Syria: Agriculture Input and Commodity Bulletins

June 2021
Introduction

Agriculture, including crop and animal husbandry, forestry; fisheries and agro-processing with post-harvest handling and marketing, constitutes the basis of socio-economic lives of most smallholder farmers in the Syrian Arab Republic. FAO works on strengthening the value chain and food systems by empowering the involved stakeholders’ capacity, mainly farmers, and expanding their knowledge and understand of the surrounding situation by sharing useful reports to make agriculture production sustainable, considers gender aspects and climate smart. The Organization in Syria releases the “Monthly agriculture input and commodity price bulletin” that provides timely insights from 35 districts across Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus, Al-Hasakeh and Dar’a Governorates, to inform relevant stakeholders, the Food Security Sector (FSS) and partners supporting agriculture and food security interventions in the country about the prevailing prices of agriculture inputs and commodities. This bulletin is a useful publication since markets and market information both play an important role in food security, income generation, resilience and rural-market linkages. Regular dissemination of market information will benefit smallholder farmers in their market-oriented production endeavors.

DISCLAIMER: The information in this bulletin comes from monthly market 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. For further insights and analysis of food prices, WFP also issues Syria Price Bulletins regularly that could be found on the Syria Food Security Cluster FSC website.
Key Highlights

- As the 2020/2021 winter season comes to an end in June 2021, the continued increase in the prices of most agriculture inputs and food commodities is exerting more pressure on Syrian families and vulnerable smallholder farmers 10 years since the start of the protracted crisis. Out of thirty (30) monitored agriculture inputs, eighteen (18) of these inputs showed an increase in price in June 2021. The most significant price increase was recorded for Urea (top-dressing) and Phosphate (basal) fertilizers and the m-o-m percent was 57 and 65 respectively, mostly sourced from the Agriculture Bank. Wheat bran, wheat straw and various crop residues, which form the main components for livestock feed, each recorded a 13 percent increase. This price increase on an already exorbitant price will further limit livestock keepers’ access to fodder for their animals, which will affect the productivity in the livestock sector. Sector partners are encouraged to scale up support that addresses the prevailing economic hardships and the limited access to agricultural inputs by most Syrian families across the country, in a holistic and multipronged approach.

- Eight (8) out of sixteen (16) monitored food items recorded variable m-o-m price increases in June 2021. Price increases were recorded for eggs, fish, sheep milk, flour, rice, olive oil, cow milk and cow meat, ranging from 1 to 16 percent and specific price trends are presented in the respective analysis section. The prices of bread, sugar and sunflower oil remained constant since May 2021. Bread used to be subsidised item by national authority and due to the difficulties that appeared in providing this substance regularly, a new distribution system had been established one year ago by the supply ministry added new regulations that control the allocation per family in daily basis through smart card modality. The five remaining food items (i.e. tomato, eggplants, potato, chicken meat and sheep meat witnessed price decreases in June 2021, ranging from 27 percent for tomato to 3 percent for sheep meat. It must be noted that the prices remain high and out of reach for most food insecure families compared to pre-crisis levels.

- In June 2021, the continued stability in the currency exchange market has had limited contribution to the stability of agriculture inputs and food items prices.

- There are other drivers of market price volatility and these multiple factors include shortages of electricity and fuel, coupled with the prevailing and protracted economic hardships and coercive measures that are hampering any prospects for economic recovery or stability.

- By June 2021, most of the wheat and barley crop was still being harvested across the monitored governorates and FAO anticipates that harvesting will be completed by end of July or early August 2021. Most of the wheat and barley crop was adversely impacted by the low rainfall and seasonal performance, which affected mostly the rain fed crops, especially wheat, barley, chickpeas, lentil, summer vetch, spiny broom and vetch. Low yield is expected for the mentioned winter crops and this will be further reduced since most farmers do not use mechanical harvesting and in most cases do not afford the extra costs related to mechanical harvesting. In some crop fields, mechanical harvesting will not be possible, except for areas with a wider crop coverage and better stem elongation.

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

- A m-o-m decrease in the price of chicken meat was observed in June 2021. The drop in the price of chicken meat prices will potential ease on limited access to this commodity and will likely increase the consumption of chicken meat at household level, compared to previous months. Previous months were characterized by very high prices for chicken meat per kilogram. The reduced selling price for chicken meat will also have knock-on effects on the income generated by poultry farmers / producers. The selling price will not be able to cover the production costs for the poultry producers to at least break even. This challenge will most likely push some poultry farmers out of business, especially with the prevailing economic environment. It is important to note that government also covered 40-50 percent of yellow corn needs for poultry farmers and this may also have contributed to the decrease in chicken meat prices.

- The low quality of wheat produced and harvested in some locations, was transferred and converted for animal feed use and this is being delivered to the general foundation of fodder for distribution to livestock herders and keepers.

- The prevailing water scarcity, coupled with hot and dry conditions, including recurrent heat waves, has become a major challenge and concern for agriculture production in Syria for the 2021 summer season. The water scarcity has resulted due to the poor and erratic rainfall, combined with the reduced water flow and discharge from the Euphrates River. This is worsening the already difficult situation for most farmers. This prevailing crisis will highly threaten and adversely impact all aspects of agriculture production (i.e. crop and livestock). The water crisis will result in both short, medium and long term impacts on the food security and livelihoods situation of most vulnerable farmers and will most likely affect the availability and cost of most agriculture commodities in the local markets. The water scarcity challenge is coming in the backdrop of limited availability of and access to fuel for underground water extraction.
- **Agriculture Commodity and Input Prices**

**Top dressing fertilizer (Urea)**

The Agriculture Bank provides farmers with urea and the price was adjusted to 1,400 SYP per kg in June 2021 (65 percent m-o-m increase). The new price set by the Agriculture Bank, as a result of the knock-on effects of the prevailing macro-economic situation and currency fluctuation, continue to put most vulnerable farmers under pressure. The agriculture bank still has significant challenges in stocking sufficient quantities of urea across some governorates and urea was not available in Hasakeh governorate in June 2021. Due to the shortage and limited availability of urea at the Agriculture Bank, most farmers continue to rely on the local market to address the shortage and meet the significant gap. In governorates where urea is available, the Agriculture Bank provides almost a third of the farmers’ needs, pushing most farmers to purchase the rest of their requirements from the local market at an average price of 1,500 SYP per kg (4 percent m-o-m decrease). The selling price increased significantly in Aleppo (22 percent m-o-m increase) and in Hasakeh, the average selling price was 1,438 SYP per kg (17 percent m-o-m increase). The Prices remained constant and no significant changes were observed in Homs, Hama, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus and Dará governorates (figure 3).

**Nitrate Fertilizer (Granular)**

In general, the average selling price of granular nitrate fertilizer remained constant in June 2021 at 1,573 SYP per kg. The granular nitrate fertilizers shortages were observed in Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus and Hasakeh governorates, while it remained available in Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Tartous and Dará governorates. The average selling price in Aleppo governorate increased significantly, reaching 1,585 SYP per kg (29 percent m-o-m increase). In Homs, Hama and Tartous governorates the selling price decreased (12, 10 and 10 percent m-o-m respectively). However, in Dará governorate the price remained generally constant and reached 1,400 SYP per kg (figure 3).

**Nitrate Fertilizer (Liquid):**

The average selling price of liquid nitrate fertilizer was 6,339 SYP per liter in June 2021 and a 4 percent m-o-m increase was noted from May 2021. The average selling price in Rural Damascus increased significantly, reaching 7,000 SYP per liter (40 percent m-o-m increase). In Aleppo governorate the selling price recorded for June 2021 is 10,415 SYP per liter (1 percent m-o-m decrease) as highlighted in figure 4, while the price of the same input remained constant in Homs, Hama, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor, Hasakeh and Dará.

**Ammonium Nitrate:**

Ammonium Nitrate remains available in Homs, Hama, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor and Hasakeh governorates in June 2021 with an average selling price of 1,334 SYP per kg across the monitored governorates. The prices remained constant in these afore-monitored governorates since May 2021 and no changes in prices have been observed and the prices recorded are 1,500, 1,500, 1,500, 870 and 1,300 SYP per kg respectively.
changes in prices have been observed and the prices recorded are 1 500, 1 500, 1 500, 870 and 1 300 SYP per kg respectively (figure 5). Ammonium Nitrate is very important for plant growth, performance, health and ultimately yield. It provides Nitrogen, which is essential for plant development, since it plays a fundamental role in energy metabolism and protein synthesis.

Basal fertilizers (Phosphate)

Phosphate fertilizer was available at the Agriculture Bank at a subsided price of 1 100 SYP per kg (57 percent m-o-m increase). The Agriculture Bank faced challenges in stocking phosphate fertilizer as observed in June 2021 across Homs, Hama, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor and Hasakeh governorates. As for local markets, phosphate fertilizer is still available at a price of 1 268 SYP per kg and this remained constant since May 2021. Tartous governorate recorded a 7 percent m-o-m increase and the average selling price was 1 000 SYP per kg. While Dará witnessed a slight decrease in June 2021 with an average selling price of 1 300 SYP per kg (figure 6).

Basal fertilizer (NPK)

The macronutrients that are required by crops in the largest amounts are Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K). For that reason, they are considered as the most important primary nutrients that ensure optimal growth of crops and the good quality of the harvested plant products. NPK is available in all monitored governorates and respective local markets. The average selling price reached 5 363 SYP per kg in June 2021. The highest price was recorded in Hasakeh Governorate at 8 000 SYP per kg (5 percent m-o-m increase). The selling price in Tartous, Rural Damascus and Dará governorates remained constant since May 2021 and the selling prices were 3 750, 7 000 and 6 000 SYP per kg respectively. Aleppo governorate witnessed a very minimal decrease (1 percent m-o-m decrease) and the selling price reached 4 745 SYP per Kg.

Pesticides

Crop-protection agro-chemicals (i.e. pesticides), which mainly include insecticides, fungicides and herbicides, remain available across all monitored governorates. The average prices of pesticides in June 2021 across the monitored sites continued to witness a slight decrease compared to previous months (2 percent m-o-m decrease). However, they remain generally expensive and out of reach for most farmers. It is important to note that the price of pesticides continues to limit access for most vulnerable farmers and this tends to affect the application rates, leading to a greater risk of pest and disease incidences and prevalence. This will ultimately affect production, productivity and the quality of produce of vegetables and fruits. FAO continues to advise sector partners and stakeholders supporting the agriculture sector, to scale-up context-specific Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approaches and tactics to minimize the reliance on expensive synthetic or inorganic pesticides. Integrated pest management is an environment friendly strategy that aims at maintaining pest populations below economic damaging levels, and reducing the use of toxic synthetic chemicals (i.e. pesticides). The farmers and the Food and Agriculture Sector (FAS) partners are encouraged to adopt IPM, where feasible, as this may offer ways to achieve effective long-term pest control while mitigating hazards to humans and the environment, with possibility of increasing the resilience of farming households, including helping farmers cope with the lack of price stability for various pesticides. Furthermore, most available pesticides in the local market are coming from unknown and unofficial sources, hence the quality and efficacy is difficult to verify.

- **Insecticides (dusts, granules, wettable powders):**
  These are generally available across all monitored governorates at an average price of 57 793 SYP per kg.
The selling prices remained constant in Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus and Dará governorates in June 2021 and the prices reached 40 000, 48 000 and 24 000 SYP per kg respectively. The highest selling price was recorded in Aleppo governorate at 81 590 SYP per kg (1 percent m-o-m decrease). Homs, Hama and Tartous governorates witnessed a negligible decrease (1 percent m-o-m), while in Hasakeh; a slight decrease of 7 percent m-o-m was observed, with the selling price reaching 63 750 SYP per kg as highlighted in figure 8.

**Liquid Insecticides:**

Prices for liquid insecticides increased slightly in June 2021 (1 percent m-o-m), with the average selling price reaching 40 978 SYP per litre. Liquid insecticides were generally available across most of the monitored markets. The average selling prices remained constant m-o-m across Homs, Hama, Dará and Deir-ez-Zor governorates. Rural Damascus governorate witnessed an increase in June 2021 and the price reached 55 000 SYP per litre (15 percent m-o-m increase), while Hasakeh, Tartous and Aleppo governorates recorded a slight decrease of 5, 2 and 1 percent respectively (figure 9).

**Fungicides**

*(Dusts, granules or wettable powders):* Fungicides are generally available across the monitored governorates at an average selling price of 49 068 SYP per kg (2 percent m-o-m decrease). In Hasakeh, the decrease in the average price was the highest recorded among the monitored governorates, with the selling price reaching 43 500 SYP per kg (7 percent m-o-m decrease), while a slight increase was recorded in Tartous, Homs and Hama governorates (11, 10 and 10 percent m-o-m increase respectively). The average selling price for fungicides remained constant in Deir-ez-Zor and Rural Damascus at 53 000 and 55 000 SYP per kg respectively (figure 10).

**Liquid Fungicides:** There was a slight m-o-m decrease in the average selling price of liquid fungicides (8 percent m-o-m decrease). The prices in five governorates out of eight remained constant m-o-m in June 2021 and these are Homs, Hama, Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus and Dará. Tartous and Hasakeh governorates recorded a slight increase (1 percent m-o-m) and the average selling price reached 46 833 and 39 000 SYP per litre respectively. The prices in Aleppo governorate witnessed a slight decrease, reaching 36 455 SYP per litre (figure 11).

**Herbicides**

The average selling price of herbicides (i.e. dusts, granules or wettable powders) was 62 735 SYP per kg (2 percent m-o-m decrease). A slight m-o-m decrease in the selling price of herbicides was recorded in Homs, Hama, Tartous, Aleppo and Hasakeh governorates (3, 3, 3, 1 and 1 percent). Prices remained constant m-o-m in Rural Damascus and Deir-ez-Zor governorates (figure 12). Though prices remained constant, they remain exorbitant and higher than pre-crisis levels and this will limit access and use of herbicides by most vulnerable smallholder farmers.
The high cost of herbicides continues to limit access as often seen by the weed pressure in most wheat crop stands. Some herbicides are produced in the country, and other are imported and considered to be more effective. For instance, in Homs and Hama Governorate, the most commonly used herbicides are Treflan and Afalon, while you commonly find Topac, agri Combi and Atlantis in Aleppo governorate. It must be noted that to the extent possible, the government of Syria (GoS) tests imported agro-chemicals for their safety and efficacy and applies official approval stamps to those that pass the tests. However, unapproved chemicals find their way onto the market.

Poultry Feed

The average selling price of the poultry feed for egg production was recorded at 1 566 SYP per kg (8 percent m-o-m increase). This has resulted in limited availability of eggs in the local markets and access by most families in Deir-ez-Zor. In Deir-ez-Zor, it must be noted that families continue to rely on other neighbouring governorates or bordering countries to cover their needs for eggs through illegal trade routes, these are of unverified quality and standards.

In terms of poultry feed for egg production, the recorded selling price in Aleppo governorate reached 1 450 SYP per kg (18 percent m-o-m decrease), while the price in Hasakeh represented the highest selling price 1 800 SYP per kg (64 percent m-o-m increase). The significant increase in the selling price of eggs could be attributed to the shortages in the available quantity of this commodity in markets. In Rural Damascus, Dar’a, Homs, Hama and Tartous governorates, the average selling price increased slightly (7, 7, 6, 6, and 6 percent m-o-m respectively) as highlighted in (figure 13).

The price of poultry feed for meat production increased significantly in Hasakeh and Dar’a governorates and reached 1 800 and 2 200 SYP per kg (26 and 22 percent m-o-m decrease respectively). Rural Damascus also witnessed a 3 percent m-o-m increase, reaching 1 800 SYP per kg. The price of poultry feed for meat production decreased in Aleppo governorate and reached 1 700 SYP per kg (13 percent m-o-m). Homs, Hama and Tartous governorates recorded a slight increase (10, 9 and 9 percent m-o-m) as shown in figure 14 below.

Cattle Feed

The availability of cattle feed (i.e. compound fodder pellets) was generally favourable and acceptable across the monitored locations, with an average price of 1 298 SYP per kg being recorded in June 2021 (1 percent increase m-o-m). The selling price in five of the monitored Governorates remained constant, namely in Homs, Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor, Rural Damascus, and Hasakeh. In Dar’a, Tartous and Hama governorates the there was a slight increase observed (i.e. 4 and 1 percent m-o-m respectively) and the average selling prices of 1 400 SYP per kg recorded in Dar’a and 1 192 noted in both Tartous and Hama as highlighted in figure 15. The price of cattle feed will be closely monitored by FAO especially considering the limited fodder and pasture availability owing to the erratic rainfall received in most parts of Syria.

The erratic 2020/2021 season presents a significant risk to the livestock sector in Syria since the poor rains reduced the growth of vegetation, particularly natural pastures and rangelands, cultivated green fodder, as well as crop residues. With the advent of climate change, the frequency and intensity of erratic seasonal performance is predicted to increase. FAO will continuously explore and monitor the effect of climate change on cattle feed prices in particular and livestock feed prices in general since, taking into consideration national and regional market integration.
Diesel Fuel

The Syrian government has allocated a specific quantity of diesel fuel for farmers in an endeavour to support the agriculture sector due to the current harvest season, but still 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 12 percent in the average diesel fuel price within the local markets, reaching 31 109 SYP per 20 litres (see figure 16). Rural Damascus witnessed a 17 percent m-o-m increase, with the selling price reaching 35 000 SYP per 20 litre. In contrast, Deir-ez-Zor governorate recorded a 17 percent m-o-m decrease and the average selling price was 15 000 SYP per 20 litre. The prices in three governorates out of eight remained constant in June 2021, Homs (36 000 SYP), Hama (36 000 SYP) and Tartous (36 000 SYP). Hasakeh governorate continues to record the lowest selling price since May 2021 (figure 16).

As the conditions of water scarcity prevail in Syria, coupled with the subsequent reduced water flow and discharge in the Euphrates River in northern Syria, the agriculture sector is under threat, particularly crop and livestock production. Unfortunately, farmers will have to allocate more financial resources towards purchasing the expensive diesel fuel, available in the local market, to cover the irrigation needs through ground water extraction. The availability and subsequent price changes of fuel (i.e. diesel and gasoline) and other energy sources will be monitored continuously as this may have ripple effects on various agriculture operations, especially water extraction and irrigation.

Wheat seed for planting

The optimum time for planting wheat in Syria is between mid-October to end of December, depending on whether the crop is under irrigation or is rain fed. If rain fed, the time of sowing also depends on the onset of rainfall and the wheat varieties’ days to physiological maturity. FAO continuously monitors the prices of wheat seed as well as other agriculture inputs. The market price analysis helps FAO to compare the prevailing wheat seed prices during peak demand and off-season. Continuous monitoring assists in analysing the price trends as mentioned above and checks on wheat seed availability as the successive winter planting seasons approach. FAO encourages sector partners and farmers to always verify the quality, season of production and seed viability and germinability of the seed being bought from seed carried over from the previous season.

It is important to note that pre-basic registered varieties of wheat seed are available only with GOSM, while breeder seed of Syrian registered varieties should be available with the General Commission for Scientific Agricultural Research (GCsAR). The General Organization for Seed Multiplication (GOSM) has not officially announced any updated price for wheat seed for the upcoming 2021/2022 planting season. This therefore means that the old price remains valid until further notice from Government and GOSM.

Wheat seed remains available in most monitored governorates at 858 SYP per kg (21 percent m-o-m decrease). In Deir-ez-Zor and Hama governorates, a significant decrease was recorded (34 and 27 percent m-o-m decrease respectively). While a 17 percent m-o-m increase was observed in Hasakeh governorate, with the reaching 1 200 SYP per kg (figure 17).

Barley seed

The optimum time for planting barley in Syria is between early-October to mid-November, depending on the onset of rainfall and the barley varieties’ days to physiological maturity. FAO continuously monitors the prices of barley seed, and other agriculture input prices, so that a comparison may be made for the prevailing barley seed prices during peak demand and off-season.
Continuous monitoring assists in analysing the price trends as mentioned above and checks on barley seed availability as successive planting seasons approach. However, FAO encourages sector partners and farmers to always verify the quality, season of production and seed viability and germinability of the seed being bought from seed leftover from previous season.

Barley seed remains generally available in the local market, with the average selling price of 1,386 SYP per kg being recorded across the monitored locations. This represents a 10 percent m-o-m increase in the average selling price of barley seed. Hasakeh governorate recorded a significant increase of 23 percent m-o-m and the selling price reached 1,225 SYP per kg. Hama, Dará and Rural Damascus recorded a 17, 12 and 12 percent m-o-m increase respectively, with the price in the mentioned locations reaching 1,400 SYP per kg, as shown in figure 18 below.

Maize grain (Corn)
The average selling price of Maize was 1,305 SYP per kg and Hasakeh and Deir-ez-Zor governorates witnessed a significant m-o-m increase of 59 and 54 percent respectively and this can be attributed to the planting season of this item as demand increased by farmers accordingly. A slight increase was also recorded in Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Tartous governorates (9, 6, 3 and 3 percent m-o-m increase respectively). The prices in Rural Damascus and Dará governorates remained constant m-o-m since May 2021 (figure 19).

It must be noted that the reduced water flow in the Euphrates River is adversely impacting maize production. The water scarcity resulting from the mentioned constraint will result in a significant reduction in the maize cropped area. Maize is produced during the summer season under irrigation and the water primarily comes from the Euphrates River.

Soybean Meal
Soybean remains available in most of the monitored Governorates, especially in Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Tartous, Rural Damascus and Dará, at an average selling price of 2,036 SYP per kg (12 percent m-o-m increase). The m-o-m percent increase was quite significant in Tartous, Homs and Hama governorates (64, 63 and 63 percent respectively) and this can be attributed to the increase in demand by farmers for planting purpose. Dará and Rural Damascus maize grain prices remained constant for June 2021 at 2,100 and 2,200 SYP per kg respectively as shown in (figure 20).

Barley Grain
Barely grain is available in all the monitored Governorates in June 2021. The average selling price increased 10 percent m-o-m, reaching 1,293 SYP per kg. Deir-ez-Zor and Hasakeh governorates both recorded a significant increase (27 and 23 percent m-o-m respectively). Aleppo, Tartous, Homs and Hama governorates witnessed a slight increase (6, 3, 3 and 1 percent m-o-m respectively). In Rural Damascus the average selling price reached 1,100 from 1,200 in May 2021 (8 percent m-o-m decrease). However, in Dará, the average selling price recorded is 1,200 SYP per kg and this did not change since May 2021 as in figure 21 below.

Cottonseed Meal
Cottonseed remained available in six governorates out of eight, namely Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor and Rural Damascus Governorates. In general, the average selling prices was 1,533 SYP per kg (7 percent m-o-m increase). A slight increase in the average selling price was observed in Aleppo, Tartous, Homs and Hama (7, 2, 2 and 2 percent m-o-m increase respectively), with the price remaining constant at 1,200 SYP per kg in Rural Damascus.
Wheat Bran

The average selling price of wheat bran reached 805 SYP per kg in June 2021, representing a 13 percent m-o-m increase across monitored governorates. The price increase noted in June 2021 can be attributed to increased demand coupled with the “not so adequate” supply due to the erratic rainfall. Hama, Homs, Tartous and Aleppo governorates recorded a significant increase (25, 24, 24 and 20 percent m-o-m) and the average selling price of 840 SYP per kg in Hama, 830 SYP per kg in Homs, 833 SYP per kg in Tartous and lastly 800 SYP per kg in Aleppo. While the price in Deir-ez-Zor governorate decreased slightly (7 percent m-o-m), reaching 650 SYP per kg (figure 23).

Wheat Straw

Despite the commencement of the harvest period, the price of wheat straw increased (13 percent m-o-m). This can be attributed to the currency volatility, limited supply and most likely the anticipation by most sellers of wheat straw volumes decreasing. In June 2021, wheat straw was readily available across all monitored governorates at an average price of 331 SYP per kg. In Hama, Deir-ez-Zor and Hasakeh governorates, a significant increase in the price of wheat straw was recorded (44, 24 and 23 percent m-o-m) and the average selling prices were 300, 298 and 463 SYP per kg respectively. In Darā governorate, a 14 percent m-o-m decrease in the selling price was recorded at 300 SYP per kg, while in Rural Damascus the price increased slightly (7 percent m-o-m) as in figure 23. The wheat straw price increase, particularly in Hama, Deir-ez-Zor and Hasakeh governorates, could be attributed to low supply owing to the erratic rainfall received during the 2020/2021 agricultural season.

Crop Residues

Most common crop residues are obtained from the dry stems and leaves left after the harvest of legumes, vegetables and other crops such as cumin. The average selling price of crop residues recorded a 13 percent m-o-m increase, with the average selling price reaching 663 SYP per kg in June 2021. A significant increase was recorded in Homs, Hama and Tartous governorates (33 percent m-o-m increase in each of the mentioned governorates). The selling price decreased 8 percent m-o-m for Darā governorate and the average selling price reached 600 SYP per kg. The price of crop residues in Rural Damascus governorate remained constant at 1000 SYP per kg. Hasakeh witnessed a slight increase (17 percent m-o-m) and the average selling price was 700 SYP per kg.

Food Prices:

In general, the selling price of bread remained constant in June 2021 and reached 165 SYP per rabta. Hama, Tartous and Deir-ez-Zor governorates recorded a slight decrease (5, 2 and 2 percent m-o-m). The highest selling price of bread was 263 SYP per rabta (pack) recorded in Hasakeh governorate (5 percent m-o-m increase) as highlighted in figure 26.
The price of flour increased 5 percent m-o-m and the average selling price reached 1,735 SYP per Kg. In Hasakeh, the selling price reached 1,300 (18 percent m-o-m increase) with Tartous and Deir-ez-Zor governorates recording a minimal increase (3 and 2 percent m-o-m), with the selling prices reaching 1,683 and 1,250 SYP per Kg respectively. The prices in Rural Damascus and Dar’a remained constant in June 2021. Aleppo and Hama governorates witnessed a slight decrease (3 and 1 percent m-o-m) as highlighted in (figure 27) Homs, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo observed the most significant price increase (29, 28, 20 and 20 m-o-m respectively), with the average selling price reaching 7,760 (Homs), 7,650 (Tartous), 8,300 (Deir-ez-Zor) and 7,500 (Aleppo) SYP per crate or pack of 30 eggs. The increase in the price of eggs can be attributed to the shortages in the commodity quantities in the markets of Hama, Dar’a and Rural Damascus governorates recorded a very slight decrease (9, 9 and 8 percent m-o-m decrease) and the average selling prices were 7,620 (Hama), 8,500 (Dar’a) and 8,200 (Rural Damascus) SYP for a pack 30 eggs as shown in figure 30.

The selling price of cow milk slightly increased (1 percent m-o-m) in June 2021 and the average price reached 1,079 SYP per litre. The price in Aleppo, Deir-ez-Zor and Rural Damascus governorates remained constant at 1,125, 925 and 1,300 SYP per litre respectively. Tartous governorate recorded a 11 percent m-o-m decrease and the price was 975 SYP per litre. The price of milk in Hasakeh and Homs governorates witnessed a slight increase (7 percent m-o-m decrease in both afore-mentioned locations) and the average selling price recorded are 970 in Homs and 1,100 SYP in Hasakeh per litre (figure 31).

For eggs, the average selling prices recorded showed an increase across all monitored governorates in June 2021, with a 16 percent m-o-m increase in the average price, reaching 7,777 SYP for a crate or pack 30 eggs. Homs, Tartous, Deir-ez-Zor and Aleppo observed the most significant price increase (29, 28, 20 and 20 m-o-m respectively), with the average selling price reaching 7,760 (Homs), 7,650 (Tartous), 8,300 (Deir-ez-Zor) and 7,500 (Aleppo) SYP per crate or pack of 30 eggs. The increase in the price of eggs can be attributed to the shortages in the commodity quantities in the markets of Hama, Dar’a and Rural Damascus governorates recorded a very slight decrease (9, 9 and 8 percent m-o-m decrease) and the average selling prices were 7,620 (Hama), 8,500 (Dar’a) and 8,200 (Rural Damascus) SYP for a pack 30 eggs as shown in figure 30.
The average selling price for sheep milk increased slightly (7 percent m-o-m increase) across the monitored markets, with the average selling price increasing to 1 528 SYP per litre. A slight decrease was recorded particularly in Deir-ez-Zor and Hasakeh governorates (5 and 2 percent m-o-m). The selling price of sheep milk in Rural Damascus increased 13 percent m-o-m and the average selling price recorded in June 2021 is 1 700 SYP per litre, the highest compared to other governorates as shown in figure 32.

For chicken meat, the average selling price reached 6 826 SYP per kg (5 percent m-o-m decrease), with the highest selling price of 8 350 SYP per kg being recorded in Aleppo governorate, though there was a 22 percent m-o-m decrease in this location. The drop in the price of chicken meat in Aleppo can be attributed to the lack of electricity that most retailers prefer to sell the all commodity rather than storing it that could mitigate the loss. The lowest selling price was observed in Dará at 4 500 SYP per kg (10 percent m-o-m decrease). The selling price of chicken meat decreased in Deir-ez-Zor governorate (3 percent m-o-m decrease), reaching 6 500 SYP per kg. The price for chicken meat remained constant in Rural Damascus at 7 300 SYP per kg (figure 33).

For cow meat, the prices in Homs and Rural Damascus increased slightly (6 and 5 percent m-o-m) and the average selling prices recorded are 17 200 and 21 000 SYP per kg respectively. The highest selling price was observed in Aleppo reaching 24 500 SYP per kg (9 percent m-o-m increase). Hama, Deir-ez-Zor and Hasakeh governorates also recorded price decreases (8, 7 and 4 percent m-o-m) and the average selling prices recorded are 18 800 SYP (Hama), 14 000 SYP (Deir-ez-Zor) and 16 500 SYP (Hasakeh) per kg of cow meat (figure 35).

Hasakeh, Aleppo, Tartous and Deir-ez-Zor governorates witnessed a slight decrease in the average selling price of sheep meat, reaching 14 750 SYP (Hasakeh), 26 500 SYP (Aleppo), 25 750 SYP (Tartous) and 15 500 SYP (Deir-ez-Zor) per kg. This represents a 12, 9, 8 and 7 percent m-o-m decrease respectively, for the four locations mentioned. The prices in Rural Damascus remained constant as highlighted in figure 34. A slight increase was recorded in Aleppo governorate (9 percent m-o-m) and the average selling price reached 26 500 SYP per kg in June 2021.

In terms of fish, it must be noted that due to the low natural productivity of inland fisheries combined with low consumer preference for fish, the fishery and aquaculture sector plays a minor role in the Syrian Arab Republic’s economy. Despite this, FAO continues to monitor fish prices in output markets and noted that the average selling price for fish reached 8 113 SYP per kg (10 percent m-o-m increase) in June 2021.
The highest price was recorded in Rural Damascus at 25 000 SYP per kg (25 percent m-o-m increase). Deir-ez-Zor and Tartous governorates recorded a slight decrease (12 and 10 percent m-o-m) and the average selling price of kilogram of fish reaching 3 700 and 5 417 SYP in June 2021. In contrast, the price in Hama and Aleppo governorate increased 12 and 7 percent m-o-m and the average selling price was 5 500 and 8 000 SYP per Kg respectively (figure 36). The average Syrian meal does not usually include fish except for some locations such as the coastal areas, Al-Ghab and Deir-Ez-Zor Governorates, where marine fish and fresh water fish are available and are a part of the traditional meals there.

The fisheries and aquaculture production greatly reduced and was heavily impacted by the crisis and a lack of water resources. Syria remains dependent on fish imports to meet the majority of its fish consumption needs. FAO acknowledges the nutritional value of fish and the benefits this sector may potentially bring to Syria economy and will keep a close eye to monitor the situation in this sector.

Olive price increased by 2 percent in June 2021 and the average selling price of 9 670 SYP per litre was recorded across the eight monitored governorates. Hasakeh governorate witnessed an increase (12 percent m-o-m), while the lowest selling price was recorded in Dará governorate at 9 000 SYP per litre, which remained constant since May 2021 (figure 37).

The average price of sunflower oil remained constant since May 2021 and the selling price was 7 353 SYP per Litre. Aleppo governorate witnessed a slight m-o-m decrease (3 percent m-o-m) and the price recorded at 7 300 SYP per litre. This could be attributed to the stability in the informal exchange rate of the local Syrian currency and the USD from April to June 2021 (figure 38).

The average selling price of tomatoes decreased significantly across the monitored markets with an average of 550 SYP per kg being recorded across most Governorates. A very significant decrease of 67 percent was recorded in Hasakeh and this can be attributed to the beginning of the production season of tomato in this area. The selling price in Rural Damascus recorded a 22 percent m-o-m decrease in June 2021, though the price remained higher than any of the monitored markets. This could be attributed to the high transportation cost coupled with high demand in this governorate. The selling price of tomatoes also decreased Dará and Deir-ez-Zor by 483 and 600 SYP per kg (24 and 20 percent m-o-m decrease) respectively as highlighted in figure 39.

For Potatoes in June 2021, the average selling price decreased slightly (7 percent m-o-m) and the average selling price was recorded at 559 SYP per kg. Homs, Hama, Tartous and Dará governorates witnessed a slight decrease as well (18, 17, 17 and 15 percent m-o-m respectively). Aleppo governorate recorded a slight increase (16 percent m-o-m) and the selling price recorded in June 2021 was 725 SYP per kg, representing the highest price in June 2021 across all monitored markets (figure 40).

The average price of eggplants was 656 SYP per kg in June 2021 across the monitored locations (16 percent m-o-m decrease). The selling price of eggplant in Hasakeh represented the highest price across monitored markets and governorates since March 2021. kg from 1 475 in May 2021. Dará and Rural Damascus also witnessed a significant decrease (44 and 22 percent m-o-m respectively).
The price decrease for eggplants in the mentioned locations is most likely due to increased supply due to the ongoing harvest of eggplants, which happens from June to August 2021. In Aleppo, the selling price in June 2021 was 625 SYP per kg (39 percent m-o-m increase), representing the highest increase and this can be attributed to an increase in transportation costs, poor rainfall season, high cost of diesel fuel impacting irrigation, coupled with the resultant limited supply and increased demand for eggplant in that area, especially restaurants (figure 41).