



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Agricultural Inputs and Commodity Price Bulletin

in the Syrian Arab Republic

January 2024–Issue #25



Background

Agriculture, including crop and animal husbandry, forestry, fisheries and agro-processing, post-harvest handling and marketing, provides a source of livelihoods for most smallholder farmers in the Syrian Arab Republic (SAR). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Syria works on strengthening value chains and food production systems by building technical and productive capacity of stakeholders, mainly farmers, expanding their knowledge and understanding of the local context and situation by sharing reports that aim to make agricultural production more sustainable, gender sensitive, market-driven and climate smart. The Organization in Syria releases the *“Monthly Agriculture Input and Commodity Price Bulletin - AICPB”*, which provides timely insights from 35 districts across Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus, Al-Hasakeh and Dar’a governorates. The purpose of the bulletin is to inform relevant stakeholders, including the Food Security and Agriculture (FSA) partners supporting agricultural and food security interventions in the country, about the prevailing price trends of agricultural inputs and commodities. The bulletin is a periodic resource as markets and market information, play an important role in enhancing food security, income generation, resilience and rural-urban market linkages. Regular dissemination of market information benefits smallholder farmers in their market-oriented production endeavor.

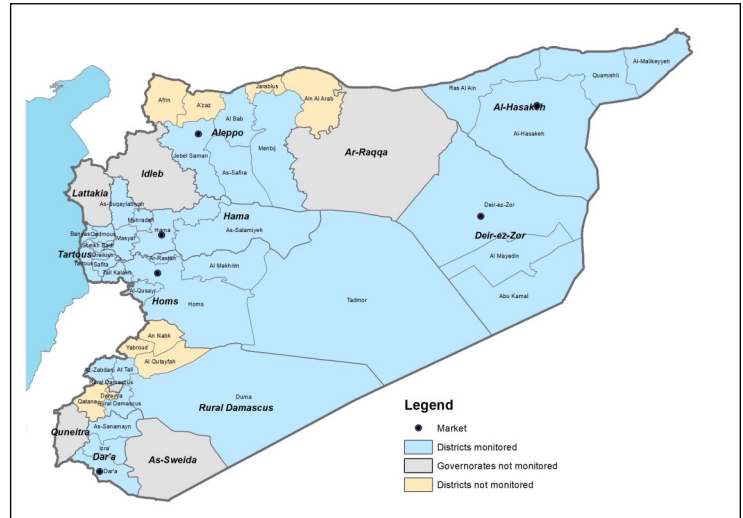


Figure 1: Markets monitored by FAO country office on a monthly basis.

Map source: UN – OCHA Feb 2021.

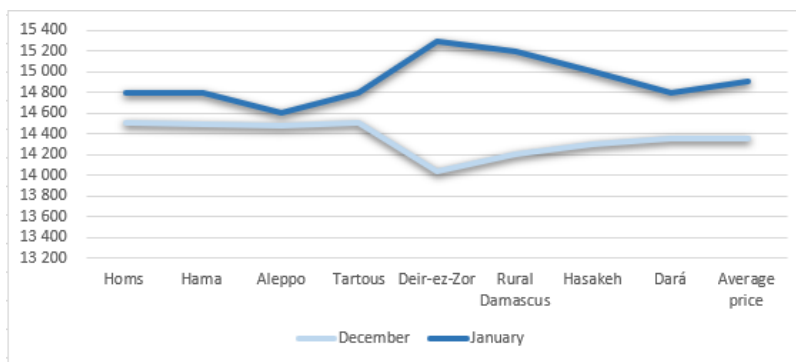
Key Highlights

- ◆ There was a significant increase in transportation fees for food commodities, agricultural products and agricultural inputs, most notably for the shipment of greenhouse-produced fresh vegetables from the coastal area. This is due to the newly set arrangement of providing transportation vehicles with diesel fuel at the non-subsidized price of 11 880 SYP/litre, including the limited eligibility of subsidized diesel fuel for public transportation vehicles and agricultural tractors.
- ◆ The Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform (MAAR) announced that the need for urea fertilizer for wheat production in this winter cropping season is 100 thousand tons. At least 50 thousand tons of urea fertilizer has already been imported through the port with internal procurement from the public fertilizer factory in Homs set to cover an additional estimated 29 thousand tons.
- ◆ Severe weather conditions affected agricultural production in the coastal areas during this reporting period, specifically Tartous governorate. The adverse weather was characterised by cyclones and floods that destroyed hundreds of greenhouses which were planted with different types of fresh vegetables.
- ◆ Only 30 628 hectares of legumes have been planted for the 2023 - 2024 winter cropping season, and this is below the cultivation plan of 106 000 hectares set for legumes. The legumes include fava beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas. On the other hand, 15 892 tons of cotton have been received by official entities and the plan is to plant 14 419 hectares for the 2024 summer season.

Exchange Rate

In January 2024, the local currency recorded a slight depreciation against the USD (4 percent m-o-m decrease). However, this slight decrease is double the decrease of the last monitored month and it comes after four months of a similar slight devaluation of the local currency. On average, the informal exchange rate in January 2024 was 14 911 SYP/USD.

Note: The FAO market bulletin monitors prices of agriculture inputs and products in the official domestic currency – Syrian Pound (SYP) - and does not specifically analyze price changes in any other foreign currencies. The price trends, whether increase or decrease, are therefore in reference to the domestic currency.



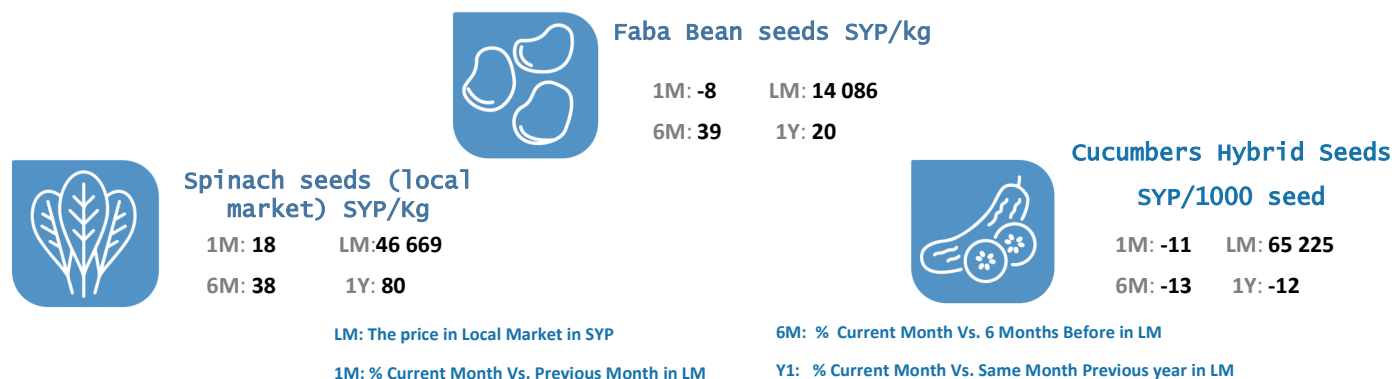
Source: Monthly survey conducted by FAO field staff

Note: The exchange rate was 50 SYP/USD before the crisis in 2012.

Agricultural Inputs

Most winter crops and vegetable seeds remained available across the monitored governorates during the reporting period. For cereal seed prices, barley remained constant and local wheat seeds recorded a slight increase by 7 percent m-o-m, as did legume seed prices with a limited increase of 2 percent m-o-m for both chickpea and lentil, while there was a slight decrease for fava bean and pea seeds by 8 percent and 1 percent respectively. For winter vegetable seed prices, the price remained constant for lettuce. Carrot and cabbage saw slight increases by 8 percent and 4 percent m-o-m respectively, while spinach recorded a moderate increase by 17 percent m-o-m due to the increased demand for planting in Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Hama and the coastal area.

Summer crop seed prices remained constant for cotton and maize, while there was a very slight increase for bean seeds by 1 percent m-o-m and a slight increase for soyabean seeds (8 percent m-o-m). For summer vegetables, seed prices saw slight changes ranging between 5 percent decrease to 4 percent increase on m-o-m and the only notable variation was for hybrid cucumber seeds due to the increasing demand as greenhouse cultivation is in progress.



Agro-chemicals

In January 2024, fertilizer prices recorded slight increases for ammonium nitrate, super phosphate and NPK by 6, 4 and 8 percent m-o-m respectively, while urea prices remained constant.

Generally, all monitored insecticides, fungicides and herbicides were available across all governorates. The price changes for monitored agro-chemicals remained generally limited for insecticides and herbicides, while fungicides recorded a slight to moderate increase due to increased demand attributed to the humid weather conditions coupled with high temperature, and increased risk of fungal infections during the winter.

Responding to the effects of climate change on pest and disease life cycles as well as the prevailing difficult socio-economic situation, sector partners and relevant stakeholders should continue providing farmers with technical trainings on more effective and climate-smart practices (CSA), such as integrated pest management (IPM) and integrated soil fertility management (ISFM). This will help farmers boost their productivity despite the high cost of agro-chemicals.

Items		Unit	Rural Damascus	Homs	Hama	Aleppo	Deir-ez-Zur	Tartous	Hasakeh	Dará	Average price	
Fertilizer	Top dressing	Urea (Agriculture)	bag(50 kg)	400 000			400 000	400 000			400 000	400 000
		Urea (Granular)	bag(50 kg)	415 000	600 000	600 000	561 250	423 333	600 000	400 000	750 000	545 938
		Nitrate (Liquid) (Local Market)	lt	30 000	28 000	28 000	43 800		28 000	28 000	75 000	35 053
	Basal	Phosphate fertilizers	bag(50 kg)	300 000			300 000	300 000			300 000	300 000
		Phosphate fertilizers (Local Market)	bag(50 kg)	150 000	311 000	311 900	325 000	375 000	311 700	1083 000	650 000	343 267
		NPK (Local Market)	kg	30 000	41 000	41 900	43 800	55 000	41 700	35 500	70 000	44 863
Pesticides	Insecticide	(Dusts, Granules, Wettable powders)										
		Mythomel	kg	235 000	325 000	325 000	876 000	22 500	325 000	205 000	430 000	342 938
		Acetamiprid	kg	170 300	226 000	226 900	329 300	21 500	226 700	205 000	350 000	219 463
		(Liquids)										
		Dimethoate	lt	140 600	211 000	211 900	200 595	153 333	211 700	170 000	235 000	191 766
	Delta Methrin	lt	165 400	216 000	216 900	234 115	135 500	216 700	163 750	250 000	199 796	
	Fungicide	(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)										
		Imopropanate-methal	kg	185 200	321 000	321 900	132 235	240 000	321 700	191 250	315 000	253 536
		Trifloxystrobin	kg	146 000	341 000	341 900	1868 800	300 000	341 700	350 000		527 057
		(Liquids)										
		Propamocarb Hydrochloride	lt	143 000	233 000	233 900	192 560	300 000	233 700	169 500	240 000	218 208
	Herbicide	(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)										
		sulfonyl urea	kg	265 000	409 000	409 900	160 600	140 000	409 700	391 750	250 000	304 494
		Glyphosate Equivalent	kg	135 200	206 500	207 400	170 870	130 000	207 200	740 000		256 739
		(Liquids)										
glyphosate		lt	125 800	151 000	151 900	110 225	118 333	151 700	141 500	140 000	136 307	
Fluroxypyr-methal		lt	156 000	266 000	266 900	212 605	150 000	266 700	296 000	250 000	233 026	
Trifluralin	lt	116 000	201 000	201 900	165 985	145 000	201 700	110 000	192 000	166 698		

Livestock feed

With the improved level of precipitation realized in January 2024, the condition of natural pastures has improved and the demand for some types of fodder has generally declined in some locations. The price of cotton meal and wheat straw decreased by 8 and 4 percent m-o-m respectively, while the price barley and soya bean meal remained constant. Slight increase was also noted for the rest of the fodder types monitored by FAO, ranging between 1 to 9 percent m-o-m.

It is still recommended to provide farmers with the knowledge needed to give good fodder mixtures to their animals so that they can balance between the needs of purchasing fodder items and relying on natural pastures.



Barley grain

1M: 0 LM:3 215
6M: -3 1Y: 5

SYP/kg



Maize

1M: 6 LM:4 407
6M: 7 1Y:26

SYP/kg



Cottonseed meal

1M: -8 LM:8 015
6M: 11 1Y: 40

SYP/kg



Wheat bran

1M: 9 LM:2 225
6M: 23 1Y: 38

SYP/kg



wheat straw

1M: -4 LM:772
6M: 5 1Y: 13

SYP/kg



Crop residues

1M: 5 LM:1 045
6M: 11 1Y: 5

SYP/kg



Soybean meal

1M: 0 LM:9 209
6M: 14 1Y: 40

SYP/kg



Poultry feed for Meat production

1M: 7 LM:9 152
6M: 12 1Y: 34

SYP/kg



Poultry feed for Egg production

1M: 4 LM:9 087
6M: 11 1Y: 38

SYP/kg



Cattle feed

1M: 2 LM:5 498
6M: 9 1Y: 30

SYP/kg

1M: % Current Month Vs. Same Month Previous year in LM

LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

Y1: % Current Month Vs. Previous year in LM

6M: % Current Month Vs. 6 Months Before in LM

Live Animals



Sheep SYP/kg

1M: 17 LM: 63 179
3M: 20 1Y: 53



Sheep female SYP/Head

1M: 23 LM: 1 961 500
3M: 15 1Y: 54



Calf SYP/Kg

1M: 15 LM: 61 356
3M: 9 1Y: 54



Dairy Cow SYP/Head

1M: 36 LM: 32 760 883
3M: 26 1Y: 120

1M: % Current Month Vs. Previous Month in LM

LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

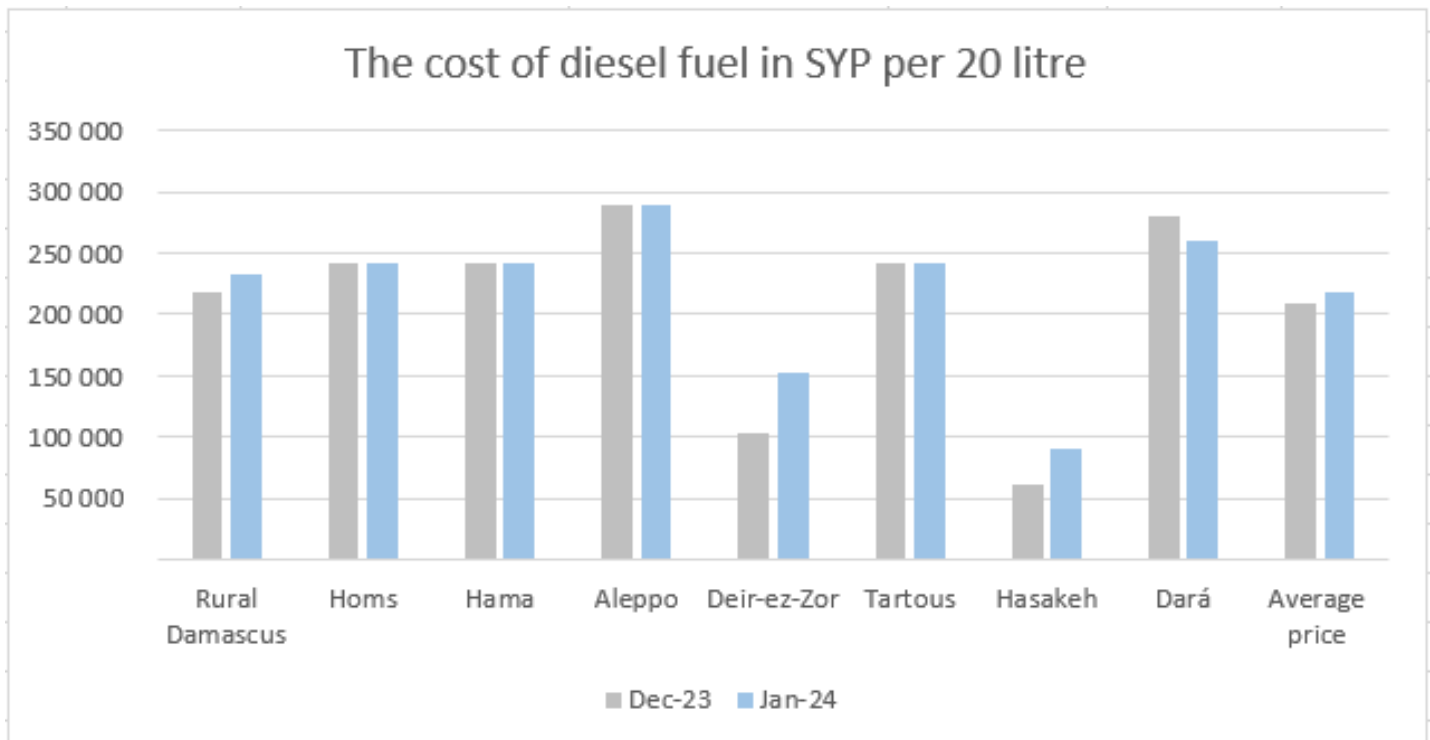
Y1: % Current Month Vs. Same Month in Previous Year

3M: % Current Month Vs. 3 Months Before in LM

Diesel Fuel (20 liters)

In January 2024, a new official arrangement was set to provide transportation vehicles with diesel fuel. Only public transportation vehicles and agricultural tractors are now eligible to buy subsidized diesel fuel, while owners of other vehicles must purchase diesel fuel at the new non-subsidized price of 11 880 SYP/litre. This reflects a price increase of at least 83 percent. This new arrangement directly affected shipping fees for food commodities, agricultural products and agricultural inputs, and notably the shipment of fresh vegetables produced in greenhouses from the coastal area.

During the same reporting period, the informal diesel fuel price recorded an increase of 4 percent m-o-m, reaching 218 929 SYP/litre on average. This increase has occurred during a period where no major demand has been observed, especially for agricultural and land preparation purposes. This slight increase could be attributed to the currency fluctuation, official price increase reported above or speculation by informal traders.



Food Items

In January 2024, while the prices of most monitored food items recorded slight changes ranging between 2 percent decrease to 9 percent increase on m-o-m. The most significant increases were noted for tomato and eggplant, rising by 25 and 30 percent m-o-m respectively. This is linked to the increased transportation cost of greenhouse produce from the coastal area, likely attributed to the ripple effect of the latest announced diesel fuel price.

For a more detailed analysis of food items and market price trends, please refer to the WFP Market Price Bulletins for Syria, which can be found on the official Syria Food Security Cluster (FSC) website:

<https://fscluster.org/search?text=wfp-syria-price-bulletin>

Items	M-O-M
Bread	↑ 29%
Flour	↑ 10%
Sugar	↑ 5%
Rice	↑ 4%
Olive oil	↓ -1%
Sunflower oil	↓ -1%
Cow Meat (Calf)	↑ 2%
Chicken Meat	↓ -3%
Sheep Meat	↑ 7%
Fish Meat /Sea	→ 0%
Fish Meat /Rivers	↑ 1%
Eggs crate	↓ -1%
Sheep Milk	↓ -4%
Cow Milk	↑ 10%
Tomatoes	↑ 26%
Eggplant	↑ 30%
Potatoes	→ 0%

1M: % Current Month Vs. Previous Month in LM

LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

Y1: % Current Month Vs. year before in LM

6M: % Current Month Vs. 6 Months Before in LM

Bread



SYP/kg

1M: 29 LM:548
6M: 52 1Y: 74

Rice



SYP/kg

1M: 4 LM:19 688
6M: 12 1Y: 51

Chicken Meat



SYP/kg

1M: -3 LM:41 700
6M: 10 1Y: 36

Sunflower oil



SYP/Litre

1M:-1 LM:26 257
6M:8 1Y: 27

Flour



SYP/kg

1M: 10 LM:8 254
6M: 27 1Y: 51

Egg



SYP/(1800—2000)g

1M: -1 LM:58 865
6M: 16 1Y: 58

Cow Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 2 LM:126 738
6M: 19 1Y: 58

Tomato



SYP/kg

1M: 26 LM:8 000
6M: 79 1Y: 118

Sugar



SYP/kg

1M: 5 LM:15 488
6M: 8 1Y: 39

Cow milk



SYP/litre

1M:10 LM:6 949
6M: 22 1Y: 48

Sheep Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 7 LM:149 852
6M: 25 1Y: 65

olive oil



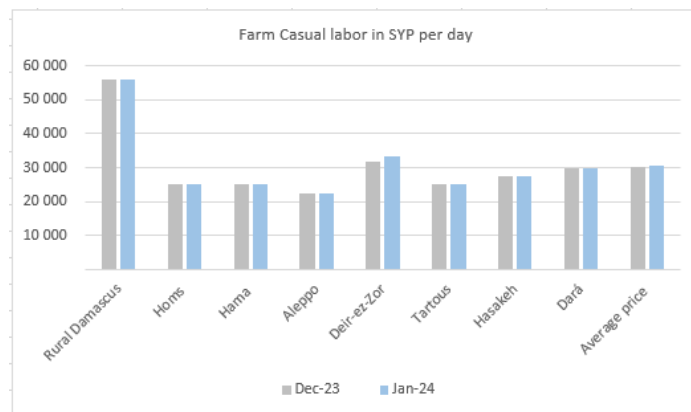
SYP/Litre

1M: -1 LM:74 309
6M: 19 1Y: 67

Other Factors

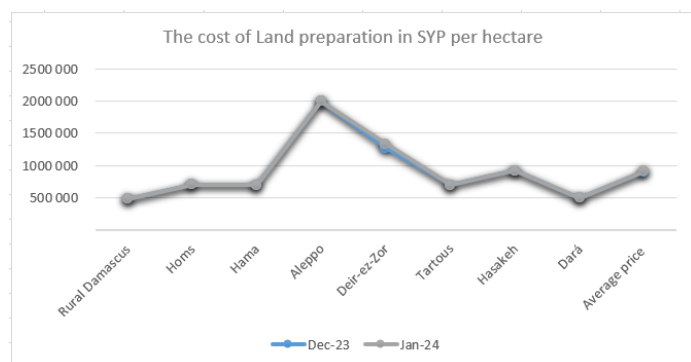
Farm Casual Labour and Wage

In January 2024, the average daily wage for casual farm labour remained stable at 30 542 SYP per day. This could be linked to the low demand for farm casual labour at this stage of the winter cropping season. It is worth mentioning noting that the daily wage rate is still remains inadequate to meet the daily cost of living for an average family.



Mechanized Farm Operations

Since the demand for machinery service during this reporting period was generally low, the cost of hiring mechanized farm implements for land preparation remained stable at 914 842 SYP per hectare. The latest announcement on new diesel fuel prices has had no immediate effect on the cost of land preparation in January 2024.



DISCLAIMER

The information in this bulletin comes from monthly market monitoring surveys conducted informally by FAO field staff. While FAO Syria strives to provide accurate and timely market information, there may be slight unintended technical or factual inaccuracies. Decisions based on information contained herein are the sole responsibility of the reader. All changes in market prices for the monitored agriculture inputs and commodities are in local Syrian currency (SYP). For further insights and analysis on food commodities, WFP also issues regular Market Price Bulletins for Syria and these can be found on the official Syria Food Security Cluster (FSC) website.

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