholesale and retail pricing between week 5 and week 1 revealed steady prices for all commodities, except for Biriani rice, TamTam rice and Irish potatoes, which witnessed higher costs at both the wholesale and retail levels. The availability of produce from the nearby producing regions contributes to stable prices. Irish potatoes are more expensive in the region now because of seasonality and high demand.

The Nairobi region recorded a combination of stable and reduced retail and wholesale prices for various commodities. All available dry beans, rice varieties and wheat saw decreasing wholesale prices except dry maize and Shangi Irish potatoes which recorded slight increase of 2.52% and 3.9% respectively. Nairobi is a populated city, and rising prices are a result of high demand, rising fuel prices, which result in higher transportation costs, and the availability of middlemen.

In the Nakuru region, most commodities recorded reduced and stable wholesale and retail prices. Most dry beans recorded decreasing wholesale prices ranging between 2% and 9% except for Mwiternia and Red kidney beans which saw increasing wholesale prices of 1.7% and 2% respectively. Dry maize, and dry wheat recorded decreased wholesale prices of 7% and 3% respectively. Because most food supplies are in season and available in Nakuru, one of the country's primary producing regions, prices have decreased and remained consistent.

When wholesale and retail pricing for different food commodities between weeks 5 and 1 were compared, Nyeri

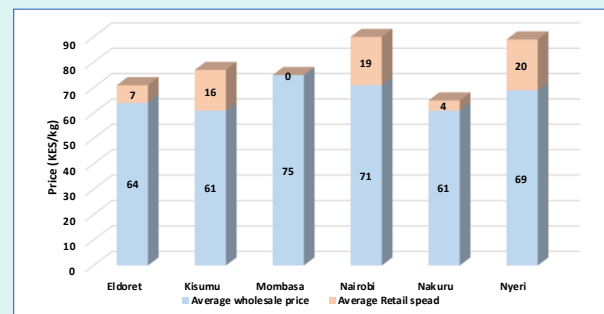
## FOCUS ON MAIZE ACROSS SELECTED REGIONS

The production of maize is one of the most major agricultural operations in Kenya, and because it makes a large contribution to both food security and the national economy, its availability is seen as an indication of food security. Warm season crops like maize can thrive in a variety of soil types. Both large-scale and small-scale maize production occurs in the top seven counties of Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Bungoma, Narok, Nakuru, Kakamega, and Nandi. Kenya is a diverse country with various ecological zones, each with its unique maize varieties. The following are some of the common maize varieties grown in Kenya; hybrid, open pollinated varieties (OPVs), high altitude maize and quality protein maize (QPM).

In major growing areas, maize is planted during the long rain/main season in March and April and harvested from September to November. For short season varieties, maize matures after 3-4 months compared to 6-8 months for the long maturity seasons. Maize is very often consumed with beans, or processed to flour to form *ugali* which is frequently served with meat, vegetables, and pulses. The crop's byproducts are fed to cattle and poultry, so nothing from the harvest is wasted.

Wholesale and retail prices for maize declined in August in most regions except for Nairobi due to the surplus occasioned by favourable weather, and availability of inputs. Maize farmers in most parts of the Western Region have a reason to be happy after their area experienced a record crop that caused a sharp decline in the price of the local commodity, known as *gorogoro*, from Sh.230 to Sh.80 per 2-kilogram tin. It is evident that residents adhered to government calls during the planting season and properly used the subsidized fertilizers, resulting in high yields (Kenya News Agency, September 2023).

Figure 1: Average wholesale and retail price spreads of maize (KES/kg) in selected regions



Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of August 2023.

region saw both increasing and decreasing trends. Due to the abundance of food items in this region and neighboring counties, the prices of the majority of dry bean, maize, and certain rice varieties decreased.

## Comparison of National Average Prices between July and June

A comparison of overall prices (national averages for all commodities) for July and August (Table 2) shows stable and slight decrease of wholesale and retail prices for most commodities, and slight increase for a few commodities, mostly some rice varieties. Most commodities saw stable retail and wholesale prices (between 3% and -4%) and a slight decrease of between 4% and 13%. Food commodities that saw

slight increase of greater than 2% but less than 8% wholesale and retail prices included some rice varieties (Basmati, Biriani, and Tamtam). Due to increasing demand and rising fuel prices, which led to high transportation costs, Irish potatoes saw a 7% increase in retail price. A stable decline in wholesale and retail prices for most commodities between July and August 2023 is attributable to surplus of commodities from various producing regions in the country.

**Table 2: Comparison of July and August prices**

Product	Variety	Average Wholesale Price (Kes/Kg)		Percentage change	Average Retail Price (Kes/ Kg)		Percentage change
		July	August		July	August	
Dry maize	Maize	74	67	-9%	88	78	-11%
Dry beans	Army green	175	172	-2%	191	182	-5%
	Black beans (Njahi)	170	175	3%	207	203	-2%
	Green/yellow	167	154	-8%	198	189	-5%
	Mwitmania	154	139	-10%	174	160	-8%
	Nyayo	155	149	-4%	184	178	-3%
	Pinto beans	146	132	-10%	195	191	-2%
	Red kidney	150	145	-3%	194	192	-1%
	Rosecoco	166	159	-4%	194	185	-5%
	Saitoti	125	125	0%	150	150	0%
Wairimu	131	125	-5%	157	152	-3%	
Irish potatoes	Shangi	37	37	0%	55	59	7%
Rice	Ahero	128	119	-7%	163	160	-2%
	Basmati	136	140	3%	160	164	3%
	Biriani	105	113	8%	130	138	6%
	Fatma rice	255	255	0%	260	269	3%
	Mpunga	160	160	0%	170	170	0%
	Pakistan	139	121	-13%	149	146	-2%
	Pishori grade 1	162	164	1%	192	190	-1%
	Pishori grade 2	140	141	1%	178	177	-1%
	Sindano	136	137	1%	160	163	2%
	Sunrice	255	255	0%	260	260	0%
Tamtam	140	149	6%	150	159	6%	
Wheat	Wheat	70	71	1%	86	88	2%

**Key**

<3 but >-4	Stable
>-4 but <-13	Slight Decrease
>2 but <8	Slight Increase

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month August 2023

## Outlook for the Month of September

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

- The prices of some food items including maize, and beans are expected to drop due to increased supply resulting from bumper harvest due to favourable weather.
- Prices of wheat and rice are expected to increase due to reduced local production, high cost of imports occasioned by a weaker shilling, and global events such as the conflict in Ukraine.
- Since July, Irish potato prices have generally been falling. This trend is projected to continue until the end of September, when prices are predicted to begin to rise once more.

### FOCUS ON NAIROBI REGION

Kenya's capital and most populated city is Nairobi, which also serves as the country's economic and cultural hub. The city's food comes from all over the nation, as well as imports from nearby East African countries and other local and international producers. Pricing for target crops were obtained from the Nyamakima and Wakulima (Marikiti) wholesale markets, which are Nairobi's major grain and fresh produce marketplaces, respectively. Every day of the week, Nyamakima market is open from 6 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

Maize came from Western part of Kenya, while beans came from Meru, Narok, and Taita Taveta Counties as well as Busia County-Kenya. Rice was from Mombasa, and Kirinyaga Counties (Mwea irrigation scheme). While wheat was generated from Narok, and Taita-Taveta Counties. Several varieties of rice were imported from Asia (India, Pakistan, and Vietnam). Prices for Irish potatoes were collected from the Marikiti wholesale market, the biggest fresh produce market in the area, which is open all day for retailers and from 3-5 a.m. for wholesalers. Among the traders who frequent the market are farmers, wholesalers, brokers, retailers, vendors, handcart pushers, and those who carry luggage on their backs or shoulders to various bus stops. Irish potatoes were sourced from Narok County, Kinangop in Nyahururu county and Kinamba in Laikipia county. Irish potato prices were much higher than those in other regions even though the crop was in season. This was brought on by the strong demand for the product, which is frequently consumed in the city as chips or French fries; high fuel costs, which increased the expense of transportation; and the use of middlemen.

**Table 3: Average Retail and Wholesale Prices, Nairobi Region**

Product	Variety	Average w/sale price (KES/kg)					Nairobi average w/sale price (KES/kg)	Nairobi average of retail price (KES/kg)
		Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5		
Dry beans	Black beans (Njahi)	172	170	170	170	170	170	190
	Green/yellow	178	178	172	170	156	172	189
	Mwitemania		150	150	150	150	150	172
	Nyayo	159	156	156	156	139	154	179
	Rosecoco	172	172	172	172	171	172	190
	Wairimu	139	139	137	137	137	138	160
Dry maize	Maize	70	71	72	69	72	71	90
Irish potatoes	Shangi	77	74	80	79	80	78	89
Rice	Basmati	144	144	137	134	134	139	160
	Pishori grade 1	185	180	180	180	170	179	204
	Sindano	102	104	104	104	94	102	127
Wheat	Wheat	70	68	65	65	65	67	90

Source: Daily Market Survey for the month of August 2023.

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## 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.

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## 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<sup>1</sup>.

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).

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<sup>1</sup> 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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