



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Agricultural Inputs and Commodity Price Bulletin

in the Syrian Arab Republic

February 2023– Issue #14



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.

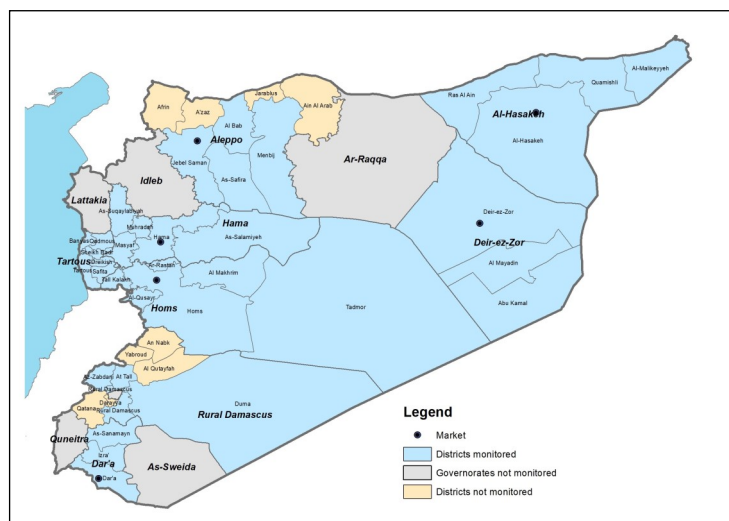


Figure 1: Markets monitored by FAO country office on a monthly basis.

Map source: UN – OCHA Feb 2021.

Key Highlights

- ◆ On 6 February, a catastrophic and magnitude 7.7 earthquake impacted northwestern governorates in Syria. The earthquake which was sequenced with several aftershocks, had devastating impacts for Syrians living in Aleppo, Idlib, Hama, Latakia and Tartous. Initial assessments following the earthquake indicate severe damage to agriculture, including crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, as well as rural infrastructure in affected areas. The earthquake-affected areas are vital for the Syria’s agricultural production and food security. The impact of the earthquake has compromised animal health in affected locations and has resulted in the destruction of critical agriculture infrastructure. The earthquake has resulted in a general rise in food prices and this can be attributed to damage to the main market in Lattakia, and to merchants being hesitant to transport items from Lattakia to other markets during the earthquake crisis. During this reporting period, there were also reports of the bridge between Shat-ha city and Al-Aziziya, Al-Rasif and Al-Jaid villages in Hama governorate being affected by the earthquake. This particular bridge is important since it is the shortest route or road for transportation of agricultural produce and inputs to and from the mentioned villages.
- ◆ On the 2nd of February 2023, in an effort to stimulate the flow of more remittances into the country through the official banking channels, the Central Bank of Syria (CBS) officially announced a new floating exchange rate. Furthermore, following the aftermath of the earthquake, the Government of Syria issued a waiver allowing humanitarian organizations to use the new money transfer floating exchange rate. It is important to note that the official exchange rate remained at 4 522 SYP/USD.
- ◆ In February 2023, the price of diesel fuel dropped slightly and this could be attributed to low demand during this reporting period. The average price of diesel fuel decreased 5 percent m-o-m reaching 126 783 SYP per 20 litre, across the monitored sites.

Exchange Rate

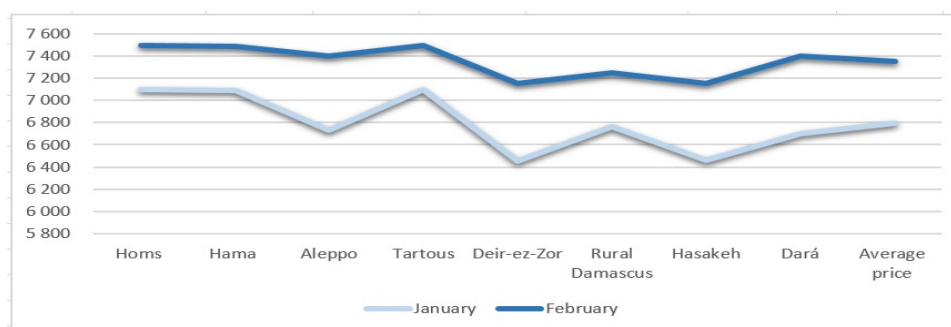
In February 2023, the informal exchange rate trends varied especially from mid-February 2023 onwards, with the local currency improving temporarily and reaching 6 700 SYP/USD. Following this short-lived improvement, the domestic currency depreciated once more, reaching an average of 7 355 SYP/USD. In general, the SYP versus USD informal exchange rate ranged between 6 700 and 7 450 SYP/USD and this reflects an 8 percent m-o-m average depreciation. The brief improvement mentioned above, could be linked to the 2nd of February 2023 CBS newly announced special floating official exchange rate for remittances. It is important to note that the official exchange rate remains at 4 522 SYP/USD.

Note: FAO market bulletin continues to monitor prices in the official domestic currency – SYP - and does not specifically analyse price changes in other foreign currencies. The price trends, whether increase or decrease, are therefore in reference to the local currency and not in USD terms.

Trends of unofficial exchange rate for the last two months (SYP/USD)									
	Homs	Hama	Aleppo	Tartous	Deir-ez-Zor	Rural Damascus	Hasakeh	Dará	Average price
January	7 100	7 090	6 730	7 100	6 450	6 760	6 460	6 700	6 799
February	7 500	7 490	7 400	7 500	7 150	7 250	7 150	7 400	7 355

Source: Monthly survey conducted by FAO field staff

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



Agricultural Inputs

In February 2023, the availability of most winter crops and vegetable were similar to the previous month across monitored governorates. The price of wheat and barley seeds from GOSM and wheat seeds from local markets remained generally constant, while barley seeds in the local market recorded a slight increase (4 percent m-o-m). The price of legume seeds recorded a slight increase (chickpea 11 percent m-o-m, lentil 12 percent m-o-m, faba bean 8 percent m-o-m and pea 4 percent m-o-m), while the price increase for winter vegetables seeds ranged from 1 to 7 percent m-o-m.

In terms of availability of summer crops and vegetables seeds for this reporting month, the trends were generally similar to the previous month across monitored governorates. In February 2023, a significant increase in the price of hybrid summer vegetable seeds was recorded compared to local varieties, notably for tomato at 15 percent m-o-m, cucumber at 37 m-o-m percent and egg-plant at 14 percent m-o-m). The local varieties recorded a slight increase and for example local varieties for cucumber seed increased by 6 percent m-o-m yet imported hybrid cucumber seed recorded a 37 m-o-m increase as mentioned above. The price of Soybean seeds witnessed a moderate increase (33 percent m-o-m).



Soyabean seeds SYP/kg

1M: **33** LM: **6 538**
6M: **42** 1Y: **51**



Lentil seeds SYP/kg

1M: **3** LM: **21 133**
6M: **34** 1Y: **55**



Cucumber Hybrid seeds SYP/1000 seed

1M: **38** LM: **144 748**
6M: **-3** 1Y: **24**

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

LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

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

Agro-chemicals

During February 2023, basal and top dressing fertilizers remained generally available across all monitored markets though the prices rose slightly. The price of Urea increased by 5 percent m-o-m, liquid ammonium nitrate 8 percent m-o-m and the price of NPK went up 8 percent m-o-m, while the price of super phosphate remained constant. The price for subsidized fertilizers also remained constant since the last adjustment announced by government.

In general, most insecticides, fungicides and herbicides were available across all monitored markets locations, except of Trifloxystrobin (a fungicide) and the Glyphosate Equivalent (a herbicide), which were not available in Dará.

The prices of monitored agro-chemicals generally increased in February 2023 and this can be attributed to increased seasonal demand. This is coupled with the continued depreciation of the local currency. The notable increases reported in February 2023 are mainly for mythomel (a granular insecticide) and delta methrin (a liquid insecticide), rising by 26 percent and 21 percent m-o-m respectively. Thiophanate-methyl (a granular fungicide) also rose significantly by 27 percent m-o-m and haloxyfop-R-methyl (a liquid herbicide) by 23 percent m-o-m.

It is worth to mention that FAO's vision is to promote sustainable agricultural production practices and enhance productivity, through achieving higher production while conserving natural resources, reducing the negative impact on the environment and enhancing the natural capital. FAO once again encourages sector partners to continue supporting vulnerable and resource-constrained farmers with interventions that improve access to high quality and critical inputs to support local food production, coupled with relevant agricultural training on integrated pest management (IPM), integrated weed management (IWM) and integrated soil fertility management (ISFM) practices such as compost making and application. The afore-mentioned techniques and approaches, will likely cushion farmers against market-related shocks and ensure that farmers rely less on synthetic or inorganic agro-chemicals.

Items		Unit	Rural Damascus	Homs	Hama	Aleppo	Deir-ez-Zur	Tartous	Hasakeh	Dará	Average price	
Fertilizer	Top dressing	Urea (Agriculture Bank)	bag(50 kg)	150 000			150 000	150 000		150 000	150 000	
		Urea (Granular) Local Market	bag(50 kg)	375 000	310 000	310 000	285 000	282 000	310 000	252 500	300 000	303 063
		Nitrate (Liquid) (Local Market)	lt	27 000	14 500	14 500	22 200	14 333	14 500	16 000	35 000	19 754
	Basal	Phosphate fertilizers (Agriculture Bank)	bag(50 kg)	102 500	102 500	102 500	102 500	102 500	102 500		102 500	102 500
		Phosphate fertilizers (Local Market)	bag(50 kg)	140 000	206 000	206 900	100 000	138 333	206 700	175 000	135 000	163 492
		NPK (Local Market)	kg	23 000	23 500	24 400	16 280	18 667	24 200	17 000	28 000	21 881
Pesticides	Insecticide	(Dusts, Granules, Wettable powders)										
		Mythomel	kg	221 650	225 000	225 000	444 000	185 000	225 000	90 000	225 000	230 081
		Acetamiprid	kg	140 635	143 000	143 900	121 400	93 667	143 700	75 750	137 000	124 881
		(Liquids)										
		Dimethoate	lt	130 300	111 000	111 900	112 200	54 667	111 700	78 500	127 000	104 658
		Delta Methrin	lt	140 635	143 000	143 900	121 400	93 667	143 700	75 750	137 000	124 881
	Fungicide	(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)										
		Thiophanate-methyl	kg	171 900	171 000	171 900	148 000	58 667	171 700	78 500	170 000	142 708
		Trifloxystrobin	kg	132 000	166 000	166 900	947 200	240 000	166 700	225 000		291 971
		(Liquids)										
		Propamocarb Hydrochloride	lt	125 000	131 000	131 900	107 000	57 333	131 700	78 000	125 000	110 867
		(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)										
	Herbicide	sulfonyl urea	kg	234 000	161 000	161 900	81 400	436 667	161 700	285 000	140 000	207 708
		Glyphosate Equivalent	kg	122 120	100 000	100 900	105 500	50 000	100 700	70 000		92 746
		(Liquids)										
glyphosate		lt	105 500	97 000	97 900	68 000	49 333	97 700	60 000	78 000	81 679	
Haloxyfop-R-methyl		lt	138 130	146 000	146 900	119 350	83 333	146 700	129 500	135 000	130 614	
Trifluralin		lt	102 000	116 000	116 900	88 200	45 000	116 700	55 000	100 000	92 475	

Livestock feed

Livestock feed (i.e. processed stock feed) remained generally available, similar to the situation in the previous month, across all monitored governorates. Though generally available, some slight increases were observed, ranging between 1 to 12 percent m-o-m, with Cottonseed recording a price increase of 17 percent m-o-m rising to 4 260 SYP per Kg.

Due to the climate-induced erratic rainfall, water scarcity and absence of human-planted forage crops, livestock keepers and pastoral communities do not have adequate access to both natural pastures and cultivated forage and green fodder. The poor precipitation and intermittent dry spells, especially in the northern and southern governorates is affecting fodder production and growth and development of natural pastures. The above challenges have generally resulted in the continued increase of fodder prices, and resultant limited access to high quality fodder for most vulnerable smallholder livestock keepers.



Barley grain

1M: 7 LM:3 004
6M: 20 1Y: 38

SYP/kg



Maize

1M: 3 LM:2 711
6M: 8 1Y: 20

SYP/kg



Cottonseed meal

1M: 18 LM:4 261
6M: 15 1Y: 77

SYP/kg



wheat bran

1M: 1 LM:1 468
6M: 6 1Y: 12

SYP/kg



wheat straw

1M: 12 LM:867
6M: 23 1Y: 22

SYP/kg



Crop residues

1M: 12 LM:1 297
6M: 23 1Y: 25

SYP/kg



Soybean meal

1M: 2 LM:4 833
6M: 19 1Y: 46

SYP/kg



Poultry feed for Meat production

1M: 13 LM:5 330
6M: 35 1Y: 52

SYP/kg



Poultry feed for Egg production

1M: 5 LM:4 505
6M: 31 1Y: 51

SYP/kg



Cattle feed

1M: 6 LM:3 198
6M: 22 1Y: 43

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: 26 700
3M: 46 1Y: 93



Sheep female SYP/Head

1M: 20 LM: 737 000
3M: 50 1Y: 77



Dairy Cow SYP/Head

1M: 12 LM: 7 099 425
3M: 29 1Y: 52



Calf SYP/Kg

1M: 14 LM: 24 450
3M: 43 1Y: 89

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

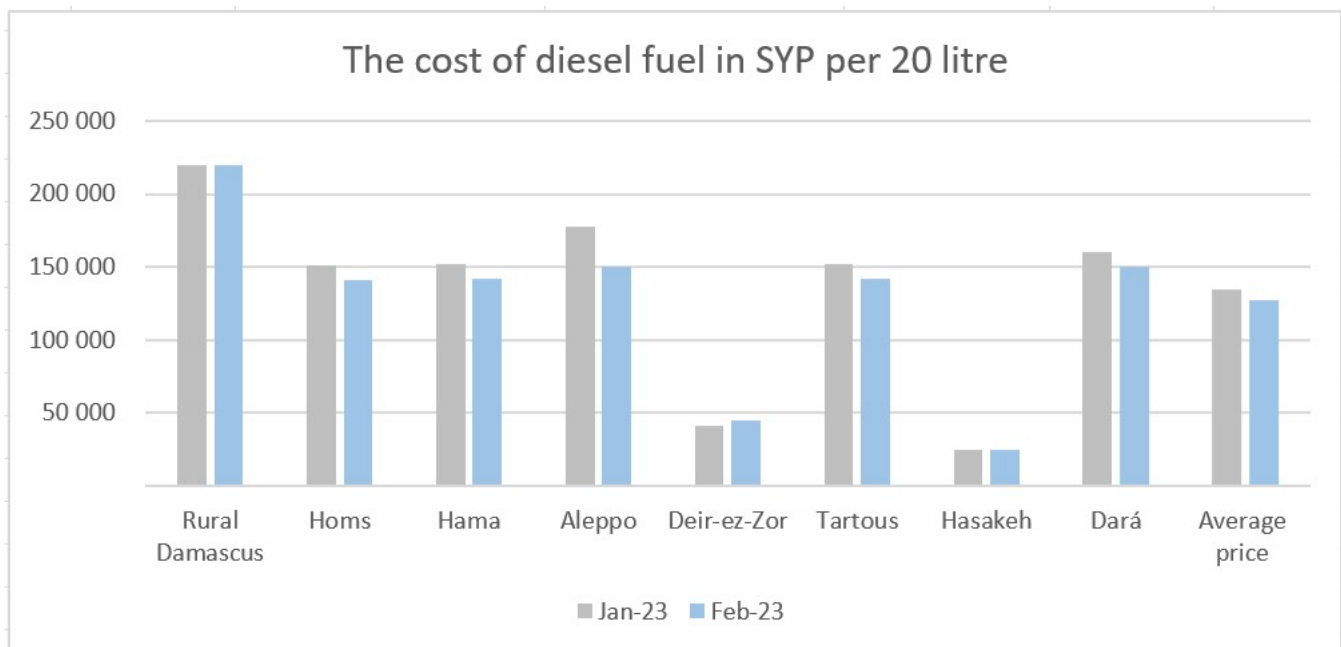
LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

1Y: % Current Month Vs. Same Month in Previous Year

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

Diesel Fuel (20 liters)

In February 2023, the price of diesel fuel continued to drop slightly and this could be attributed to low demand during this reporting period. The average price of diesel fuel decreased 5 percent m-o-m reaching 126 783 SYP per 20 litre, across the monitored sites. A detailed analysis of the diesel fuel price trends reflects a general decrease and this could be attributed to the abovementioned low demand since most field operations, especially land preparation for winter cropping, ended. However, Rural Damascus and Al-Hasakeh, the price of diesel fuel remained generally constant.



Food Items

In February 2023, the prices of most monitored food items increased except for tomato and potato, which recorded slight decrease (3 percent and 12 percent respectively). Notably, the price of meat from different livestock sources continued to increase significantly. The average price of beef increased by 25 percent m-o-m, chicken meat 21 percent m-o-m, sheep meat 19 percent m-o-m, river fish price rose by 27 percent m-o-m and marine fish 19 percent m-o-m. Essentially, access to animal source foods (ASFs) is becoming more challenging especially meat, particularly for the most vulnerable families and groups at risk of malnutrition (i.e. pregnant and lactating women, infants, children and adolescents). For more detailed analysis on food commodities and market price trends, please refer to the WFP Market Price Bulletins for Syria, found on the official Syria Food Security Cluster (FSC) website.

Items	M-O-M
Bread	↑ 1%
Flour	↑ 12%
Sugar	↑ 1%
Rice	↑ 6%
Olive oil	↑ 11%
Sunflower oil	↑ 1%
Cow Meat (Calf)	↑ 25%
Chicken Meat	↑ 21%
Sheep Meat	↑ 19%
Fish Meat /Sea	↑ 19%
Fish Meat /Rivers	↑ 27%
Eggs crate	↑ 4%
Sheep Milk	↑ 7%
Cow Milk	↑ 5%
Tomatoes	↓ -5%
Eggplant	↑ 23%
Potatoes	↓ -12%

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: 1 LM: 267
6M: 5 1Y: 1

Rice



SYP/kg

1M: 6 LM: 8 261
6M: 46 1Y: 73

Chicken Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 21 LM: 21 538
6M: 50 1Y: 76

Sunflower oil



SYP/Litre

1M: 1 LM: 17 257
6M: 14 1Y: 21

Flour



SYP/kg

1M: 12 LM: 4 144
6M: 22 1Y: 33

Egg



SYP/(1800—2000)g

1M: 4 LM: 21 907
6M: 25 1Y: 48

Cow Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 25 LM: 44 883
6M: 53 1Y: 68

Tomato



SYP/kg

1M: -5 LM: 3 005
6M: 52 1Y: 42

Sugar



SYP/kg

1M: 1 LM: 6 865
6M: 22 1Y: 47

Cow milk



SYP/litre

1M: 5 LM: 3 514
6M: 24 1Y: 45

Sheep Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 19 LM: 50 446
6M: 51 1Y: 67

olive oil



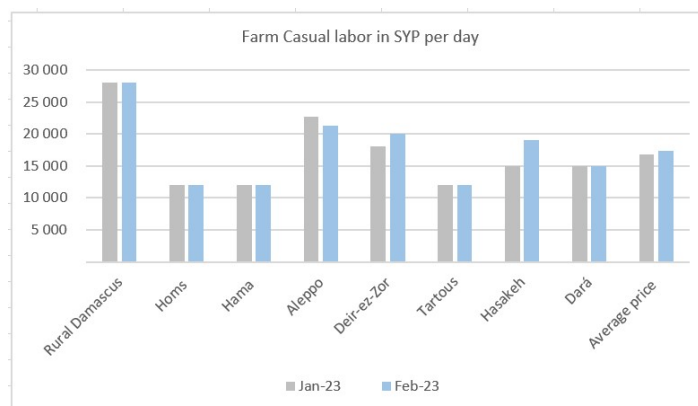
SYP/Litre

1M: 11 LM: 23 809
6M: 32 1Y: 44

Other Factors

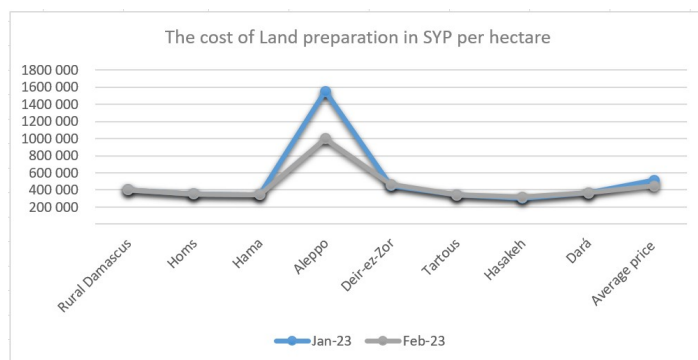
Farm Casual Labour and Wage

In February 2023, the average farm labour wage recorded across monitored sites was 17 406 SYP per day and this reflects a 3 percent m-o-m increase. However, the daily average wage rate remained constant in Rural Damascus, Homs, Hama and Dar'a. The daily farm labour wage increased moderately in Deir-ez-Zor and Al-Hasakeh (11 and 26 percent m-o-m respectively), while Aleppo recorded a slight decrease (7 percent m-o-m). The daily farm labour wage was highest in Rural Damascus (28 000 SYP).



Land Preparation

During February 2023, the cost of land preparation dropped to 448 071 SYP per hectare (12 percent m-o-m). The major confounding factor is the general decrease in the price of diesel fuel prices, combined with low demand for agricultural machinery services due to the advanced cropping season. The continued monitoring of diesel fuel prices and land preparation costs and others, allows FAO and other sector partners to track changes in agricultural operational costs. This helps in the identification of potential issues that may affect food production output and commodity prices.



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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