

FUGALEI MARKET SURVEY REPORT

AUGUST 2008

Monthly Report No. 8/08*

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Central Bank of Samoa
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FUGALEI MARKET SURVEY AUGUST 2008

This report provides a monthly review of selected agricultural produce available at the Fugalei Market, based on the Central Bank's survey and price data sourced from the Samoa Bureau of Statistic(formerly Statistical Services Division of the Ministry of Finance).

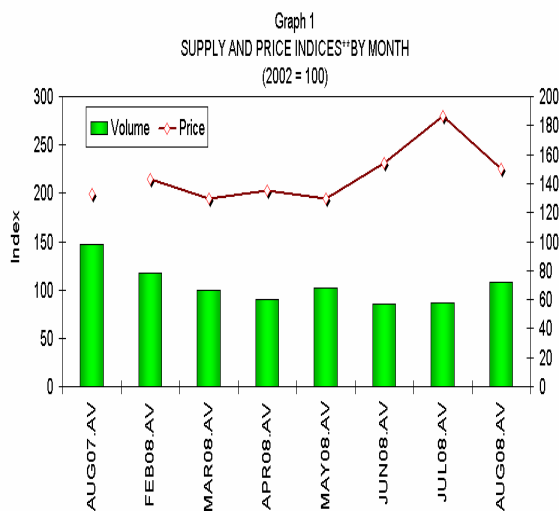
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OVERVIEW

The Central Bank's survey of the Fugalei Market recorded a 24 percent jump in the overall volume of selected produce supplied to the Market in August 2008. However, it was 26 percent lower when compared with the same month last year. The surge in the level of the overall supply reflected increases in the availability of most agricultural produce which was partially offset by declines in the availability of taro palagi and other vegetables.

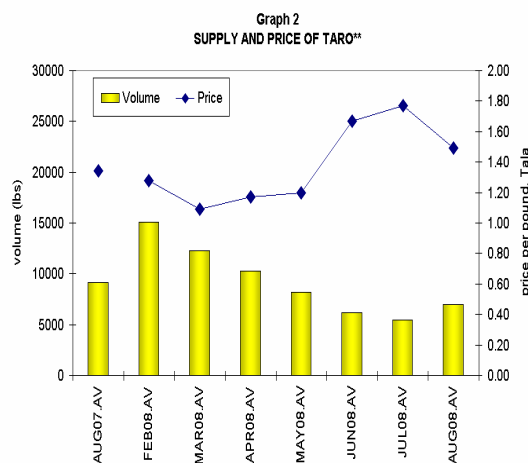
The increased availability saw the overall price index at the Fugalei Market drop 20 percent in August 2008, but was 13 percent higher than in August 2007 reflecting the increased domestic demand over the year as the country hosted several regional meetings as well as preparations for the 17th Teuila Festival to be held in September 2008. (See Graph 1 and Table 4 & 5.)



Despite higher supplies in August 2008, the overall volume of selected agricultural commodities in the first two months of 2008/09 when compared with the same period of 2007/08 was 20 percent lower reflecting the exceptionally high level of supplies last year as part of Samoa's preparations for hosting the South Pacific Games. The average price level was 25 percent higher reflecting increased demand.

TARO

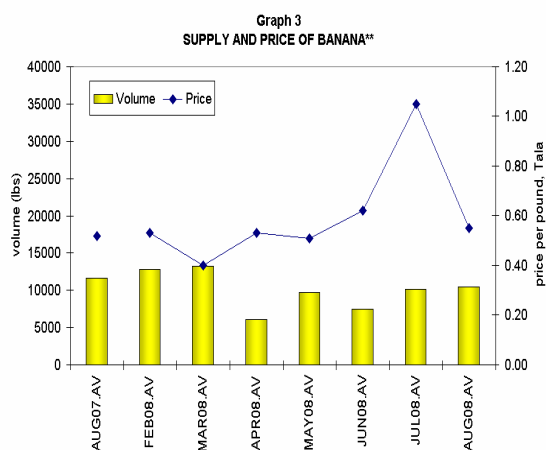
At 6,998 pounds, the average supply of taro on the days surveyed rebounded 27 percent, reversing a declining trend seen in the previous three months. As a result, its price fell 16 percent to \$1.49 per pound. However, when compared to August 2007, the supply of taro was 23 percent lower and its price was 11 percent higher. (See Graph 2 and Table 1 and 2.)



The average availability of taro in the first two months of 2008/09, at 6,245 pounds per month, was 30 percent lower than in the same period of 2007/08. As a result, the price of taro was 26 percent higher.

BANANA

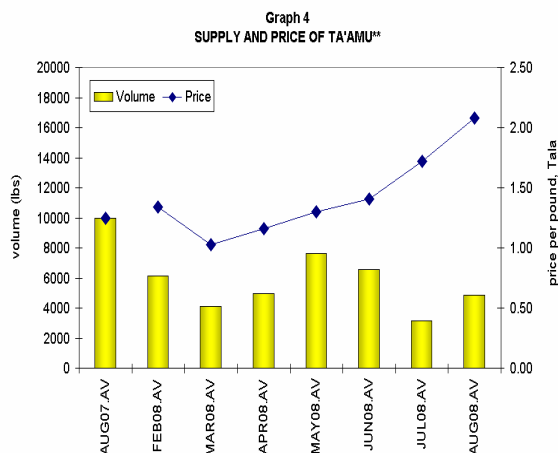
The average supply of banana in August 2008 (at 10,491 pounds) was 4 percent and 10 percent lower than the level in July 2008 and August last year respectively. Reflecting the decreased demand for banana as consumers switched to taro and taamu, its price fell 48 percent to \$0.55 per pound but was 6 percent higher than the same month last year. (See Graph 3 and Tables 1 and 2.)



In the first two months of 2008/09, the average monthly availability of banana at the market (at 10,309 pounds) was 6 percent lower than the same period last year, and its price was 48 percent higher.

TAA'MU

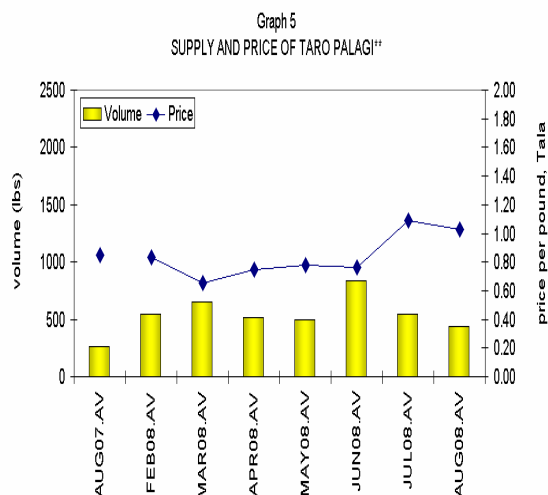
Taamu availability, at 4,861 pounds, surged 55 percent from the previous month but was 51 percent lower than in August 2007. Stronger demand saw the price of taamu (at \$2.08 per pound) increase by 21 percent to a level 66 percent higher than in August 2007. (See Graph 4 and Table 1 & 2.)



Despite the increase in August 2008, the average availability of taamu (at 3,999 pounds per month) in the first two months of 2008/09, shrank 44 percent when compared with the same period of 2007/08. As a result, its price soared 60 percent.

TARO PALAGI

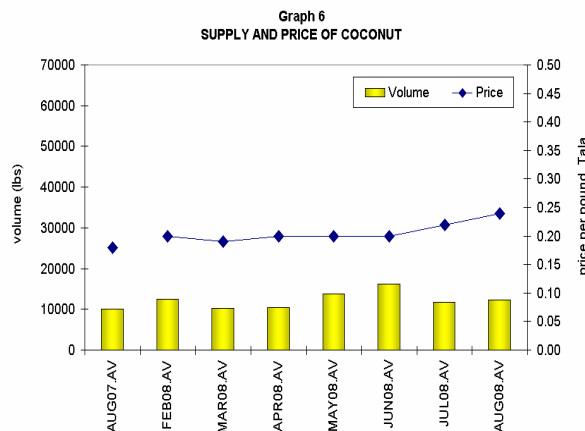
The availability of taro palagi dwindled 19 percent in August 2008, and its price dropped 6 percent to \$1.03 per pound, as a result of reduced demand. However when compared with August 2007, the volume of taro palagi was 66 percent higher with strong demand pushing its average price level up 21 percent. (See Graph 5 and Tables 1 & 2.)



Despite the drop in the month under review, the average availability of taro palagi in the first two months of 2008/09 (at 491 pounds per month) was 67 percent higher than the level in the same period of 2007/08. As a result of increased demand, its average price was more costly by 26 percent.

COCONUT

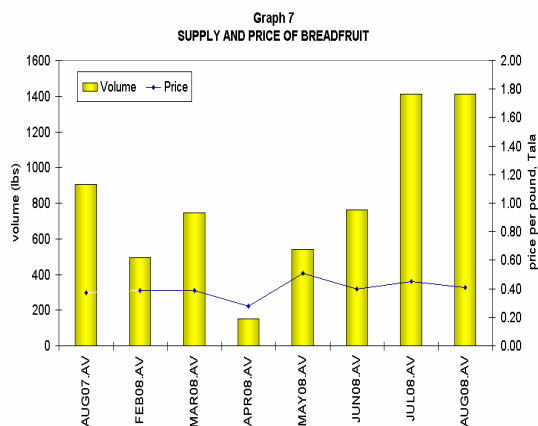
Increased demand saw the availability of coconut pick up 4 percent to 12,245 pounds, pushing up its price (at \$0.24 per pound) by 9 percent. When compared to August 2007, coconut supply was 23 percent higher but its price climbed 33 percent to \$0.11 per pound. (See Graph 6 and Tables 1 and 2.)



Despite the hike in August 2008, the monthly average availability of coconut at the Market in the first two months of 2008/09 (at 12,031 pounds per month) tumbled 42 percent when compared with the corresponding period of 2007/08. As a result, its price was 35 percent higher.

BREADFRUIT

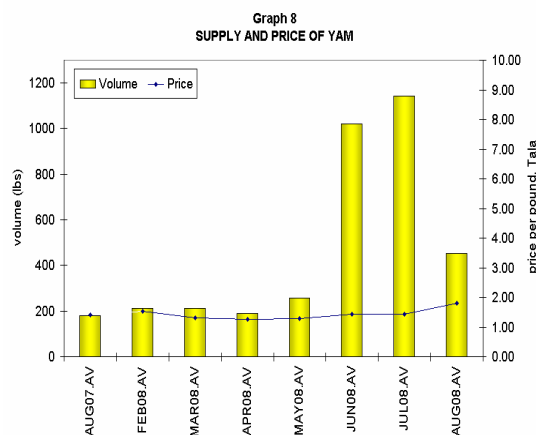
At 1,413 pounds, the supply of breadfruit during the month under review rose marginally from the previous month, but was 56 percent higher than in August last year. Consequently, at \$0.41 per pound, the price of breadfruit decreased 9 percent from the previous month but was 11 percent higher than in August 2007. (See Graph 7 and Table 1 and 2.)



The average availability of breadfruit in the two months to August 2008 (at 1,412 pounds per month) was 61 percent higher than in the same period of 2007/08 and its average price was 48 percent more expensive as a result of increased demand.

YAM

In August 2008, the supply of yam declined 61 percent from the previous month and its price increased 26 percent to \$1.80 per pound. However, when compared with August 2007, the current volume of yam was more than doubled, with strong demand over the year pushing its price up 28 percent. (See Graph 8 and Tables 1 and 2.)

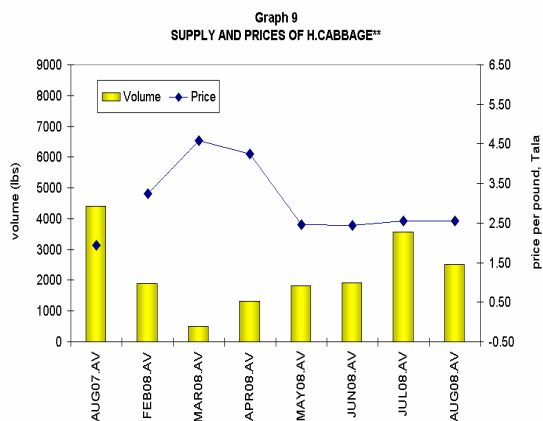


Despite the drop in the month under review, the average availability of yam in the first two months of 2008/09 more than doubled the level of the same period last year. Its average price, however, was 26 percent higher due to increased demand.

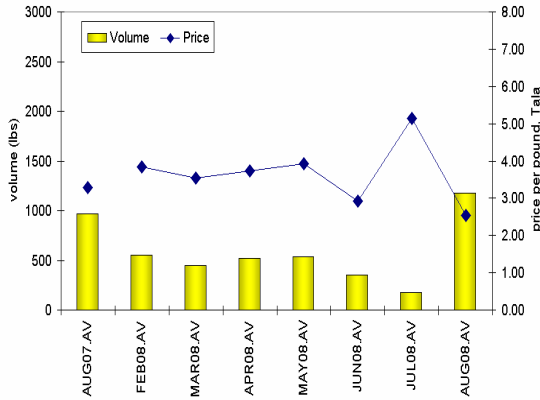
VEGETABLE PRODUCE

Encouraged by strong domestic demand and the usual favourable weather conditions, the output of most vegetable produce improved substantially in August 2008. The average supplies of tomatoes and pumpkin jumped 577 percent and 499 percent in that order. Consequently, the prices of tomatoes and pumpkin dropped by 51 percent and 44 percent respectively.

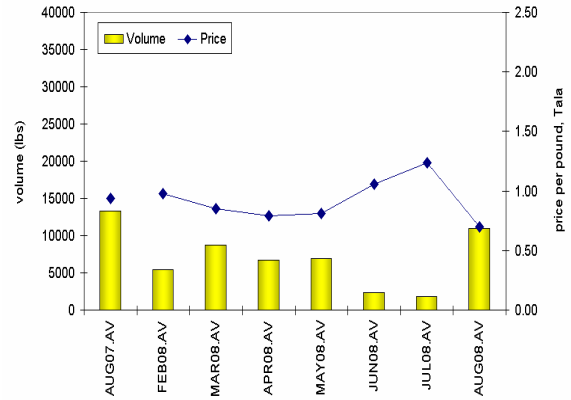
On the downside, the supplies of head cabbage, chinese cabbage and cucumber fell by 30 percent, 10 percent and 61 percent in that order. Similarly, the price of chinese cabbage and cucumber tumbled 10 percent and 6 percent respectively while that of head cabbage remained unchanged at \$2.56 per pound. Compared to August 2007, the supplies of all vegetable produce were lower but their prices were more expensive reflecting higher domestic demand. (See Graphs 9 to 13 and Tables 1 and 2.)



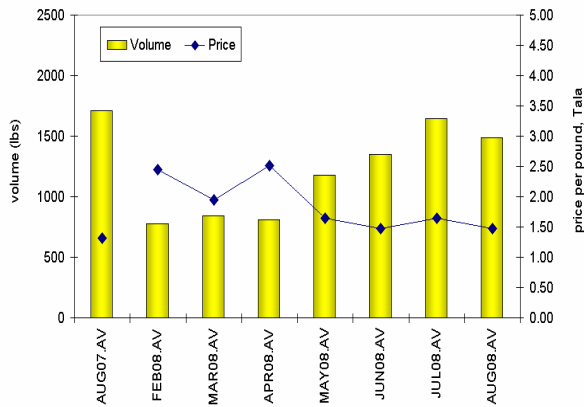
Graph 10
SUPPLY AND PRICE OF TOMATOES**



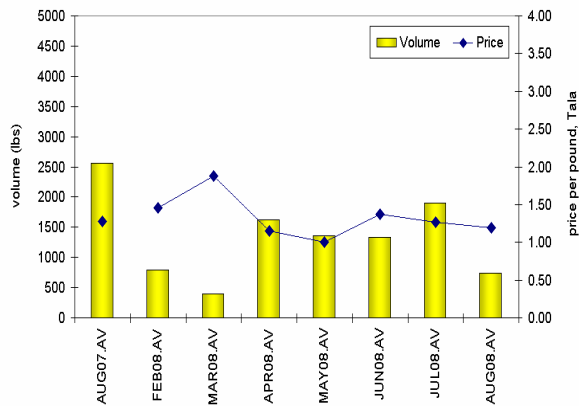
Graph 13
SUPPLY AND PRICE OF PUMPKIN**



Graph 11
SUPPLY AND PRICE OF CH.CABBAGE**

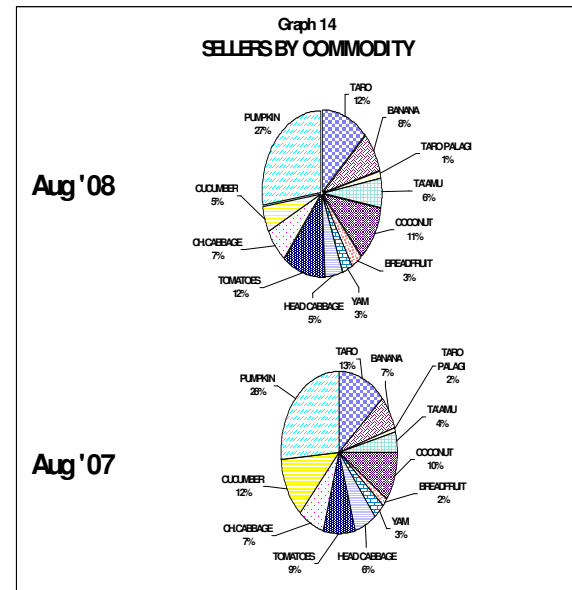


Graph 12
SUPPLY AND PRICE OF CUCUMBER



SELLERS

Reflecting the expansion in the overall supply, the number of sellers (314) on the days surveyed in August 2008 was 35 percent higher than in the previous month, and 7 percent above the same month last year. (See Graph 14 and Table 6.)

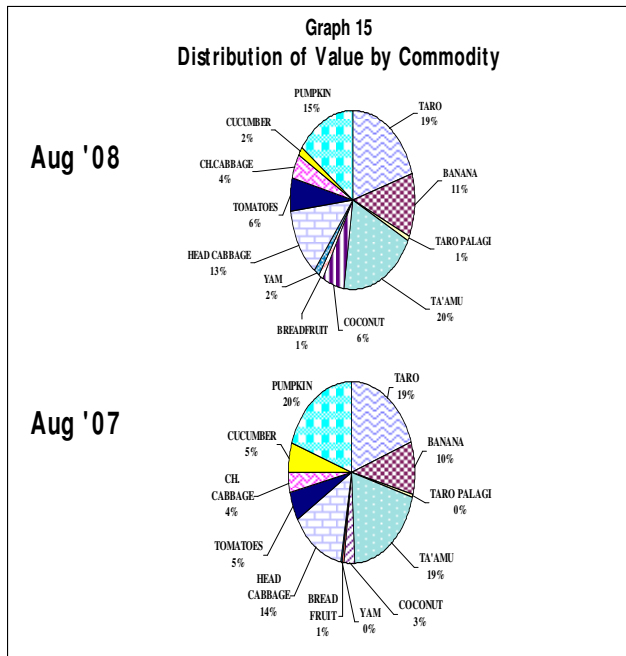


Pumpkin sellers recorded the largest increase with its total rising to 87 from 19 in July 2008 and 78 in August 2007. Taro and tomatoes sellers followed with totals of 40 and 37 respectively, up from 35 and 15 in July 2008, and 39 and 27 in that order in August 2007. Sellers of banana, taamu and taro palagi also increased to 24, 18 and 5 respectively, from 21, 13 and 5 in that order in the previous month and 20, 13 and 2 in August 2007. On the downside, coconut, Chinese cabbage and cucumber sellers were slightly below the level last month but higher than the same month last year, while breadfruit seller (at a low of 10) was unchanged from its level last month and the same month last year.

Yam and head cabbage sellers fell to 9 and 15 in August 2008 from 10 and 17 in the previous month and 9 and 18 in August 2007.

VALUE OF SUPPLIES

Consequent to the rise in the level of supply, the average value of selected produce supplied to the Market (at \$51,300) jumped 5 percent to a level 19 percent below that in the same month of 2007. (See Graph 15 and Table 3.)



Taro and ta'amu contributed the most to the total value of produce surveyed in August 2008, with shares of 20 percent each, from 20 percent and 11 percent respectively in the previous month and 19 percent and 20 percent in that order in August 2007. Likewise, pumpkin, head cabbage and banana registered shares of 15 percent, 13 percent and 11 percent respectively in the month under review. On the other hand, coconut and tomatoes recorded shares of 6 percent each. Relatively lowers shares were recorded for the rest of the other commodities in August 2008.

@ Weights for the selected produce have been revised using 2002 as the base period and have been incorporated starting from January 2003 report.

* The selected produces are: taro, banana, ta'amu, taro palagi, coconut, head cabbage, tomatoes, Chinese cabbage, cucumber and pumpkin. Breadfruit and yam were recently included in the composition of the overall Indices.

** Data shown reflects the average availability and prices of the selected produce at the Fugalei Market on each Friday (Thursday where Friday is a public holiday) in the months under reference.