

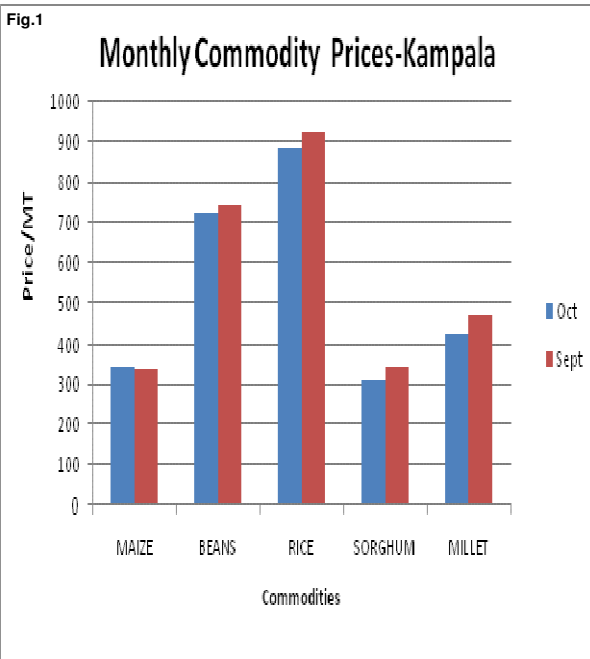
November 2009

Eastern Africa Food & Trade bulletin

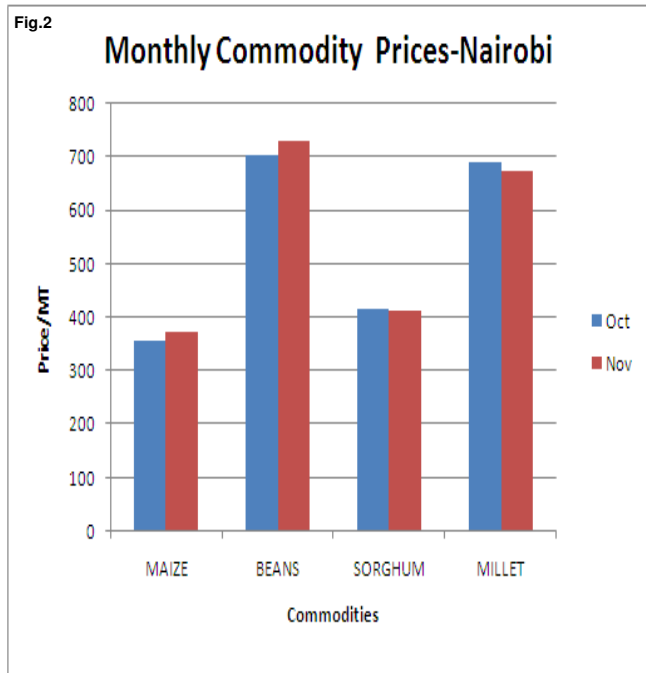
Crops and Markets Update

UGANDA: Early crop harvest in most of Uganda's bimodal districts is gradually improving and stabilizing household food security, especially in northern and parts of eastern Uganda, where lower than normal harvests have caused many households to suffer high food insecurity. Currently, initial crop harvest is helping to enhance household food security. The early harvests are also increasing supplies of green crops -- pulses, maize, root crops and tubers -- enabling relatively increased access for market-dependent households, although market prices remain higher than the five-year average across most markets. The projected season extension of the rains into January is expected to boost crop harvests and replenish stocks. Harvesting of pulses, maize, and sorghum in Karamoja's wet agricultural zone located to the west is in its last stages. It is generally agreed that harvests this year will be much lower than 50 percent of normal levels. (Source: FEWSNET)

KENYA: The long rains maize harvest, which accounts for 85 percent of total national maize output, is ongoing in the grain basket regions of the Rift Valley as harvesting has been completed in all other areas. Harvesting of an estimated 30 percent of national output should be completed in January. About 1.9 million MT is anticipated from the 2009 long rains maize harvest and an additional 530,000 MT from the short rains harvest, barring an unanticipated change in weather conditions. So far, expected pre and post harvest losses have remained low, although the anticipated harvest is already 25 percent below the short term average arising from drought-induced losses. The markets are already responding to ongoing harvesting and the average price of maize, particularly in the grain basket, shows a declining trend. The jury is still out on whether the el-Niño rains will still come as earlier anticipated. (Source: FEWSNET)



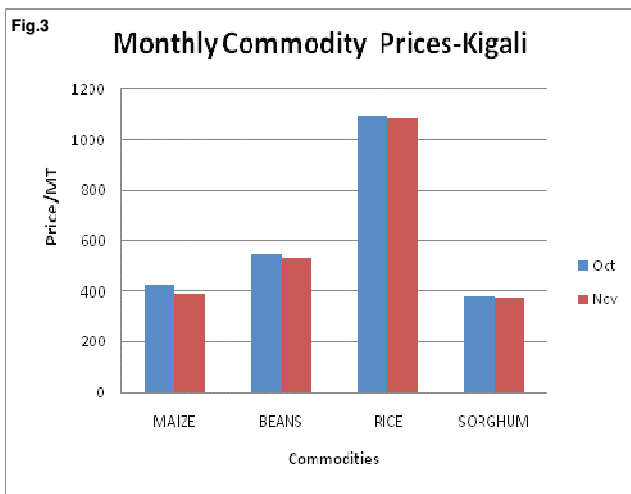
Source: EAGC-RATIN



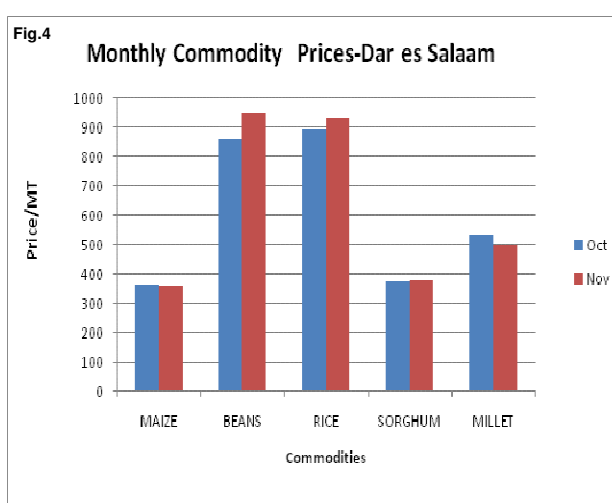
Source: EAGC-RATIN

RWANDA:The September-December period has been characterized by very erratic and low rainfall. The season saw two long dry spells divided by a period of heavy rainfall in early November. As a result, crops in parts of Byumba, Kibuye, and Umutara Provinces were destroyed. Overall, the cumulative rainfall between September and December was 30% lower than the long term average for the same period. Studies show that there was a 1% drop in national production compared to last year. Commodity prices in Rwanda remained almost the same compared to the same period last year with slight changes of plus or minus one percentage point (*source: MINAGRI*)

TANZANIA:Short-rains (*vuli*) started in October in the highlands-Meru district (Arusha), Rombo (Kilimanjaro), Lushoto, and Korogwe districts (Tanga) and Kagera and Kigoma regions. Farmers have planted maize and pulses and the crops are tasseling. The *Vuli* harvests are expected in January (2010). Meteorologists had forecast the September to December *vuli* rains would be normal to above normal due to the impact of El Niño. *Msimu* rains started normally in mid-November 09 and early December in the central zone (Dodoma and Singida regions) and are expected to last up to May. Farmers have planted maize, sorghum and pulses whose harvest is expected in March. Most commodity prices in November remained stable with slight changes of plus or minus one percentage point.



Source: EAGC-RATIN



Source: EAGC-RATIN

Cross Border Commodity Trade Continues to Rise: There was a remarkable rise in the volumes of informal trade across the Eastern African borders in the month of November. The level of traded maize volume reached a relative high of 8038MT, this from an October low of 5828MT. It is noteworthy that though there was an increase in volumes, the price of maize and indeed the other commodities monitored (beans, rice, sorghum, millet and wheat) remained significantly stable clearly because of the harvesting season that has been picking up over the past three months ensuring that there has been relative stability in supply. The quantity of beans that changed hands across the borders peaked at 12905MT with the bulk of it crossing from Uganda into Kenya. Indeed Ugandan sources alone accounted for 12826MT with the balance crossing over to Rwanda. This volume of beans was significantly higher than the total of 2007MT traded in October. Trade volumes for rice, sorghum and millet were 976, 104 and 147 metric tons respectively over the same period. It is instructive that cross border trade continues to rise despite the odds stacked against the small scale traders, a clear indication that there is urgent need for authorities to help ease transactions by creating an enabling environment. Efforts to implement the simplified trade regime by both EAC and COMESA are thus commendable. A look at the aggregate volumes shows that informal trade now stands at 129038MT for beans, 243288MT for maize and 14217MT for Rice. Sorghum and millets now account for 15613 and 8448 metric tons respectively in the past eleven months alone. Clearly, by facilitating the movement of commodities from surplus to deficit areas across the eastern African region, informal trade has the potential to help reduce food insecurity.



The analysis and conclusions made in this report are those of the author, you may contact EAGC office, grains@eagc.org, +254 20 3745840/ +254 710 607313

Sources of information used in this report (1) FEWSNET—Uganda & Tanzania (2) Ministry of Agriculture in Kenya, Tanzania and (3) Cross border monitors and private traders.