



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



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# Agriculture Input and Commodity Bulletin

## February 2021



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### Key Highlights

- The situation in February 2021 has witnessed continued depreciation of the local Syrian currency resulting in volatility in the exchange market. This subsequently resulted in most prices of agricultural inputs rising, making it out of reach for vulnerable farmers’ in some governorates. Significant price increases were noted for mostly top dressing and phosphate fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, and poultry feed and diesel fuel. There is still a need to address the prevailing economic hardships and limited access to agricultural inputs by most Syrian families across the country in a holistic and multipronged approach.
- The consistent depreciation of the informal exchange rate of the SYP versus USD, as mentioned above, and the weakening of the Syrian economy, will limit the vulnerable farmers’ access to agricultural inputs in the local market because of prevailing high cost. Taking into consideration that the government’s subsidized inputs are unable to meet the farmer’s full requirements. These constraints were further worsened by the Covid-19 impact on supply chains, since importation and exportation of most agricultural inputs and commodities has been affected respectively.
- The electricity and fuel shortage continues to persist sharply in most governorates. This challenge is contributing to the general increase in the agricultural production costs, especially transportation, which limit farmers’ capacity to increase their production and productivity as shortage of

fuel will affect irrigation operations and transportation that will add barriers to access to markets.

- The ongoing market monitoring for February 2021 showed shortage and high prices of agro-chemicals, particularly fertilizers and pesticides, making it almost impossible for farmers to purchase. This will result in limited access to agro-chemicals and it will affect the production levels and quality of produce for most smallholder farmers.
- The shortage of and high prices for poultry, cattle and sheep fodder, coupled with the fragile veterinary services, remain a challenge for livestock keepers. As a result, the livestock products’ prices have sharply increased, making most Syrian families limit the consumption of livestock products. Unfortunately, this is having detrimental effects on most household’s dietary diversity.

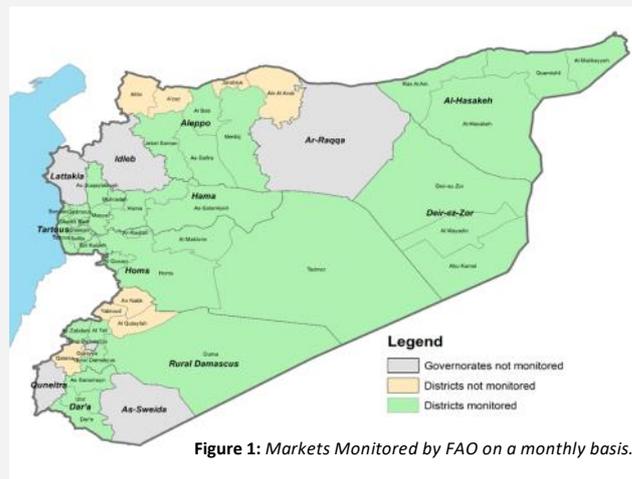


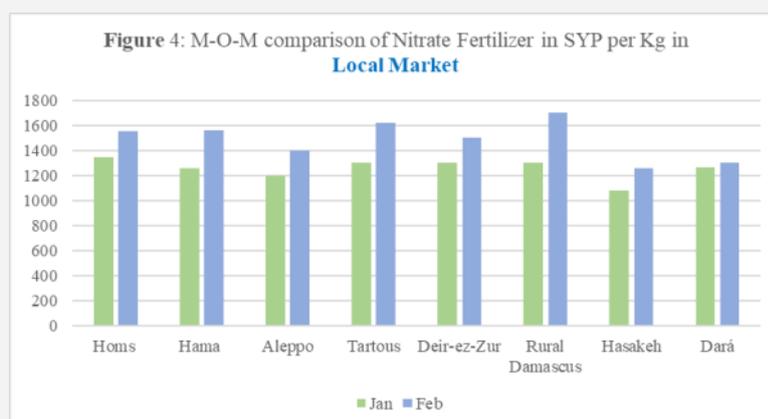
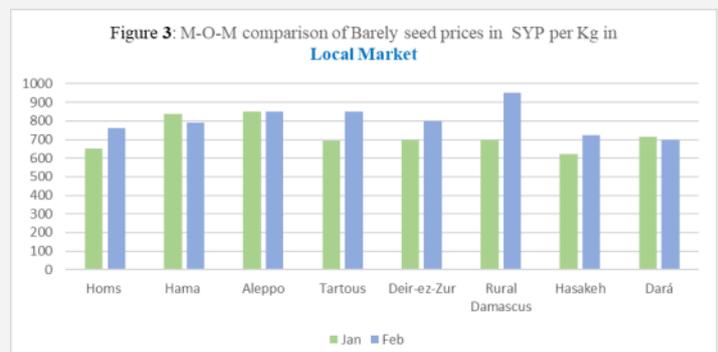
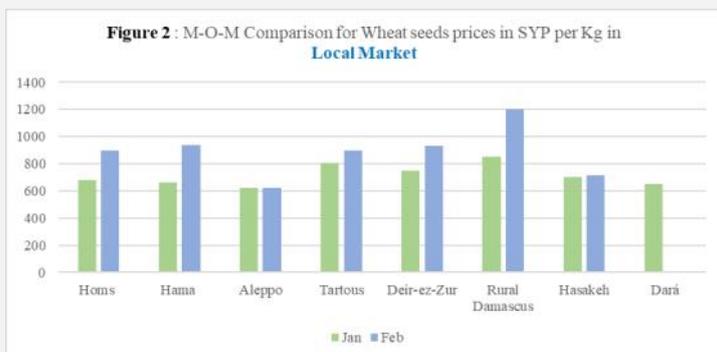
Figure 1: Markets Monitored by FAO on a monthly basis.

## Agriculture Commodity and Input Prices

**Wheat:** Since August 2020, the General Organization for Seed Multiplication (GOSM) has been providing wheat seed at the price of 450 SYP per kg - as an official price. This is expected to change for the next cropping season since the government has modified the wheat's grain receipt price for farmers from 450 SYP to 900 SYP per kg of wheat grain. The impact of the recent price change is now evident in the local markets since the selling price of wheat already reached 1 200 SYP per kg in Rural Damascus (figure 2). In Hama, the selling price of wheat seed recorded is 940 SYP per kg in February 2021 (42 percent m-o-m increase) compared to 660 SYP per kg in January 2021, while the selling price in Deir-ez-Zor reached 933 SYP per Kg (24 percent m-o-m increase) and the highest price recorded in Rural Damascus is 1 200 SYP per kg .

**Barley:** The local market has offered barley seed at a price range between 700 SYP per kg to 950 SYP per kg. In Rural Damascus, there was a significant increase indicated by 36 percent m-o-m, with the price in the local market reached 950 SYP per kg, while it reached 850 SYP per kg in Aleppo and Tartous governorates. Observations have revealed a significant m-o-m price increase of almost 17 percent in Hasakeh and Homs governorates, with the average-selling price of 725 and 760 SYP per kg being recorded respectively (Figure 3).

**Nitrate fertilizers:** The Agriculture Bank provides each farmer with granular nitrate fertilizer at a supported price of 200 SYP per kg. The price of granular nitrate fertilizer from the Agriculture bank remained constant m-o-m across the monitored governorates. Taking into account that the Agriculture Bank cannot provide granular top dressing fertilizer in Al-Hasakeh due to security reasons, the lack of substance in Tartous, Homs and Hama governorates. This has forced most farmers to rely on the local market to meet the gap. In governorates where granular top dressing fertilizer is available, the Agriculture Bank provides almost a third of the farmers' needs, forcing them to purchase the rest of their requirements from the local market at an average price of 1 488 SYP per kg (18 percent m-o-m increase). The selling price increased significantly in Rural Damascus and Tartous governorates (representing a 31 percent and 25 percent m-o-m increase). The remaining governorates also recorded an increase in the average selling price with an 18 percent m-o-m increase (figure 4). The continued fall of the local currency against the USD is worsening the already dire situation since it is resulting in significant market price volatility for agricultural inputs purchased from local markets that affected farmers' capability in covering their needs with required quantities.



**Nitrate fertilizers:** The average selling price of liquid nitrate fertilizer was 6 424 SYP per litre in February 2021 and a 39 percent m-o-m increase was noted from January 2021. The average selling price in Dar'a increased significantly reaching 8 000 SYP per litre (176 percent m-o-m increase) and in Hasakeh the selling price recorded was 7 000 SYP per litre (100 percent m-o-m increase) as highlighted in figure 5. In general, the liquid nitrate fertilizer is more expensive than the granular type, FAO will closely monitor the price of this commodity in the coming months as demand is increasing particularly in the last two months before harvest season.

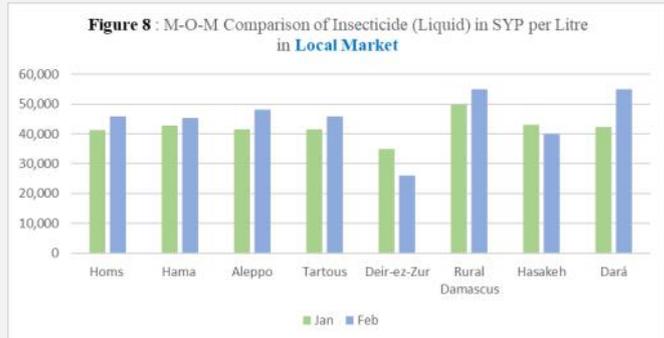
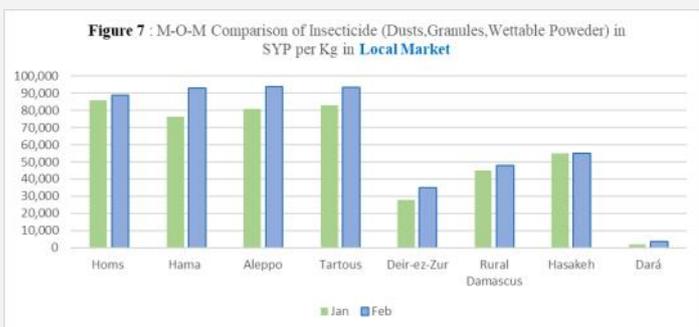
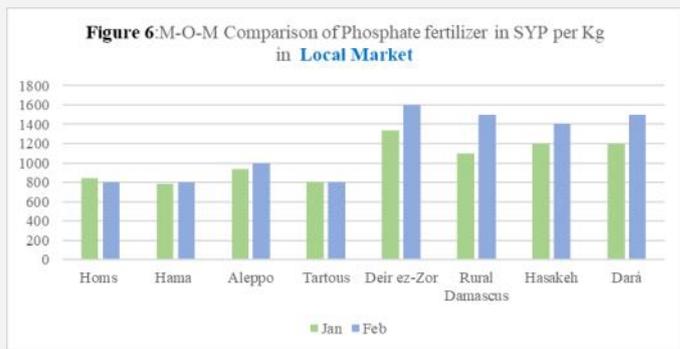
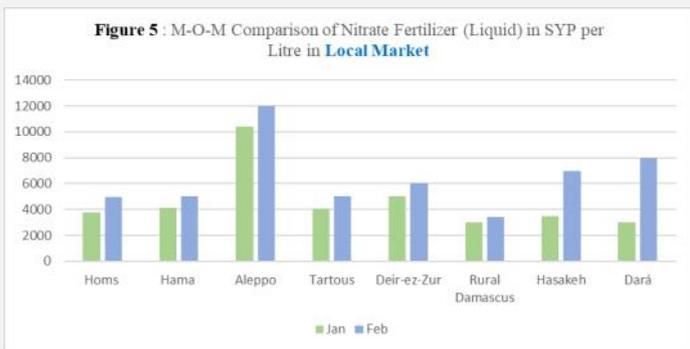
**Phosphate fertilizers:** The Agriculture Bank continues to support farmers with phosphate fertilizers at a subsidized price of 240 SYP per kg. However, the quantities are not enough to meet the farmers' full requirements, in which they will have to rely on purchasing from the local markets to meet the rest of their needs. Unfortunately, the average price for phosphate fertilizer recorded in February has reached 1 175 SYP per kg. The highest price of phosphate fertilizer from the local market was recorded in Deir-Ez-Zor at 1 600 SYP per kg (increase 20 percent m-o-m), while the lowest price was recorded in Tartous, Hama and Homs at a price of 800 SYP per Kg (figure 6).

**Pesticides**

**Crop-protection agro-chemicals** (i.e. pesticides), which include insecticides, fungicides and herbicides, are available across the governorates. However, they remain generally expensive and out of reach for most farmers. The price of pesticides will negatively affect farmer's application rates, leading to a greater risk of pest and disease incidences and prevalence, which will ultimately affect production (i.e. Cereal Leaf Miner which is affecting a large area in Homs). Most farmers will have to rely on other integrated pest management (IPM) options and tactics to minimize the reliance on expensive synthetic or inorganic pesticides. Taking into consideration that most available pesticides in the local market are coming from unknown and unofficial sources, which it is difficult to verify the quality and efficacy of the items.

**Insecticides (dusts, granules, Wettable powders):** These are generally available at an average price of 63 854 SYP per kg. The highest selling price was recorded in Aleppo governorate at 94 000 SYP per kg (16 percent m-o-m increase), the change in price was significant in Dar'a (75 percent m-o-m increase) followed by Deir-ez-Zor (25 percent m-o-m increase) as highlighted in figure 7.

**Liquid Insecticides:** The liquid insecticides prices increased in February 2021 (7 percent m-o-m increase), with an average selling price reached 45 131 SYP per litre. Liquid insecticides were generally available across most of the monitored markets. The prices of liquid insecticide dropped significantly in Deir-ez-Zor governorate to 26 000 SYP per litre (26 m-o-m decrease). While the prices in Dara' governorate witnessed an increase to at least 55 000 SYP per litre (30percent m-o-m increase) as shown in figure 8.

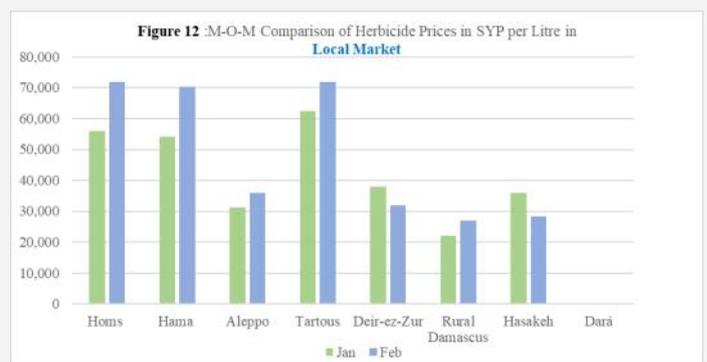
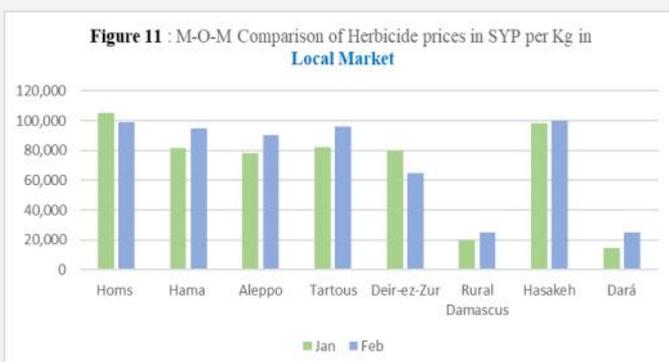
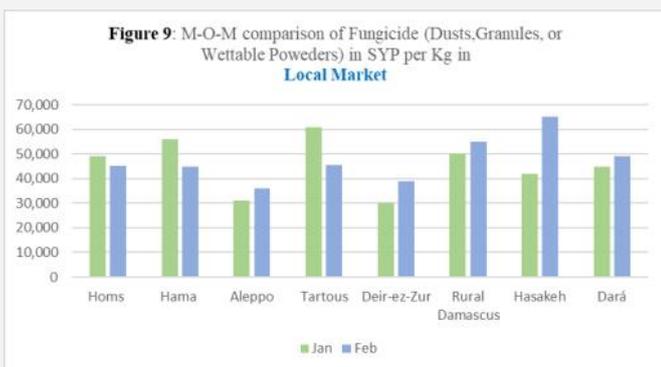


## Pesticides

**Fungicides (dusts, granules or Wettable powders):** Fungicides are generally available across the monitored governorates at an average selling price of 47 392 SYP per kg (4 percent m-o-m decrease). In Tartous, the decrease in the average price was the highest recorded among the monitored governorates, with a selling price of 45 333 SYP per kg (25 percent m-o-m decrease), while in Homs the selling price was 45 000 SYP per kg, indicating an eight percent m-o-m decrease. In Deir-ez-Zor, the average price increased by 30 percent m-o-m (Figure 9).

There was a notable decrease in the average selling price of liquid fungicides in Al-Hasakeh, Deir-ez-Zor, Tartous and Hama (20, 9, 5 and 5 percent m-o-m decrease respectively). However, in Dara' there was a 40 percent m-o-m increase and the average selling price was 80 000 SYP per Litre (Figure 10).

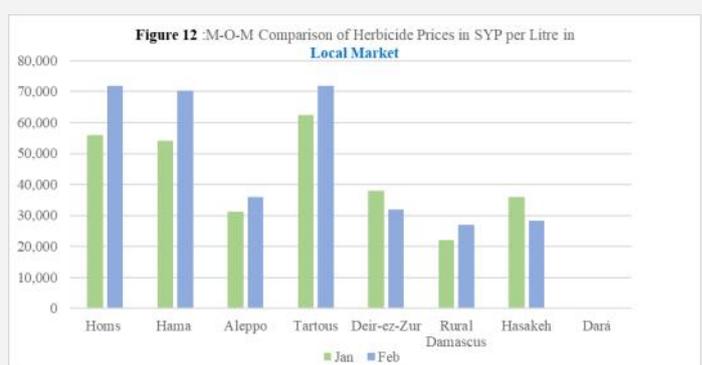
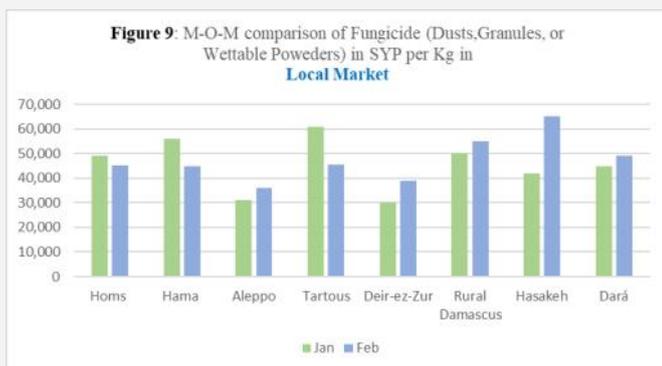
**Herbicides:** The average price of herbicides (i.e. dusts, granules or Wettable powders) was 74 354 SYP per kg (6 percent m-o-m increase). An increase in the selling price of herbicides was recorded in Dara', Rural Damascus and Hama (70, 25 and 17 percent m-o-m increase). While in Deir-ez-Zor governorate, a 19 percent m-o-m decrease was recorded, reaching a price of 65 000 SYP per kg. Homs governorate also witnessed a slight 6 percent m-o-m decrease with the selling price reaching 99 000 SYP per kg (figure 11). The liquid herbicides recorded a 13 percent m-o-m increase with an average selling price of 42 194 SYP per litre. The highest selling price continued to be recorded in Tartous governorate at 72 000 SYP per litre. Furthermore, the price recorded in Rural Damascus was the lowest at 27 000 SYP per kg with (23 m-o-m percent increase). Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor governorates witnessed a decrease in the average selling price (22 and 16 percent m-o-m respectively) and the actual prices recorded 28 250 SYP per litre in Hasakeh and 32 000 SYP per litre in Deir-ez-Zor. In Dara' the substance was not readily available in February 2021 (figure 12).



**Poultry Feed** The average selling price of poultry feed for layers and egg production was recorded at 1 139 SYP per kg. This has resulted in limited availability and high cost for eggs in the local markets in Deir-ez-Zor. Most families in this aforementioned governorate depend on other governorates to cover their requirements for eggs. Some families also get eggs from neighbouring countries through illegal trading routes with unverified quality and standards. The highest selling price of poultry feed for layers was recorded in Tartous governorate at 1708 SYP per kg, while Rural Damascus recorded the lowest selling price 1 150 SYP per kg .The average selling price of the poultry feed for chicken meat production (i.e. broiler starter, grower and finisher mash) was recorded at 1 299 SYP per Kg. Hasakeh governorate recorded the highest selling price 1 700 SYP per Kg and Homs recorded the lowest at 1 190 SYP per Kg.

**Cattle feed** The availability of cattle feed for milk production was generally acceptable in the monitored sites, with an average price of 995 SYP per kg recorded in February 2021. The highest selling price was observed in Hasakeh at 1 500 SYP per kg, while the lowest price was recorded in Homs governorate at 940 SYP per kg. Cattle feed for meat production (i.e. compound fodder pellets) was available within the governorates at an estimated price of 1 073 SYP per kg. Hasakeh recorded the highest price for cattle feed, which was sold for at least 1 600 SYP per kg. Feed is the main challenge affecting livestock keepers and herders, as it constitutes about 70 percent of the total costs for livestock production. However; the availability of livestock feed is fair to good but the exorbitant prices and continued price increases are significantly limiting access by most livestock farmers. This is coupled with the economic and financial constraints that are worsening the situation. There is an urgent need for sector partners to support innovative and sustainable interventions that protect livestock assets, particularly activities that result in increased availability and production of fodder.

**Diesel Fuel** The Syrian government has allocated a specific quantity of diesel fuel for farmers in an endeavour to support the agriculture sector; yet, this quantity is not enough to cover the demand. The farmers continue to access fuel through a subsidised price of 180 SYP per litre. There was a significant m-o-m increase of 11 percent in the average diesel fuel price within the local markets, reaching 22 175 SYP per 20 litres (see figure 13). Dara’ governorate recorded the highest diesel fuel price at 30 000 SYP per 20 litres, while the price in Al-Hasakeh was 3 000 SYP for the same amount (figure 13), indicating the lowest diesel fuel price across the monitored sites. Most farmers have to rely on the expensive diesel fuel prices offered in the local market and black market to cover the unmet needs. The availability and subsequent price changes of fuel and other energy sources will be monitored as this may have ripple effects on various agriculture operations, especially for irrigation purposes in March and April months when wheat mostly need this service and could subsequently affected the productivity of wheat and barley, subsequently impacting agriculture production and even agro-processing. Furthermore, diesel fuel and other forms of energy are essential for groundwater extraction for irrigation purposes, transportation of products and inputs to markets, food processing and preservation. The high cost and extremely limited availability of diesel fuel, in particular, will have adverse effects on agricultural production and may affect food and nutrition security.



## Food Prices

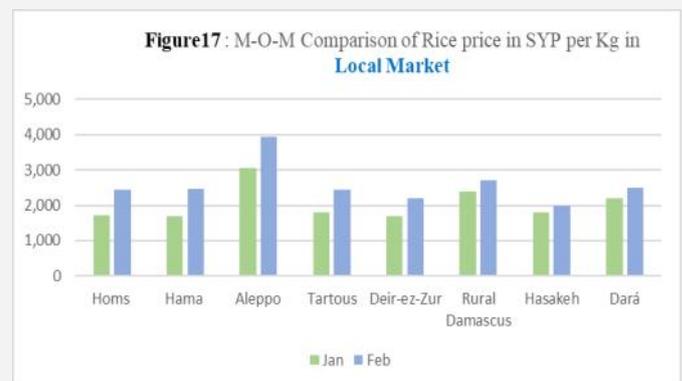
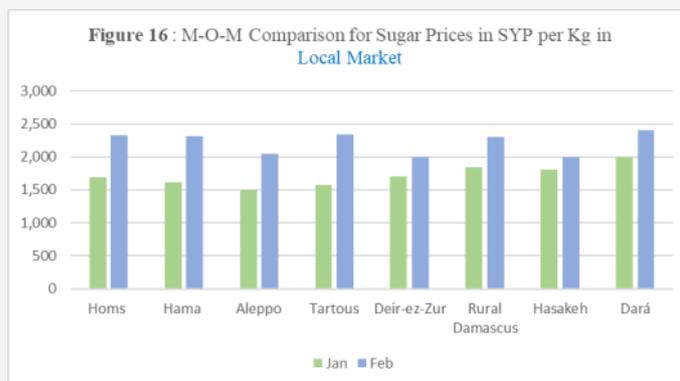
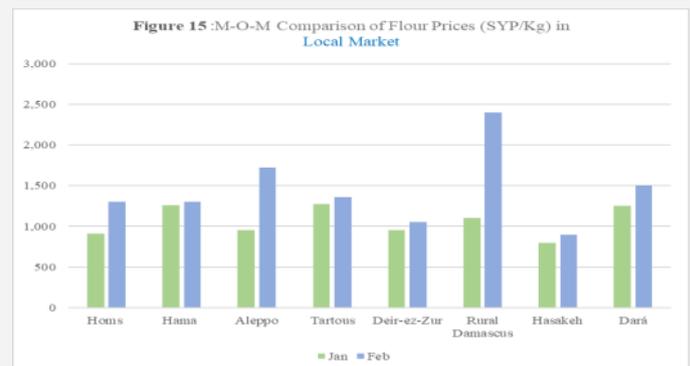
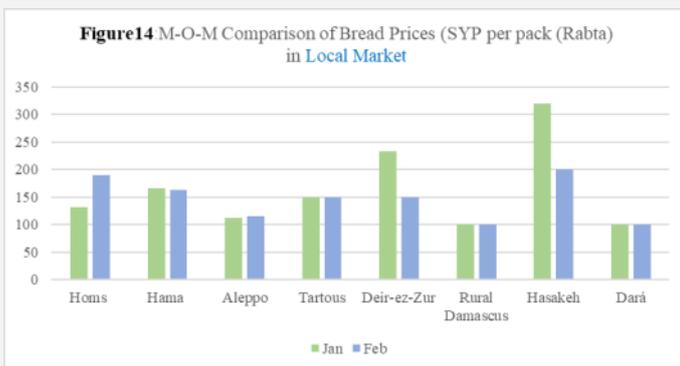
The observations in February 2021 indicate that almost all of the prices for the fifteen food items' monitored generally increased in variable proportions. Sunflower recorded the highest price increase compared to the prices in January 2021 with an average selling price 7 474 for 1 L, followed by flour and then chicken meat with an average selling price up to 1 442 for 1 Kg.

The average selling price of bread decreased in February to 146 SYP per pack that is equal around one Kg (11 percent m-o-m decrease). The highest selling price was recorded in Al-Hasakeh governorate at 200 SYP per pack (figure 14). Generally, the price of flour prices increased across most governorates with an average increase of 36 percent m-o-m. The highest price was recorded in Rural Damascus at 2 400 SYP per kg (118 percent m-o-m). Aleppo also witnessed a sharp increase (80 percent m-o-m) with the selling price reaching 1 725 SYP per kg (figure 15).

The average price of sugar increased 29 percent m-o-m in February 2021 across the monitored locations. Dara' registered the highest average selling price of 2 400 SYP per kg (20 percent m-o-m increase). Tartous recorded the highest price increase (43 percent m-o-m) with Hama also recording a significant 34 percent m-o-m increase (figure 16).

For rice, the price remained highest in Aleppo governorate at 3 950 SYP per kg, remaining constant from December 2020 and February 2021. However, a 45 percent m-o-m increase was recorded in Hama and 42 percent m-o-m increase was noticed in Homs also. In general, the average selling price of sugar in February 2021 reached 2 584 SYP per Kg representing a 26 percent m-o-m increase in the average selling price across the monitored governorates (figure 17).

The selling prices of eggs witnessed a slight increase in February 2021 with a 3 percent m-o-m increase, reaching 6 441 SYP for 30 eggs. Rural Damascus recorded the highest average selling price of 6 700 for 30 eggs while the lowest price was in Deir-ez-Zor governorate 6 200 SYP for the same amount. (figure 18).



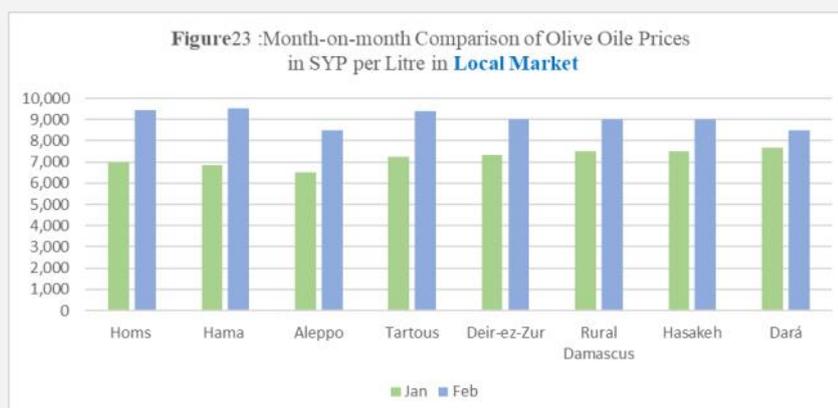
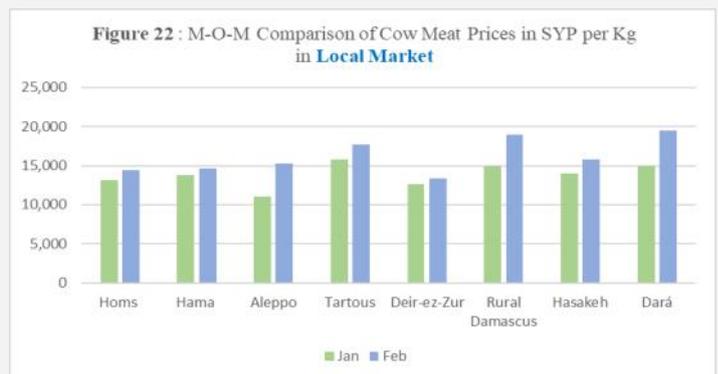
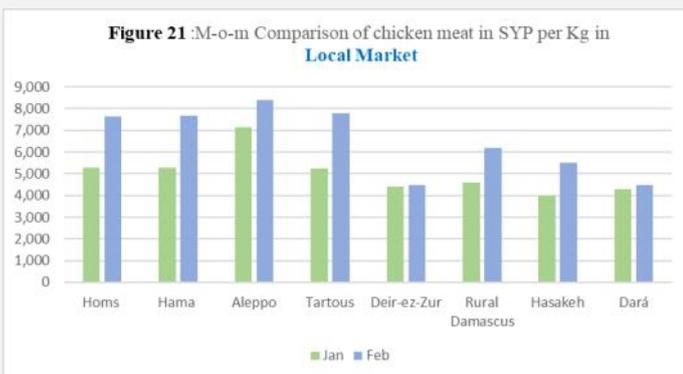
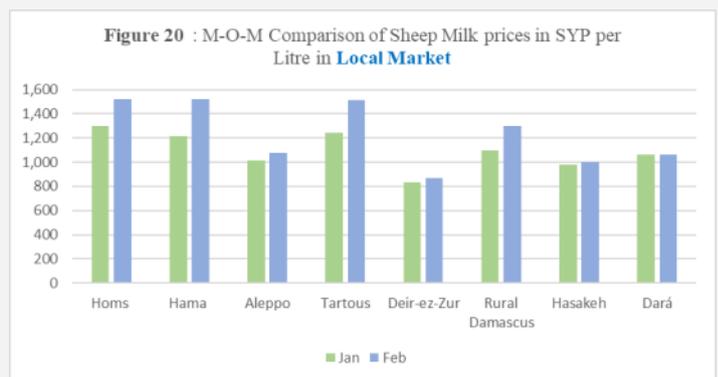
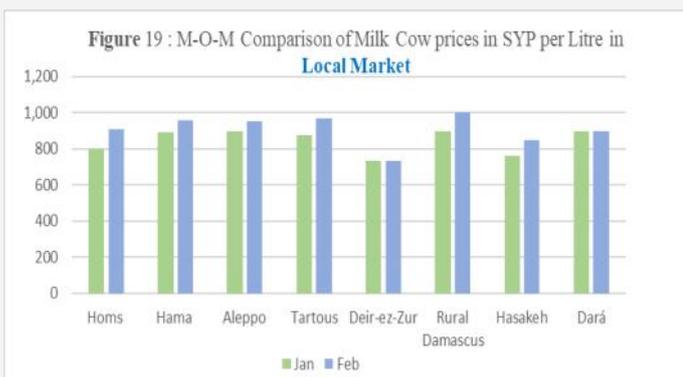
## Food Prices

The cow milk selling price increased in Homs, Hasakeh and Rural Damascus governorates (14, 11 and 10 percent m-o-m increase respectively) and remained the same of January price in Deir-ez-Zor and Dara' governorates. The average selling price reached 909 SYP per litre across the eight monitored governorates with the highest price of 10 000 SYP being recorded in Rural Damascus (figure 19). For sheep milk, the average selling price reached 1 233 SYP per litre with the highest selling price of 1 520 SYP per litre being recorded in both Homs and Hama governorates. This is followed by Tartous, which recorded 1 517 SYP per litre, while the lowest selling price was observed in Al-Hasakeh at 1000 SYP per litre (figure 20).

For chicken meat, the prices in Aleppo continue to rise reaching an alarming. An average selling price of 6 525 SYP per kg was recorded across the eight monitored locations (figure 21). Sheep and cow meat average prices reached 17 492 SYP per kg (13 percent m-o-m increase) and 16 187 SYP per kg (17 percent m-o-m increase) respectively as highlighted in figure 21 and 22.

For fish, the monthly market monitoring indicated the highest average selling price of 17 000 SYP per kg in Rural Damascus. This high and exorbitant price will further limit access and consumption of fish by most vulnerable and food insecure families.

Olive oil price increased by 26 percent in February 2021 having been steady in December 2020 and January 2021. The average selling price of 7 200 SYP per litre was recorded across the eighth monitored governorates. Hama and Homs governorates witnessed a sharp increase (39 and 35 percent m-o-m), while the highest selling price was recorded in three governorates namely Rural Damascus, Al-Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor at 9 000 SYP per litre (figure 23).

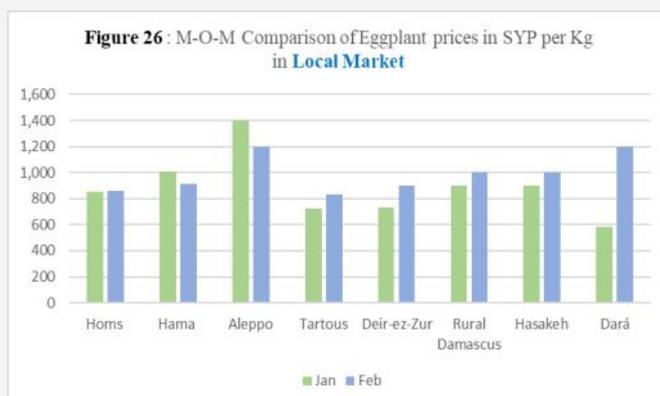
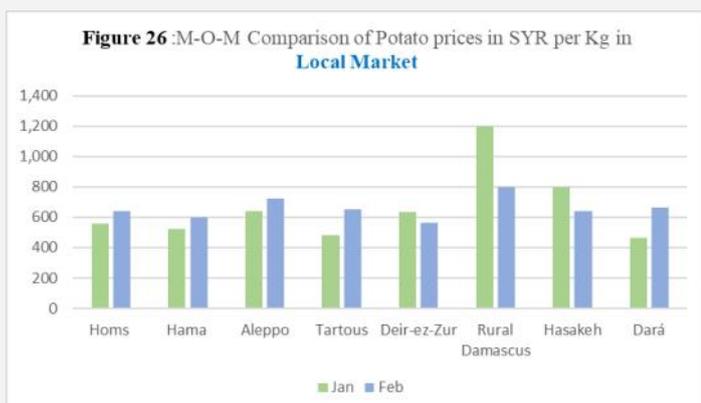
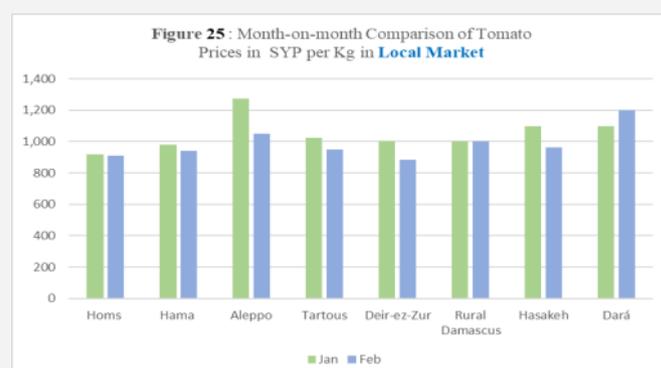


## Food Prices

Sunflower oil average price increased significantly to 7 474 SYP per litre (45 percent m-o-m) as highlighted in figure 27. In Rural Damascus, the average selling price reached 10 000 SYP per litre (54 percent m-o-m increase). Hama, Tartous and Homs governorates also recorded high selling prices 8 333, 8 380 and 8 280 SYP per litre respectively (figure 24).

The average selling price for tomato slightly decreased across the monitored markets with the average selling price reaching 987 SYP per kg. This slight decrease could be attributed to decrease in demand according to prioritisation process that followed by families to cover their basic of food needs and the fund limitation factor . The selling price of tomatoes reached 1 050 SYP per kg in Aleppo, highlighting an 18 percent m-o-m decrease). Tomato selling prices in Rural Damascus remained constant in February at 1 000 SYP per Kg. In Deir-ez-Zor, the selling price of tomato decreased from 1000 SYP in January 2021 to 883 SYP in February 2021 (figure 25). The average selling price of potatoes remained stable in February 2021; with a price of 661 SYP per Kg recorded in Rural Damascus. Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor governorates recorded a decrease in potato prices (20 and 11 percent m-o-m). On the contrary, a 34 percent m-o-m increase was observed in Tartous governorate, with an average selling price of 650 SYP per Kg (figure 29).

The average price of eggplant recorded was 988 SYP per kg in February 2021 across the monitored locations. However, Dará governorate witnessed a sharp increase (106 percent m-o-m increase) with the average selling price reaching 1 200 SYP per Kg. Aleppo and Hama governorates observed a price decrease (14 and 10 percent m-o-m) with the prices reaching 1 200 SYP per Kg in Aleppo and 910 SYP per Kg in Hama (figure 26).



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