

CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA

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FUGALEI MARKET SURVEY REPORT

APRIL 2009

Monthly Report No. 04/09*

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Central Bank of Samoa

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FUGALEI MARKET SURVEY APRIL 2009

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 Statistics (formerly Statistical Services Division of the Ministry of Finance).

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OVERVIEW

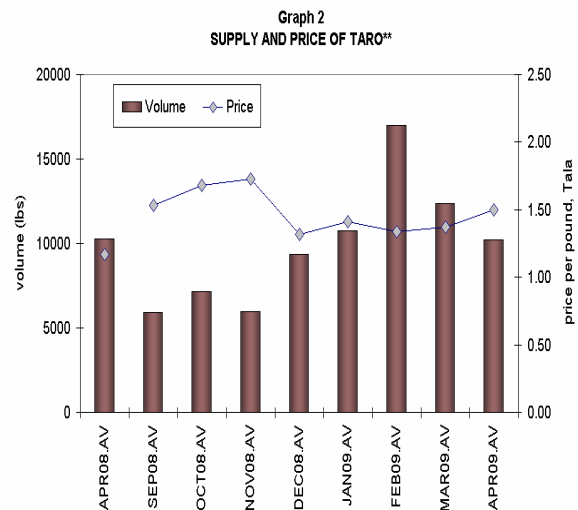
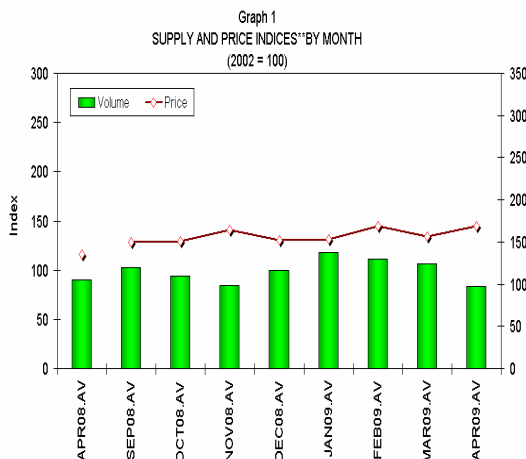
Agricultural food supplies, according to the Central Bank's survey of the Fugalei Market in April 2009 continued to fall for the third consecutive month, dropping 21 percent from March 2009 and was 8 percent lower than that in April 2008. The reduction in the overall volume during the month under review was due to decreased supplies of taro, coconut and most vegetables to the market. As suggested by some farmers, contributing factors to this month's decline was the change in weather conditions over the period under review as well as the decision by some farmers to bring their produce on Saturday mornings when there are more buyers rather than during the weekdays.

Subsequent to the fall in the overall volume of agricultural produce in the month under review, the average price level at the Market rose 8 percent reflecting increased prices of most commodities (with the exception of taamu and breadfruit). And, when compared to April 2008, the current price level was 25 percent higher consequent to the lower volume of agricultural produce over the year. (See Graph 1 and Table 4 and 5.)

The decreased volume in the month under review contributed to a 24 percent decline in the overall average availability of agricultural produce in the first ten months of 2008/09 compared to the corresponding period of 2007/08. As a result, the average price level increased 24 percent from the ten months ending April 2008.

TARO

The volume of taro (at 10,216 pounds) in April 2009 shrank 17 percent, reflecting a shortage of matured taro during the month under review, with its price consequently increasing 9 percent to \$1.50 per pound. In addition, when compared with April 2008, the current volume of taro was slightly lower (at 0.4 percent), pushing its price up 28 percent. (See Graph 2 and Table 1 and 2.)

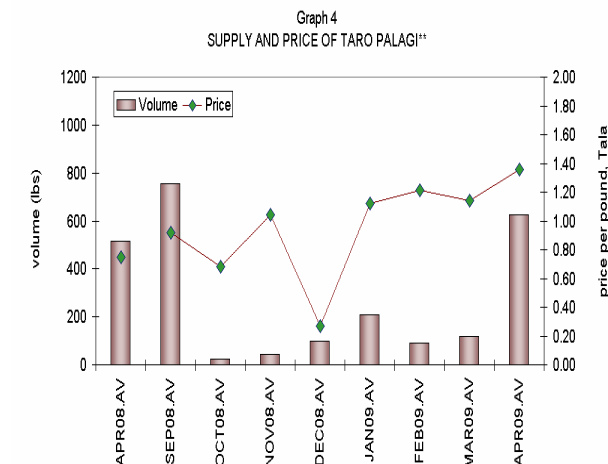


This month's lower volume contributed to an 18 percent tumble in the average supply of taro (to 9,118 pounds) in the first ten months of 2008/09 from the corresponding period of 2007/08. Its average price, as a result, rose 27 percent over the same period.

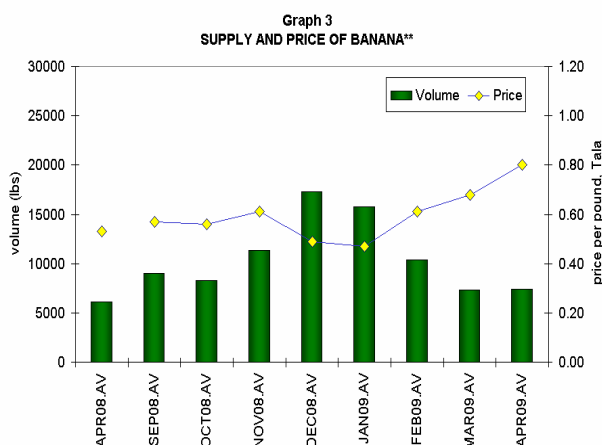
\$1.36 per pound, a level that was 81 percent higher than that of a year ago. (See Graph 4 and Table 1 and 2.)

BANANA

Reflecting the reduced availability of its close substitutes (taro and yam); the average volume of banana supplied to the Fugalei Market rose 1 percent to 7,391 pounds in April 2009. And, as demand shifted to this staple food, the average price of banana rose 18 percent to \$0.80 per pound. And, when compared to April 2008, the current volume of banana supplies to the Market was 21 percent higher, with stronger demand taking its price up by 51 percent over the year. (See Graph 3 and Table 1 and 2.)



Despite the currently high volumes of taro palagi supplied to the Market in April 2009, the monthly average availability of this staple crop in the first ten months of 2008/09 was 19 percent lower (at 295 pounds per month) than the corresponding period of 2007/08. In the event, its average price in the ten months ending April 2009 was 19 percent higher than in the same period of 2007/08.



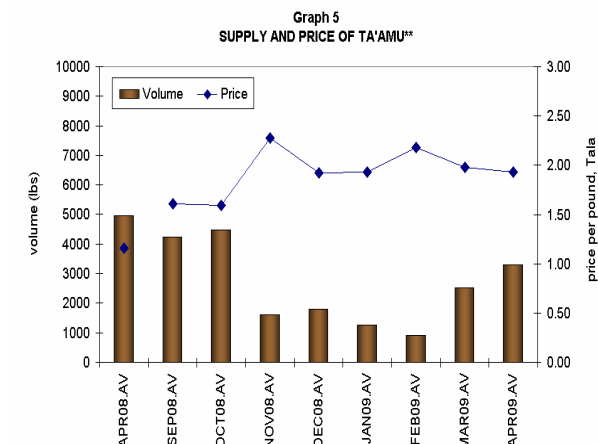
Regardless of this month's higher supply of banana, the average volume in the ten months ending April 2009 was 29 percent lower at 10,741 pounds per month from the ten months ending April 2008. As a result, its average price was 25 percent higher in the comparable period.

TAAMU

Taamu availability, at 3,289 pounds, surged 31 percent from the previous month but was 34 percent lower than in April 2008. Consequently, its' price (of \$1.93 per pound) was 3 percent cheaper than the previous month but was 66 percent higher than in April 2008. (See Graph 5 and Table 1 and 2.)

TARO PALAGI

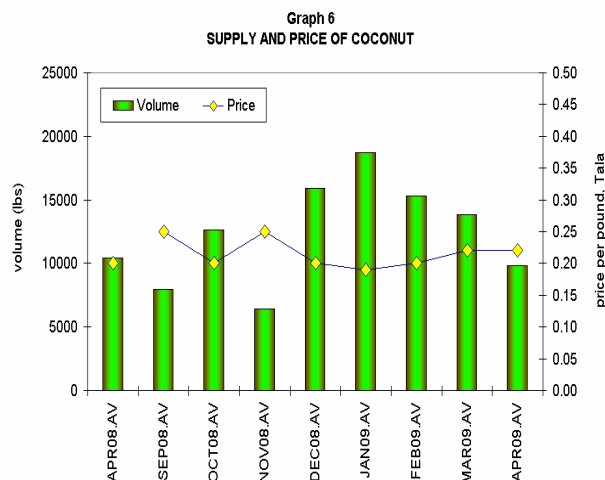
After four months of below average levels, the volume of taro palagi available at the Fugalei Market in April 2009 rebounded to 627 pounds from 118 pounds in March 2009. At this current level, it was 22 percent higher than the supplies last year. Increased demand for this staple food crop, however, saw its price leap 19 percent to



Despite the increase in April 2009, the average availability of taamu (at 2,809 pounds per month) in the ten months of 2008/09, shrank 51 percent when compared with the same period of 2007/08. As a result, its price soared 61 percent.

COCONUT

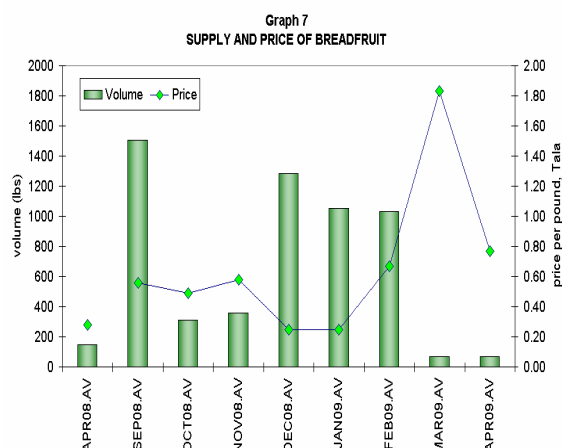
While the volume of coconut at the Fugalei Market decreased 29 percent to 9,814 pounds in April 2009, its price remained steady at \$0.22 per pound. The current volume of coconut supplied to the Market was the lowest level recorded since November 2008 with many suppliers stating the high cost of transportation as being the main reason for their reluctance to deliver coconuts to the Market. Some coconut sellers have also diverted their supplies to National Hospital, hotels, restaurants and STEC at Vaitele. When compared with the same month last year, coconut supplies were 6 percent lower than in April 2008 with its current price 10 percent higher. (See Graph 6 and Table 1 and 2).



This month's lower supply of coconut to the Market added to the 12,464 pounds per month in the ten months ending April 2009, which was 18 percent lower than the same period in 2008. As a result, coconut prices were 10 percent higher than the ten months ending April 2008.

BREADFRUIT

At 69 pounds, the supply of breadfruit during the month under review remained unchanged from the previous month, but was 53 percent lower than in April last year. At \$0.77 per pound, the price of breadfruit decreased 58 percent from the previous month but was more than doubled in April 2008. (See Graph 7 and Table 1 and 2.)

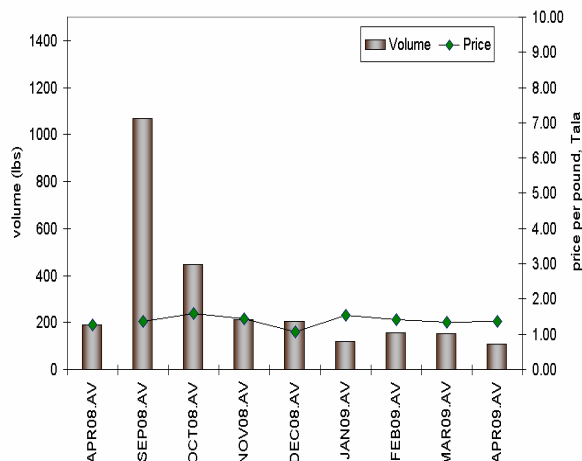


The average availability of breadfruit in the ten months to April 2009 (at 851 pounds per month) was 24 percent higher than in the same period of 2008/09 and its average price was 75 percent more expensive as a result of increased demand.

YAM

Reflecting increased supplies of its close substitutes (particularly taro palagi and taamu), the supply of yam to the Fugalei Market declined 29 percent from the previous month, and was 43 percent lower than its level last year. And, corresponding to the shift in demand to these close substitutes, yam prices edged up 1 percent to \$1.36 per pound in April 2009, a level that was 7 percent higher than in April 2008. (See Graph 8 and Table 1 and 2.)

Graph 8
SUPPLY AND PRICE OF YAM



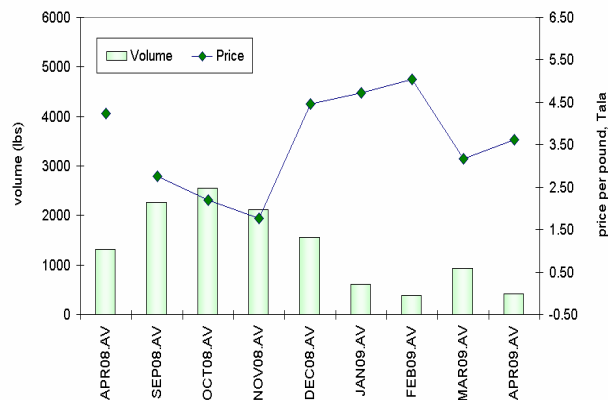
Despite the lower level of yam supplies in April 2009, the average availability of this food crop at the Market was significantly higher in the first ten months of 2008/09 (at 406 pounds per month) compared to 235 pounds per month in the corresponding period of 2007/08. Strong demand, however, pushed its price up 5 percent.

VEGETABLE PRODUCE

The fluctuating weather conditions continued to adversely affect the availability of most vegetable produce in April 2009.

Mainly affected was Chinese cabbage, which recorded the largest decrease of 61 percent in the month under review, followed by 55 percent and 43 percent decreases in head cabbage and cucumber respectively. Consequent to its lower supply, the price of Chinese cabbage jumped 75 percent with those for head cabbage and cucumber rising 14 percent and 5 percent respectively. The volume of pumpkin supplied to the Market dropped 33 percent while those of tomatoes edged down by 28 percent. As a consequence, pumpkin prices rose 6 percent in April 2009 while that of tomatoes was 21 percent higher than in March 2009. (See Graphs 9 to 13 and Tables 1 and 2.)

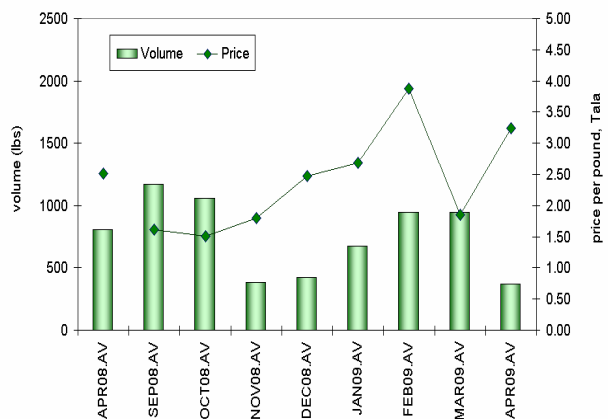
Graph 9
SUPPLY AND PRICES OF H.CABBAGE**

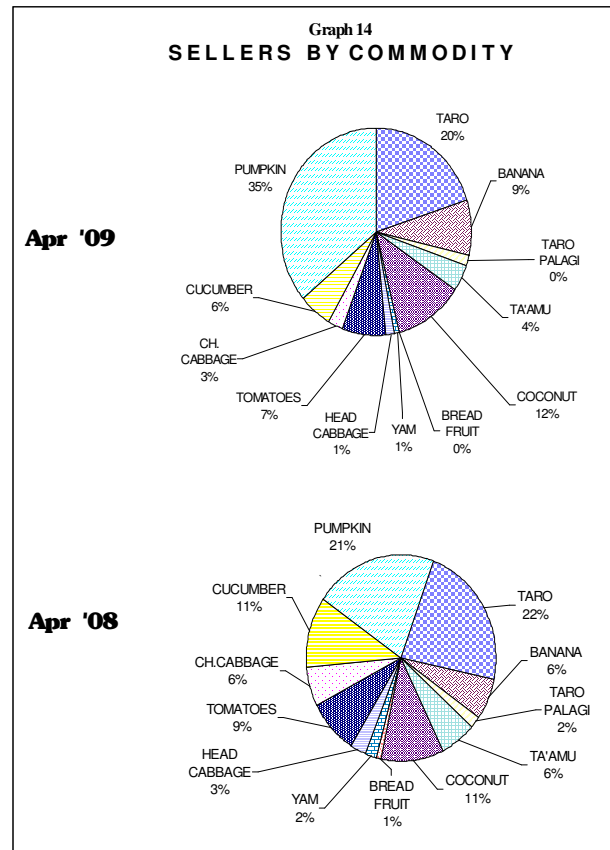
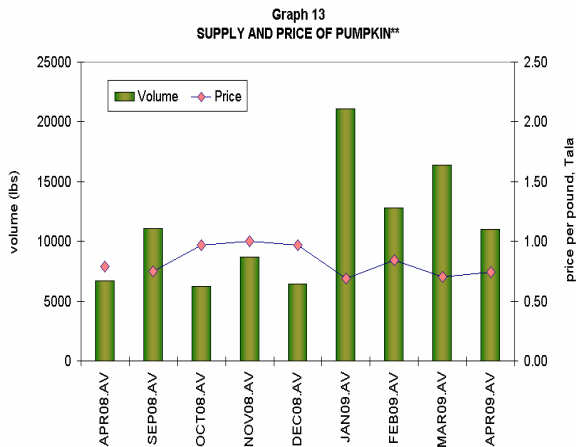
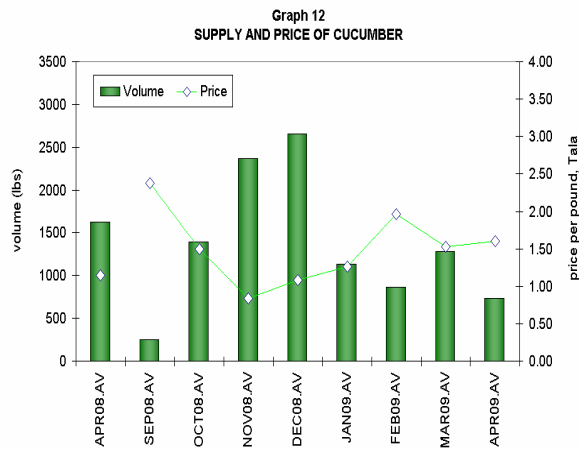


Graph 10
SUPPLY AND PRICE OF TOMATOES**



Graph 11
SUPPLY AND PRICE OF CH.CABBAGE**





SELLERS

The lower availability of agricultural produce to the Fugalei Market in April 2009 corresponded to a 23 percent decrease in the number of sellers (at 245) on the days surveyed in the month under review. However, when compared to April 2008, the current number of sellers was 5 percent higher reflecting higher suppliers of pumpkin, banana and coconut sellers over the year. (See Graph 14 and Table 6.)

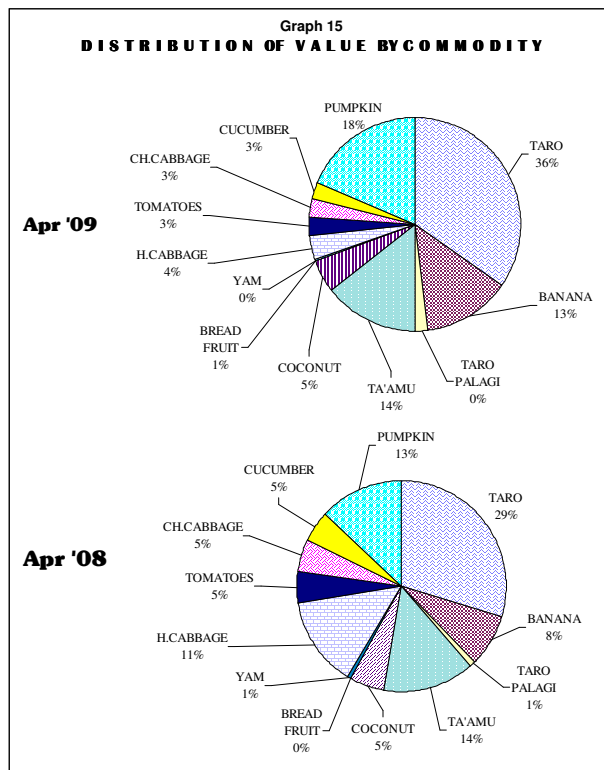
Pumpkin sellers were the largest group however its total fell to 88, from 119 in April 2009 but were higher than the 49 in April 2008. Taro sellers followed with a total of 49, down from 51 in March 2009 and 53 in April 2008. Coconut sellers were third with a total of 29, down from 37 in April 2008 but up from 25 a year ago. Banana and tomatoes sellers followed at 21 and 18 suppliers respectively, down from 22 and 26 in March 2009, and 15 and 21 in that order in April 2008. Suppliers of taamu, cucumber and Chinese cabbage declined to 14, 10 and 6 respectively from 12, 22 and 15 in the previous month and 14, 26 and 14 in that order in April last year. Taro palagi and head cabbage sellers edged down to 4 each from 3 and 6 in the previous month and 5 and 7 suppliers in April 2008. Those supplying yam dropped 2 to 4 from the previous month and was above than the 5 sellers in April 2008.

VALUE OF SUPPLIES

Reflecting the lower volume in April 2009, the average value of selected produce supplies to Market decreased 12 percent to \$44,100; a level that was 9 percent higher than the same month last year. (See Graph 15 and Table 3.)

* 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.



**CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA
3rd June 2009**

Taro contributed the most to the total value of produce surveyed, with a share of 35 percent, higher than its share of the previous month (34 percent) and April 2008 (30 percent). Pumpkin followed with an 18 percent share that was lower than its contribution in the previous month (23 percent) but higher than its 13 percent share a year ago. Taamu and banana accounted for 14 percent and 13 percent respectively in the month under review with coconut contributing 5 percent. Head cabbage, tomatoes, Chinese cabbage and cucumber recorded shares of 3 percent each while taro palagi contributed 2 percent. Breadfruit and yam accounted for modest shares of 0.1 percent and 0.3 percent in that order in April 2009.

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