



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Agricultural Inputs and Commodity Price Bulletin (AICPB) in Syrian Arabic Republic

February 2022 #2



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Background

Agriculture, including crop and animal husbandry, forestry, fisheries and agro-processing, post-harvest handling and marketing, provides livelihood for most smallholder farmers in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Syria works on strengthening value chains and food systems by building technical and productive capacity of stakeholders, mainly farmers, expanding their knowledge and understanding of the local situation by sharing reports that aimed 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-urbans markets linkages. Regular dissemination of market information benefits smallholder farmers in their market-oriented production endeavour.

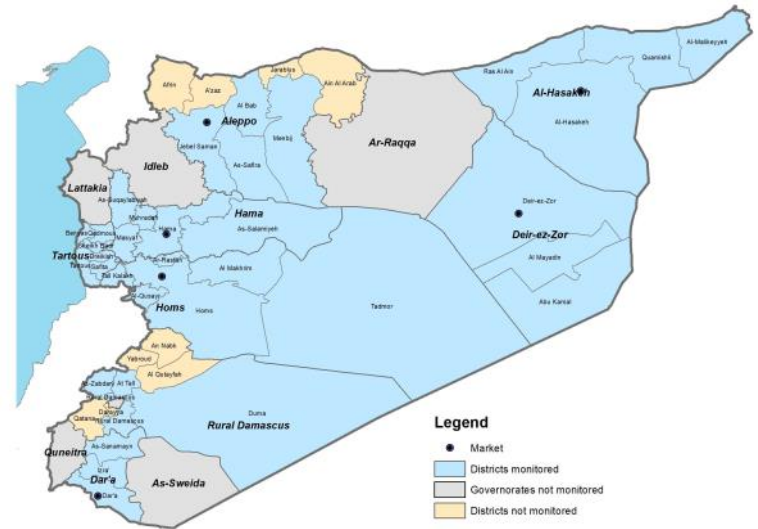


Figure 1: Markets monitored by FAO country office on a monthly basis.

Key Highlights:

The shortages and the high cost of cottonseed meal, soybean meal, maize, wheat straw and wheat bran coupled with other factors such as unavailability of green pastures due to low rain, and limited access to different types of fodder, due to current supply chain bottlenecks, remain a key challenge in livestock production. Most livestock keepers continue to resort to selling off their livestock assets. Unfortunately, continues to threaten most households’ dietary diversity and will subsequently result in asset depletion. Livestock remains a key sector and source of income and nutrition, supporting hundreds of thousands of families in Syria and urgent support is needed to protect these valuable household economic assets, especially targeting the vulnerable livestock keepers.

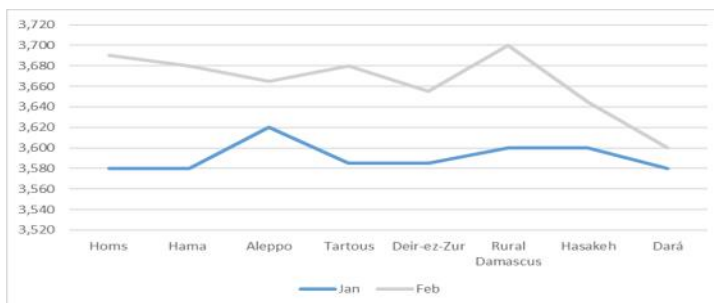
Following the Government of Syria’s (GoS’s) policy measures and regulations to maintain sufficient amounts of some staple food in local markets, so as to minimize the adverse impact of the current global challenges in Syria, the export of potato, onion, olive oil, wheat, wheat products, chicken meat and eggs will be prohibited for two consecutive months. This policy measure has been put in place to prevent any potential shortages. To better understand the situation and impacts, FAO continues to monitor the implications that may occur due to the current global challenges, especially on food prices and the cost and availability of agriculture inputs.

Fuel shortages continue to persist in most governorates and this continues to present challenges to farmers who rely on fuel for irrigation, especially with the prevailing low rainfall in the areas that are in agro-ecological zones (AEZs) three (3), four (4) and five (5). The high fuel cost is also having an impact on transportation costs for products as they are delivered to the secondary and other end markets. The fuel shortages are adding another layer of financial pressure on farmers and is having knock-on effects on overall production costs.

Exchange rate

The value of the Syrian pound continued to depreciate in the informal exchange market ranging between **3 645 / USD** and **3 700 / USD** during the period January 2022 to February 2022. The continued weakening of the local currency versus the USD is also contributing to the rise in prices for most agricultural inputs, particularly those imported.

The official exchange rate was revised by the Central Syrian Bank in January 2022, reaching 2 525 SYP/USD. The FAO market bulletin monitors prices in local currency and does not specifically analyse the changes in prices in other currencies.



Trends of Unofficial Exchange Rate For the Last Two Months (SYP/USD)							
	Homs	Hama	Aleppo	Deir-ez-Zur	Rural Damascus	Hasakeh	Dará
January	3 580	3 580	3 620	3 585	3 600	3 600	3 580
February	3 690	3 680	3 665	3 655	3 700	3 645	3 600

Source: Monthly survey conducted by FAO field staff

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

Agricultural Inputs

1M: % Current Month Vs. Previous Month in LM
LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

GOSM: General Organization for seed multiplication
PC: The price Pre-Crisis in LM in SYP

Crops and Vegetables Seeds

Wheat seeds



KG/SYP

GOSM: 1 585 LM: 1 620
PC: 20 1M: 5

Barley seeds



KG/SYP

GOSM: 1 743 LM: 1 751
PC: 16 1M: 3

Lentil seeds



KG/SYP

3 286 1M 7

Faba bean seeds



KG/SYP

LM: 2 177 1M 4

Chickpeas Seeds



KG/SYP

3 143 8

Peas seeds



KG/SYP

9 980 3

In general, winter crop seeds (i.e. wheat, barley, lentil, broad bean, chickpeas and peas) and vegetable seeds (i.e. spinach, cabbage, lettuce and carrot) were available in all monitored markets. In February 2022, the average price remained relatively stable compared to January 2022, except for cabbage seeds that witnessed 15 percent m-o-m increase.

Local bean seeds remained generally available in all monitored markets. However, prices observed a moderate increase (13 percent m-o-m), and the average price reached 10 526 SYP per kg.

Hybrid vegetable seeds witnessed a significant increase in February 2022, ranging between 72 percent m-o-m for cucumber seeds as the average price was 128 024 SYP per 1 000 seeds, and 19 percent m-o-m for tomato, reaching 133 538 SYP per 1 000 seeds. Farmers engaged in greenhouse production in coastal and south areas are mainly concerned about this significant increase in the prices, which will result in an increase in the prices of horticultural products. The increasing costs of production and potential rise in prices for horticultural commodities, will further limit access to health and nutritious food, especially for vulnerable families.

Agricultural Inputs

Agro-chemicals

In general, agrochemicals witnessed a slight 5 percent m-o-m increase due to the global pressure, which might be linked to the onset of the Ukraine crisis and other prevailing economic constraints. Urea from agricultural bank and Nitrate (liquid) observed a 14 and 13 percent m-o-m increase and the average price reached 75 583 SYP per 50kg and 6 762 SYP per litre respectively. This could be attributed to the increase in demand combined with the weakening of the local currency against the USD. Furthermore, the price of NPK observed a moderate increase of 18 percent m-o-m, reaching 8 126 SYP per kg as highlighted in the table below. A moderate increase of 17 percent m-o-m was observed for pesticides across the monitored markets. Insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides were available across all monitored locations. The high prices continue to limit access to the available agricultural inputs by most smallholder farmers and will most likely have an effect on overall yields and ultimately food security.

Items		Homs	Hama	Aleppo	Tartous	Deir-ez-Zor	Rural Damascus	Hasakeh	Dará	Average price	
Fertilizer	Top dressing	Urea (Agriculture Bank)	75,000	75,000	69,000	75,833	70,000	70,000	N/A	94,250	75,583
		Urea (Granular) Local Market	135,000	136,000	128,000	133,333	138,333	157,500	147,500	120,000	136,958
		Nitrate (Liquid) (Local Market)	4,960	5,040	11,600	4,950	9,500	7,560	8,625	8,800	7,629
	Basal	Phosphate fertilizers (Agriculture Bank)	62,500	62,500	62,000	62,750	60,000	1,500	N/A	45,000	50,893
		Phosphate fertilizers (Local Market)	72,500	72,500	69,000	72,500	81,167	8,400	85,000	60,000	65,133
		NPK (Local Market)	8,800	9,100	7,325	8,583	7,500	9,450	7,750	6,500	8,126
Pesticides	Insecticide	(Dusts, Granules, Wettable powders)									
		Mythomel	N/A	N/A	231,300	N/A	203,333	100,275	N/A	105,000	159,977
		Acetamiprid	95,000	95,000	115,500	93,333	84,333	73,500	72,250	73,500	87,802
		(Liquids)									
		Dimethoate	47,400	48,300	64,000	47,917	36,333	59,168	43,750	58,000	50,609
		Delta Methrin	47,500	48,500	75,975	47,083	85,667	63,840	73,000	63,000	63,071
	Fungicide	(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)									
		Thiophanate-methyl	53,000	53,900	92,820	52,500	44,000	78,015	53,000	84,000	63,904
		Trifloxystrobin	40,000	39,200	493,440	39,167	240,000	66,150	215,000	N/A	161,851
		(Liquids)									
		Propamocarb Hydrochloride	65,200	65,800	61,455	65,333	43,000	56,800	66,250	63,000	60,855
	Herbicide	(Dusts, Granules or Wettable powders)									
		sulfonyl urea	111,400	110,200	42,405	111,167	140,333	N/A	133,750	705,000	193,465
		Glyphosate Equivalent	63,600	62,600	60,235	63,000	37,667	50,610	44,250	N/A	54,566
		(Liquids)									
glyphosate		48,000	48,800	40,615	47,667	33,000	34,125	34,750	36,000	40,370	
Haloxypop-R-methyl		52,000	53,200	74,620	51,667	59,667	62,685	60,000	63,000	59,605	
Trifluralin	42,000	42,800	55,100	41,667	34,667	46,275	36,000	51,000	43,689		

Agricultural Inputs

1M: %Current Month Vs. Previous Month in LM
3M: %Current Month Vs. 3 Months Earlier in LM
LM: The price in Local Market in SYP

GOSM: General Organization for seed multiplication
6M: % Current Month Vs. 6 Months Earlier in LM
PC: The price Pre-Crisis in LM

Livestock feed

In February 2022, livestock feed was mostly available across monitored markets. In general, a significant increase of 21 percent m-o-m was observed for fodder and this could be attributed to a combination of factors. Most important is the limited availability of green pastures, limited access to and availability of fodder, particularly with the current disruption of the global supply chain, and the low production of previous production season in Syria. In future bulletins, FAO will seek to better understand the causes and implications of the global supply chain challenges on livestock feed.

The average price of cottonseed, wheat straw and crop residues observed a significant m-o-m increase (42, 28 and 25 percent respectively). While for maize, soybean, wheat bran and barley grains, the increase was moderate, reaching 18, 14, 14 and 11 percent m-o-m respectively. The current dynamics point to a big challenge that threatens the existence and sustainability and viability of the livestock sector in Syria. Sector partners are encouraged to support small livestock herders by fully understanding the existing production systems and value chain constraints. This will ensure that livestock interventions are tailored to the local context and real challenges to ensure increased productivity, sustainability and increased resilience among vulnerable livestock keepers.

Barley Grains KG/SYP

1M: 11 LM: 1 694
3M: 19 6M: 24

Soya bean Meal KG/SYP

1M: 14 LM 2 458
3M: 18 6M 31

Maize KG/SYP

1M: 18 LM: 1 574
3M: 22 6M 19

Cottonseed Meal KG/SYP

1M: 42 LM: 1 709
3M: 20 6M: 7

Wheat Bran KG/SYP

1M: 14 LM: 1 197
3M: 15 6M: 19

Wheat Straw KG/SYP

1M: 28 LM 743
3M: 39 6M: 61

Crop Residues KG/SYP

1M: 25 LM 997
3M: 35 6M: 42

Poultry Feed/ Egg Production KG/SYP

1M: 8 LM 2 362
3M: 21 6M: 22

Poultry Feed/ Meat Production KG/SYP

1M: 9 LM 2 525
3M: 12 6M: 14

Cattle Feed KG/SYP

1M: 6 LM 1 556
3M: 8 6M: 9

Live Animals

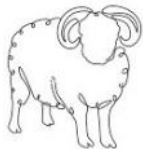
LM: The price in Local Market in SYP
1M: %Current Month Vs. Previous Month in LM

Sheep Female (Ewe)



Head/SYP

1M: -17 LM: 330 667



Sheep

1M: 4 LM: 11 127

KG/SYP



Calf

1M: -7 LM: 10 469

KG/SYP



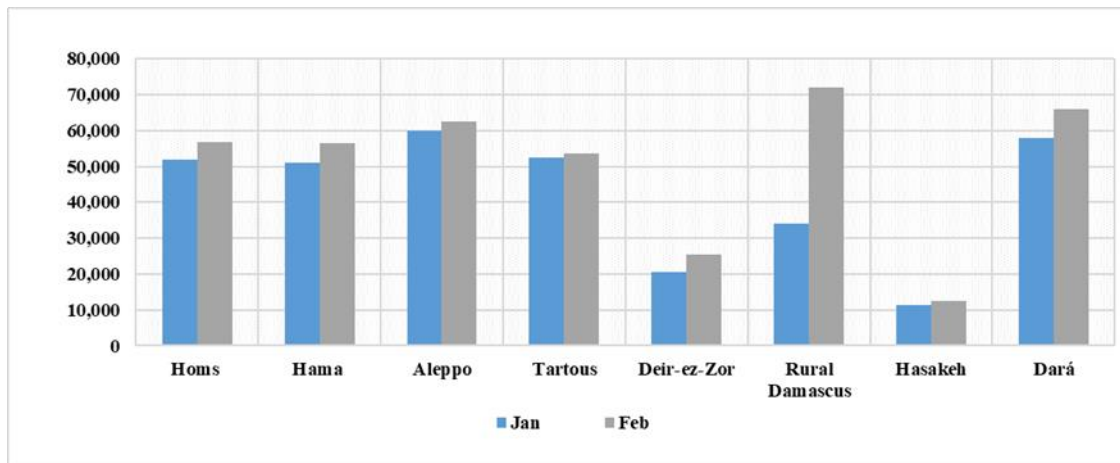
Dairy Cow

1M: -14 LM: 3 935 917

Head/SYP

Agricultural Inputs

Diesel fuel (20 litres)

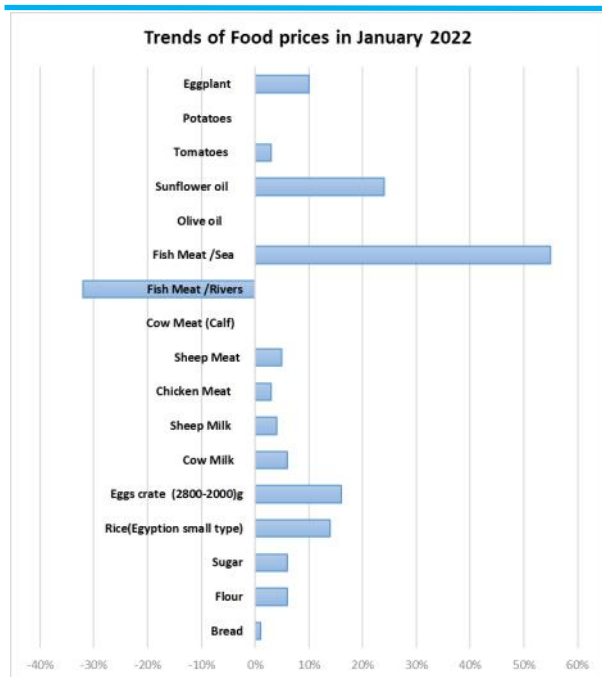


The average selling price of diesel increased significantly (20 percent m-o-m) in local markets, reaching 50 675 SYP per 20 litres. In Rural Damascus and Deir-ez-Zor governorates, the price of diesel fuel increased significantly (112 and 23 percent m-o-m) in February 2022, reaching 72 000 and 25 333 SYP for 20 litres. This increase could be attributed to the limited supply versus local demand. The other contributing factor could be the general increase in global fuel prices owing to the current challenges in Eastern Europe. The remaining monitored governorates also witnessed a slight to moderate increase in the price of fuel as highlight in the above chart. The increase ranges between 3 percent m-o-m in Tartous governorate to 14 percent m-o-m in Dará.

Food Items

1M: % Current Month Vs. Previous Month in LM
3M: % Current Month Vs. 3 Months Earlier in LM

6M: % Current Month Vs. 6 Months Earlier in LM
LM: The price in the local market in SYP



Food prices continued to increase in February 2022. Sunflower oil price witnessed a significant increase (24 percent m-o-m), reaching 10 776 SYP per litre. There were significant shortages of sunflower oil reported across most monitored markets. This could be attributed to the recent disruption in the sunflower supply chain globally. Shortages in poultry feed coupled with an increase in the price of fuel resulted in a moderate increase in the price of eggs (16 percent m-o-m). Rice also observed a moderate increase (14 percent m-o-m) in February 2022. In general, the price of the remaining food items remained relatively constant since January 2022.

Eggplants recorded a significant increase of 115 percent in Rural Damascus. While Dará governorate observed a significant increase in the price of potato (39 percent m-o-m) and it is important to highlight that, during this winter season, potato production was more viable and feasible for most farmers compared to either cabbage or cauliflower.

Bread



1M: 1 6M: 7
3M: 5 LM: 284

SYP/ Rabta(1000)g

Rice



1M: 14 6M: 13
3M: 12 LM: 3 575

SYP/KG

Chicken Meat



1M: 3 6M: 20
3M: 11 LM: 9 829

SYP/KG

Sunflower



1M: 24 6M: 30
3M: 28 LM: 10 776

SYP/ Litre



SYP/KG

Flour

1M: 6 6M: 24
3M: 17 LM: 2 508

Egg



SYP/ Crate(1800-2000)g

1M: 16 6M: 16
3M: 11 LM: 11 357

Cow Meat



SYP/KG

1M: 0 6M: 3
3M: 2 LM: 21 429

Tomato



SYP/KG

1M: 3 6M: 60
3M: 46 LM: 2 046

Sugar



SYP/KG

1M: 6 6M: 21
3M: 18 LM: 3 175

Cow milk



SYP/ Litre

1M: 6 6M: 25
3M: 11 LM: 1 900

Sheep Meat



SYP/KG

1M: 5 6M: 12
3M: 10 LM: 26 055

Eggplant

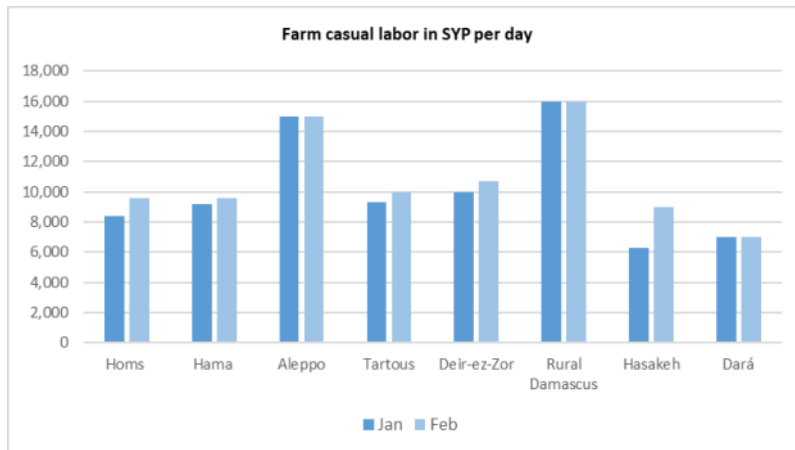


SYP/KG

1M: 10 6M: 116
3M: 65 LM: 2 680



Other Factors



The average wage rate reached 10 858 SYP per day and this represents 7 percent m-o-m increase in February 2022. The continued weakening of the local currency value versus the USD is the major contributing factor to the increase of the average daily wages across the monitored governorates. Subsequently, the wage rate is resulting in an increase in the overall agriculture production costs. Agricultural wage employment opportunities exist predominantly for casual and seasonal workers, due to the seasonality of agricultural production. For most crops, there are specific seasonal peaks, especially towards the harvesting periods, when labour demand is high. These temporary jobs are quite limited and quality and conditions are sometimes unfavourable. Varying work working conditions and wages can be found across the monitored locations, due to the prevailing socio-economic challenges. The economic difficulties are also impacting the entitlements and benefits being received by farmer workers.

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 Food Security Cluster (FSC) website.