



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Agricultural Inputs and Commodity Price Bulletin

in the Syrian Arab Republic

December 2023—Issue #24



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.

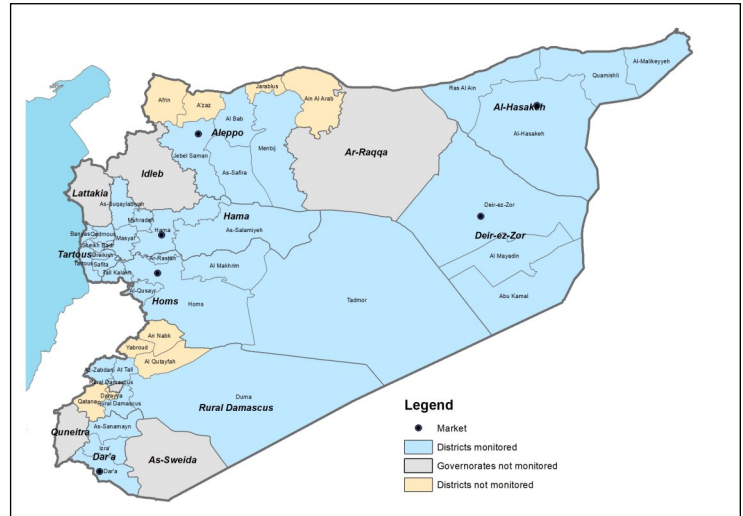


Figure 1: Markets monitored by FAO country office on a monthly basis.

Map source: UN – OCHA Feb 2021.

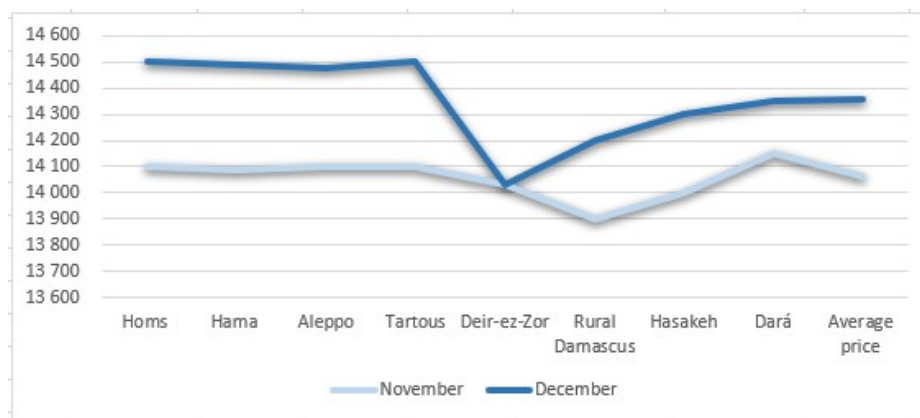
Key Highlights

- ◆ Fuel is generally available in the free market, but the price remains restrictive. This is affecting access for most vulnerable smallholder farmers. Subsidized fuel for agriculture operations remains insufficient. FAO continues to monitor the fuel situation, especially since demand is likely going to increase as the winter cropping season progresses.
- ◆ The Government of Syria announced law number 40 which allows the establishment of joint stock companies for investment in the agricultural sector. The Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform (MAAR) also issued a notice regarding the opportunity of benefiting from the subsidized interest rate official program which covers investments in various agricultural value chains.
- ◆ MAAR announced that about 278 thousand hectares of wheat and 366 thousand hectares of barley have been planted in governmental control areas until December, as well as 12 thousand hectares of legumes which have been planted for this season, also MAAR confirmed that the previously announced price of 4 200 SYP per kg for purchasing wheat grain is an initial price and that the final price will be defined prior to harvesting, taking into consideration production conditions.

Exchange Rate

In December 2023, the depreciation of the domestic currency against the USD was limited as it recorded (2 percent month on month depreciation). It is worth mentioning that December 2023 was the fourth month in succession to witness very slight devaluation of the domestic currency. On average, the informal exchange rate in December 2023 was 14 356 SYP/USD, and this general stability continues to result in price stability for most agricultural inputs, especially imported inputs, including agrochemicals.

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

In December 2023, most winter crops and vegetable seeds were available across the monitored governorates. With the progression of cereal cultivation and distribution of cereal seeds which have been subsidized by the Agricultural Cooperative Bank (ACB), the prices of these seeds in local markets witnessed slight decreases of 9 and 7 percent m-o-m for wheat and barley respectively. Legume seeds prices were varied in their change, while pea seed price remained constant. Chickpea and lentil seed prices recorded slight increases not exceeding 6 percent m-o-m, while fava bean seeds recorded a significant increase of 38 percent m-o-m due to high demand in the central and coastal regions. On the other hand, winter vegetable seed prices recorded slight to moderate decreases as these crops are in harvesting time and there was very low demand for them during the reporting period.

Summer crop seed prices recorded slight increases for maize, soybean and beans by 8, 2 and 4 percent m-o-m respectively, while cotton maintained the same official price. Since summer vegetables are out of season, summer seed prices recorded slight decreases for the hybrid varieties, while local varieties recorded moderate decrease due to generally low demand. The only exception was for hybrid eggplant seeds which recorded a slight increase of 3 percent m-o-m due to some exceptional demand in Hasakeh governorate during the reporting period.



LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

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

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

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

Agro-chemicals

In December 2023, the Agricultural Cooperative Bank (ACB) began distribution of subsidized fertilizers to farmers of cereal crops at the new endorsed prices. The distribution by ACB played a role in limiting the increase of fertilizer prices in local markets compared to the demand for the current winter cropping season, since the recorded increases have not exceeded 4 percent m-o-m.

Generally, all monitored insecticides, fungicides and herbicides were available across all governorates, except for glyphosate which was scarcely available in Dar'a. The price changes for these agro-chemicals remained generally constant for insecticides and fungicides since there was limited demand during this reporting period and only slight increases were recorded in some locations, but not exceeding 4 percent m-o-m. Herbicides recorded slight to moderate price increases ranging between 5 to 11 percent m-o-m due to the demand for them which is linked to the progression of this winter cropping season.

The need is still in place for sector partners and relevant stakeholders to provide farmers with technical trainings on more effective and sustainable good agricultural practices (GAP) and techniques, such as integrated pest management (IPM) and integrated soil fertility management (ISFM), as this will help farmers boost their production despite the high cost of agro-chemicals.

Items		Unit	Rural Damascus	Homs	Hama	Aleppo	Deir-ez-Zur	Tartous	Hasakeh	Dar'a	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	575 000	427 500	600 000	400 000	750 000	545 938
		Nitrate (Liquid) (Local Market)	lt	30 000	28 000	28 000	43 425	25 000	28 000	28 000	70 000	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	236 667	311 700	327 000	650 000	327 908
		NPK (Local Market)	kg	30 000	41 000	41 900	44 100	36 667	41 700	35 500	60 000	41 358
Pesticide	Insecticide	(Dusts, Granules, Wettable powders)										
		Mythomel	kg	235 000	325 000	325 000	868 500	233 333	325 000	205 000	400 000	364 604
		Acetamiprid	kg	170 300	226 000	226 900	305 850	138 333	226 700	205 000	375 000	234 260
		(Liquids)										
		Dimethoate	lt	140 600	183 000	183 900	186 100	128 333	183 700	170 000	225 000	175 079
		Delta Methrin	lt	165 400	183 000	183 900	240 000	135 000	183 700	163 750	235 000	186 219
	Fungicide	(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)										
		Tripropanate-mathal	kg	185 200	301 000	301 900	122 646	130 000	301 700	191 250	290 000	227 962
		Triflozstrobilin	kg	146 000	311 000	311 900	1 852 800	270 000	311 700	350 000		507 629
		(Liquids)										
		Propamocarb Hydrochloride	lt	143 000	222 000	222 900	178 735	101 667	222 700	169 500	220 000	185 063
		Herbicide	(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)									
	sulfonl urea		kg	265 000	366 000	366 900	159 225	483 333	366 700	391 750	235 000	329 239
	Glyphosate Equivalent		kg	135 200	201 000	201 900	185 000	101 667	201 700	740 000		252 352
	(Liquids)											
glyphosate	lt		125 800	151 000	151 900	120 000	106 667	151 700	141 500	140 000	136 071	
Flazoxyp-F-mathal	lt		156 000	261 000	261 900	240 000	158 333	261 700	296 000	250 000	235 617	
Trifluralin	lt	116 000	201 000	201 900	175 000	90 000	201 700	110 000	192 000	160 950		

Livestock feed

In December 2023, there was an improvement in natural pastures due to the acceptable precipitation, causing decreased demand for some fodder items like barley and wheat straw which recorded decreases of 4 and 2 percent m-o-m respectively. Prices of other fodder items like maize and crops residue remained constant for the same reason, while poultry and cattle fodder recorded increases ranging between 2 to 5 percent m-o-m. On the other hand, cotton meal and soybean meal recorded moderate increases compared to the remaining fodder items at 11 and 8 percent m-o-m respectively. Despite the moderate rates of increase, the cumulative increase on the long term is challenging the livestock breeders to secure feed for their herds and animals, which are their only income source.



Barley grain

1M: -4 LM:3 227
6M: 1 1Y: 7

SYP/kg



Maize

1M: 0 LM:4 158
6M: 5 1Y:23

SYP/kg



Cottonseed meal

1M: 11 LM:8 793
6M: 35 1Y: 67

SYP/kg



Wheat bran

1M: 5 LM:2 030
6M: 30 1Y: 19

SYP/kg



wheat straw

1M: -2 LM:808
6M: 21 1Y: 20

SYP/kg



Crop residues

1M: 0 LM:998
6M: 12 1Y: -1

SYP/kg



Soybean meal

1M: 9 LM:9 161
6M: 24 1Y: 48

SYP/kg



Poultry feed for Meat production

1M: 2 LM:8 530
6M: 9 1Y: 32

SYP/kg



Poultry feed for Egg production

1M: 3 LM:8 673
6M: 12 1Y: 40

SYP/kg



Cattle feed

1M: 5 LM:5 398
6M: 13 1Y: 34

SYP/kg

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

LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

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

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

Live Animals



Sheep SYP/kg

1M: 2 LM:54 127
3M: 5 1Y: 42



Sheep female SYP/Head

1M:-10 LM:1 590 521
3M:-8 1Y: 35



Calf SYP/Kg

1M:-22 LM:53 533
3M:-1 1Y: 46



Dairy Cow SYP/Head

1M:-13 LM:24 177 550
3M:-2 1Y: 82

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

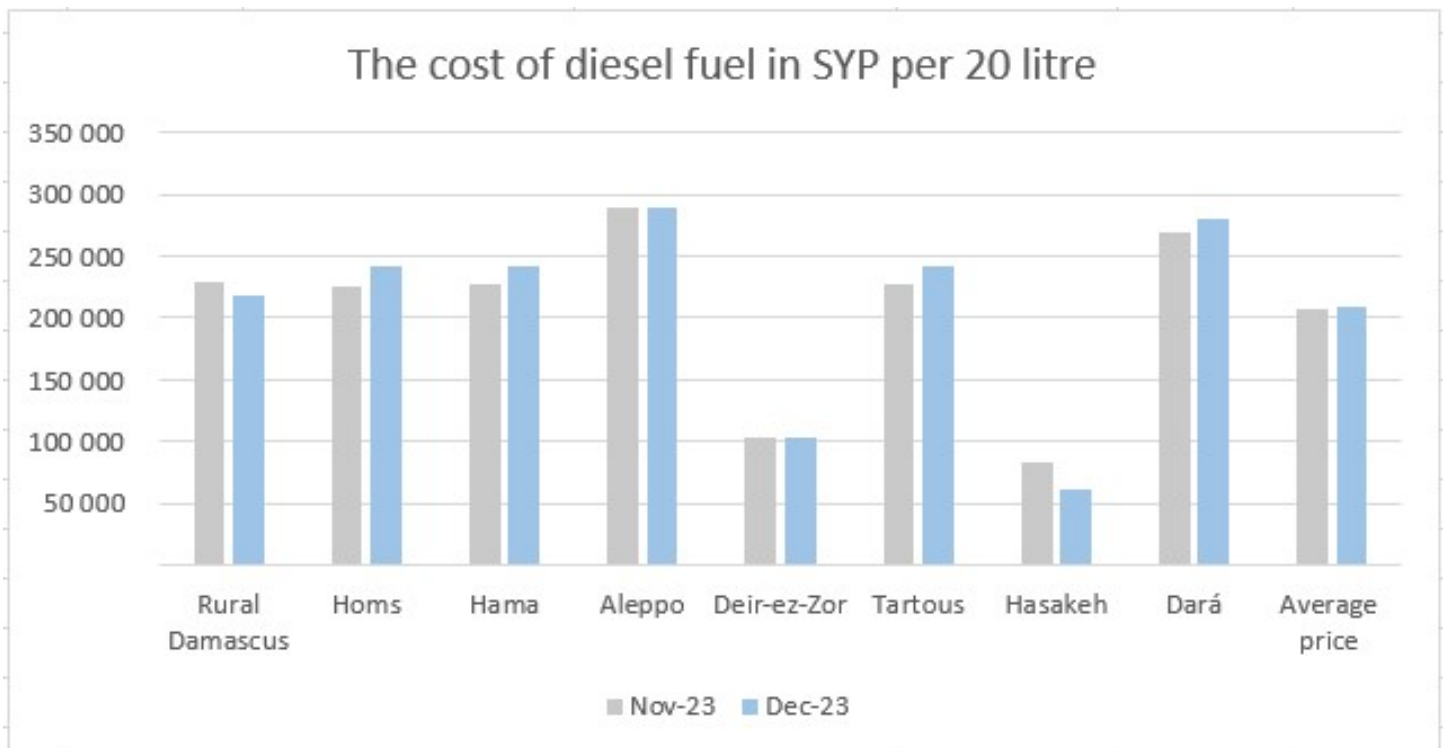
LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

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

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

Diesel Fuel (20 liters)

In December 2023, MAAR began distribution of subsidized diesel to cereal farmers for this winter cropping season. Moreover, this December saw precipitation in most governorates, so the demand for diesel fuel for use in irrigation was limited and the informal diesel fuel price recorded only a slight increase of 1 percent m-o-m, with the average price reaching 209 679 SYP per 20 litres.



Food Items

In December 2023, most animal source food (ASFs) prices recorded slight to moderate increases such as lamb and calf meat (9 percent m-o-m), freshwater fish (11 percent m-o-m), eggs (3 percent m-o-m) and chicken meat at (4 percent m-o-m). Most greenhouse-produced vegetables recorded significant increases of 36 percent m-o-m for tomatoes and 48 percent m-o-m for eggplants, while other monitored food items recorded only slight increases not exceeding 6 percent m-o-m, and some remained constant. The only decreases in food item prices were recorded for both rice and sheep milk with 4 percent m-o-m.

MAAR announced that 10 tons of its aquaculture production of tilapia and common carp fishes will be sold through its centres in the coastal area. The price was set at 32 900 SYP per kg and 30 000 SYP per kg respectively.

For a more detailed analysis of food commodities 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	↑ 12%
Flour	↑ 7%
Sugar	↓ -1%
Rice	↓ -4%
Olive oil	↑ 9%
Sunflower oil	↑ 2%
Cow Meat (Calf)	↑ 9%
Chicken Meat	↑ 4%
Sheep Meat	↑ 10%
Fish Meat /Sea	↑ 3%
Fish Meat /Rivers	↑ 11%
Eggs crate	↑ 3%
Sheep Milk	↓ -4%
Cow Milk	→ 0%
Tomatoes	↑ 36%
Eggplant	↑ 48%
Potatoes	↑ 3%

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

LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

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

Bread



SYP/kg

1M: 12 LM: 423
6M: 26 1Y: 26

Rice



SYP/kg

1M: -4 LM: 18 959
6M: 18 1Y: 57

Chicken Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 4 LM: 42 783
6M: 22 1Y: 51

Sunflower oil



SYP/Litre

1M: 2 LM: 26 425
6M: 17 1Y: 34

Flour



SYP/kg

1M: 7 LM: 7 530
6M: 17 1Y: 47

Egg



SYP/(1800—2000)g

1M: 3 LM: 59 647
6M: 21 1Y: 77

Cow Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 9 LM: 124 185
6M: 28 1Y: 71

Tomato



SYP/kg

1M: 36 LM: 6 355
6M: 68 1Y: 90

Sugar



SYP/kg

1M: -1 LM: 14 764
6M: 10 1Y: 42

Cow milk



SYP/litre

1M: 0 LM: 6 335
6M: 20 1Y: 43

Sheep Meat



SYP/kg

1M: 10 LM: 139 633
6M: 28 1Y: 69

olive oil



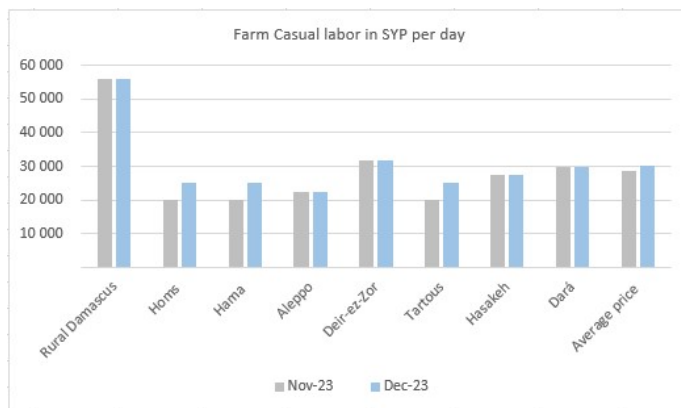
SYP/Litre

1M: 9 LM: 74 934
6M: 35 1Y: 88

Other Factors

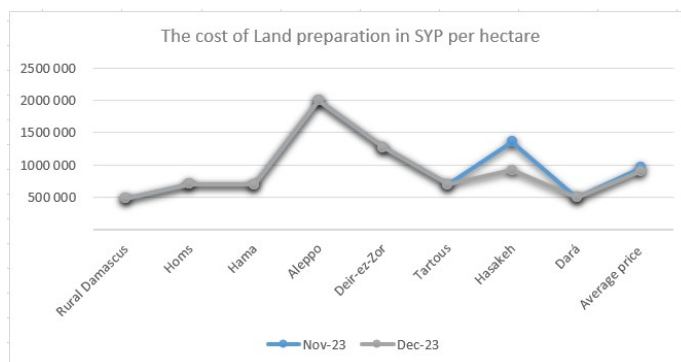
Farm Casual Labour and Wage

In December 2023, the average daily wage for casual farm labour recorded an increase of 6 percent m-o-m reaching 30 333 SYP per day. This could be attributed to the onset of the winter season and the different needed services, as well as the continuous increase in living costs. It is worth mentioning that these increases in daily wages are still not adequate to meet the daily cost of living for an average family.



Mechanized Farm Operations

The relative stability that was recorded for diesel fuel in December 2023 and the ongoing cultivation of winter crops in most fields for this cropping season have reduced demand for these machinery services during the reporting period. A slight decrease of 5 percent m-o-m was recorded and the recorded cost of hiring agricultural machinery services for land preparation reached 906 508 SYP per hectare.



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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