



Highlights:

- Conflict has severed supply lines to most besieged areas leading to extreme food shortages. As a result, in Darayya and Madamiyet Elsham fresh bread was sporadically available at an exorbitant cost of SYP 1500/bundle (30 times higher than the Damascus market price).
- The average nominal retail prices of wheat flour and rice for February 2016 were SYP 253/kg and SYP 457/kg, respectively. This represents an increase of 108% (wheat flour) and 101% (rice) compared to February 2015 prices.
- In February 2016, the average price for diesel was SYP 312/L and SYP 4,662 for a cylinder of butane gas. Compared to the same month last year, the retail price of fuel is up by 76% for both diesel and a cylinder of butane gas.
- The purchasing power of daily wage earners, as reflected by the terms-of-trade, decreased by 4.6% compared to August 2015 and by 14.2% compared to levels observed in February 2015.

A: Standard Food Basket

The average cost of a standard food basket¹ (group of essential commodities) during February 2016 was SYP 30,834. The lowest price of the basket was recorded in Lattakia governorate at SYP 20,792, while the highest basket price was observed in Deir-ez-Zor governorate at SYP 100,510 more than four times higher than in central Damascus market.

Since February 2015, the price of the food basket in Deir-ez-Zor has increased by 487 percent and in Rural Damascus by 161 percent.

Consequently, the purchasing power of vulnerable poor households, who are mainly dependent on markets, continues to deteriorate as food prices rise.

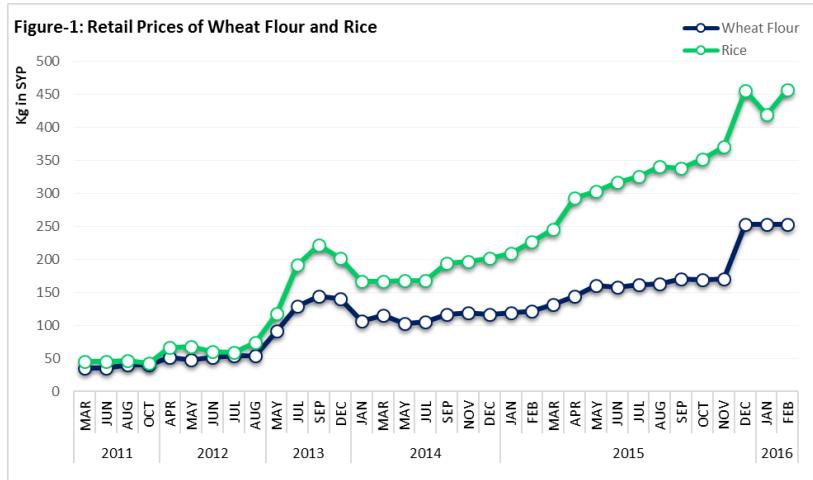
Governorate	Price February 2016	Price 1 month change	Price 6 months changes	Price 12 months changes
Aleppo	SYP 23,639	14.3%	43.5%	83.9%
Damascus	SYP 22,210	11.5%	45.2%	68.6%
Dar'a	SYP 22,977	1.1%	46.9%	74.2%
Deir-ez-Zor	SYP 100,510	7.7%	-15.7%	487%
Hama	SYP 22,244	2.1%	26.4%	53.5%
Al-Hassakeh	SYP 25,845	0.5%	58.2%	82.2%
Homs	SYP 22,178	0.5%	30.1%	60.6%
Lattakia	SYP 20,792	6.8%	34.0%	56.6%
Raqqa	SYP 27,433	0.5%	33.5%	116.3%
Rural Damascus	SYP 38,395	2.7%	51.5%	161%
Sweida	SYP 21,252	1.4%	23.6%	64.1%
Tartous	SYP 22,533	-0.3%	40.1%	67.6%
Average	SYP 30,834	4.5%	18.5%	123%

1. The cost of a standard basket of dry goods providing 1,930 kcal a day for a family of five during a month. The basket includes 37 kg of bread, 19 kg rice, 19 kg lentils, 5 kg of sugar, and 7 kg of vegetable oil.

B: Retail Prices

1- Wheat Flour and Rice:

In February 2016, the average nominal retail prices of wheat flour and rice were SYP 253/kg and SYP 457/kg respectively. Compared to January 2016, the price of wheat flour remains unchanged, while the price of rice increased by 9.1 percent. Compared to pre-crisis levels, the average monthly price of wheat flour registered significant increases (623 percent for wheat flour and 916 percent for rice). The price of wheat flour and rice respectively rose by 55.6 percent and 34.3 percent when compared to August 2015. The price increases of main food commodities in the past months can be attributed to the combined effects of the conflict, which disrupted the regular flow of supplies in some local markets as well as a recent further depreciation of the Syrian Pound (unofficial rate of USD1/SYP428, the lowest value since 2011)



During the current reporting period, markets in Darayya (located in besieged Rural Damascus) recorded the highest price for rice, sold at SYP 6,000/kg which is 17 times higher than in Damascus markets. In Deir-ez-Zor city also under siege, the rice price was SYP 2,250/kg, a 50 percent increase compared to the previous month, 36 percent compared to six months ago and 324 percent compared to February 2015. The lowest price was observed in As-Sweida where 1 kg of rice was sold at SYP 275. Besieged markets in Rural Damascus registered the highest price for wheat flour sold at SYP 900 per kg while the lowest price was observed in Homs where 1 kg of rice was sold at SYP 167.

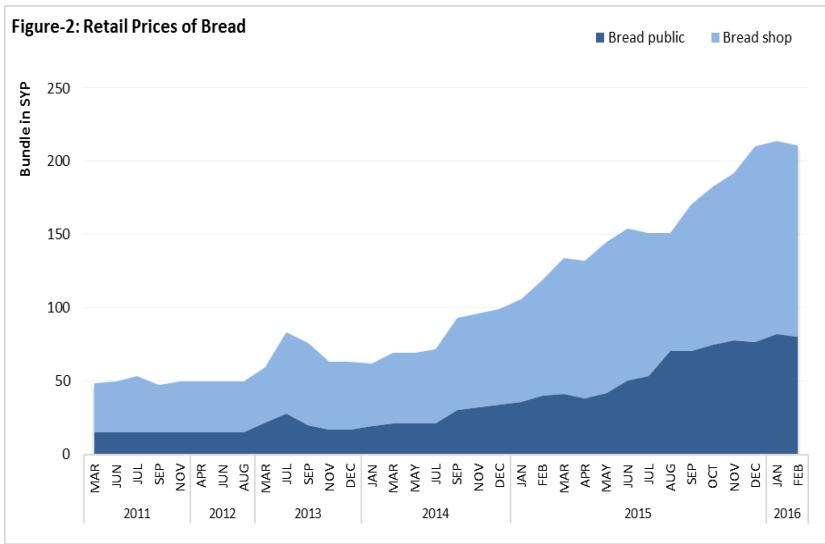
2—Bread:

During the reporting month, the average nominal retail prices for public (subsidized) bread and shop (unsubsidized) bread were SYP 80/bundle and SYP 131/bundle, respectively. The price of both public (subsidized) bread and shop (unsubsidized) bread remain unchanged, compared to January 2016.

Between August 2015 and February 2016, the average retail prices of subsidized and unsubsidized bread rose by approximately 13.6 percent and 62.7 percent respectively, reaching their highest levels in February 2016.

In Deir-ez-Zor city, bread was available only for 10 days during this month. The shortage of key inputs, including fuel has negatively impacted the functionality of the bakeries .

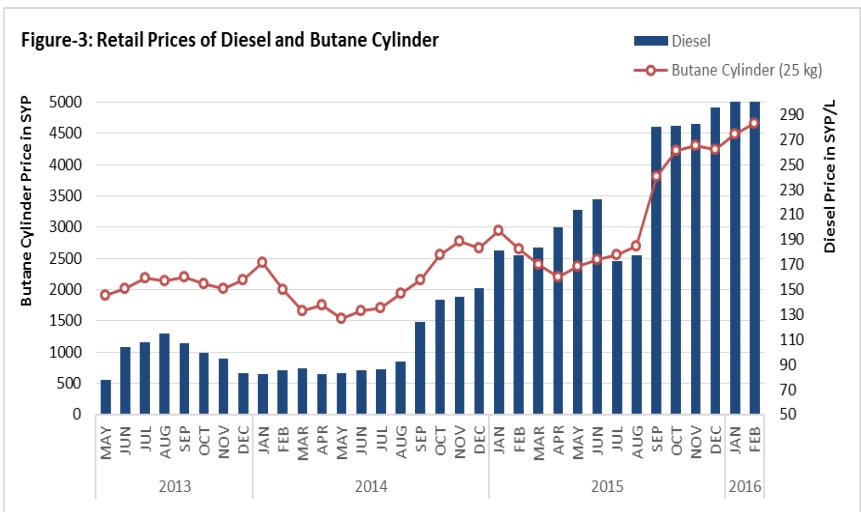
In Darayya and Madamiyet Elsham fresh bread is currently not available and the price of old bread (if available) was SYP 1500/bundle (30 times higher than Damascus).



3– Diesel and cylinder of butane gas

During the reporting month, the average price of diesel was SYP 312/L and SYP 4,662 for a cylinder of butane gas. Between January and February 2016, the average retail prices of diesel remain unchanged while it rose by 4 percent for a cylinder of butane gas. Compared to the same month last year, both diesel and a cylinder of butane gas prices went up by 76 percent. In Deir-ez-Zor the black market price of diesel reached SYP 1,525/L, which is more than an eleven-fold increase compared to the latest official price (SYP 135/L).

Shortage of diesel and gas is directly impacting the prices of all main food commodities in most besieged areas. The dire shortages of fuel and wood have made cooking very difficult in Deir-ez-Zor and Darayya cities.

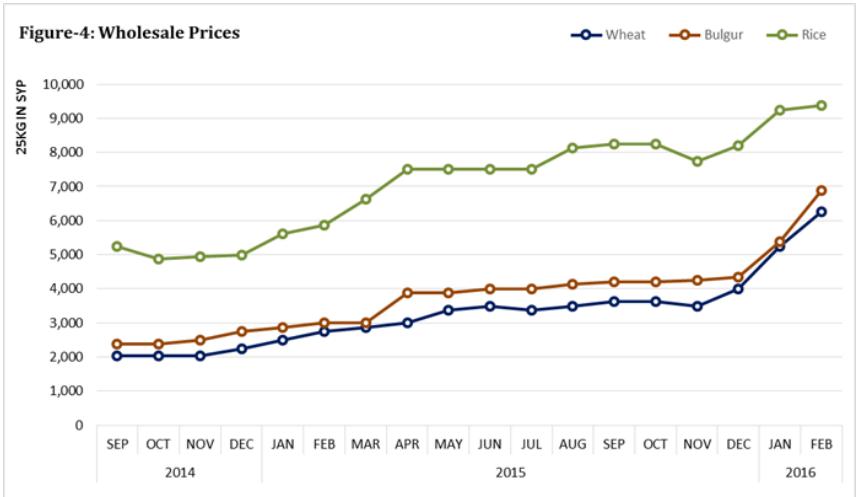


C. Wholesale Prices of main cereal in Damascus Market

During February 2016, the average nominal wholesale price of wheat grain was SYP 6,250, while for bulgur it was SYP 6,875 and white rice SYP 9,375. Compared to January 2016, the wholesale price of bulgur increased by 27 percent, rice by 1.4 percent and wheat grain by 19 percent.

Between August 2015 and February 2016 the wholesale prices of wheat increased by 79 percent, bulgur by 67 percent and rice by 15 percent.

The year-on-year wholesale price of wheat grain increased by 127 percent, bulgur by 129 percent and white rice by 60 percent . The main reason of the wholesale price increasing is the continuous depreciation of Syrian Pound against US Dollar.



D. Food Supply to Markets

During February 2016, in the monitored markets of Homs, Lattakia, Tartous, As-Sweida and Damascus the markets were functioning and supply routes were open. However, in the besieged areas in Rural Damascus (Darayya, Zamalka, Madaya, Az-Zabdani) and most areas of Deir-ez-Zor governorate, the supply of essential food commodities was severely disrupted. As a result bread, wheat flour, diesel, sugar and butane were only sporadically available at unaffordable prices. In Darayya, the long siege has severely restricted access to food and an already dire food security situation is worsening. In Dar'a (Sheikh Miskine), northern Aleppo (A'zaz) and Al-Hasakeh periodic clashes continue to disrupt the regular food supply to local markets.

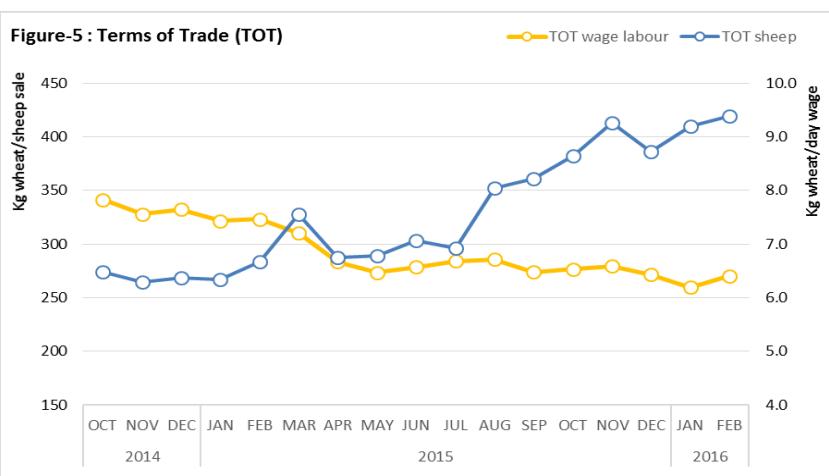
E. Terms of Trade (TOT):²

TOT between wage labour and wheat flour

The nominal average daily wage rate in February 2016 was SYP 1,275. The wage rate varied between market locations, ranging from SYP 737 in Homs to SYP 2,000 SYP in Lattakia. The average TOT between a daily unskilled labour wage and the retail price of wheat flour was 6.4kg/day, which is 4.6 percent lower than six months ago and 14.2 percent lower compared to same month last year. Consequently, the purchasing power of households who depend on wage labour income is further deteriorating.

TOT between sheep and wheat flour

In February 2016, the average price of a two-years old male sheep was SYP 83,442/head, this represents an increase of 3.9 percent compared to January 2016. The national average TOT between a sheep and wheat flour was 419.3kg/sheep, which is 2.3 percent higher compared to last month. The highest TOT was recorded in Deir-ez-Zor governorate (832kg/sheep), while the lowest TOT was in Rural Damascus governorate (93.7kg/sheep).



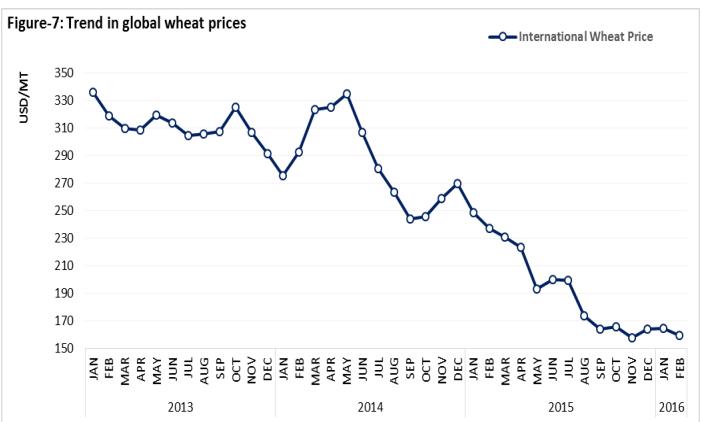
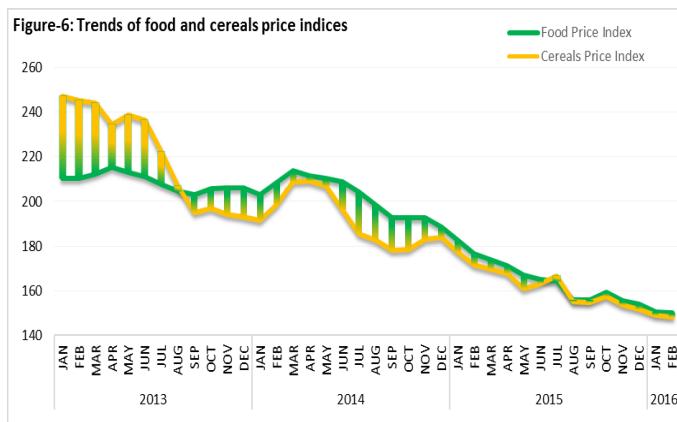
F. International Market Prices

The FAO Food Price Index averaged 150.2 points in February 2016, which is unchanged compared to January average, but represents a drop of 14.8 percent compared February 2015.

Since April 2014, the overall Food Price Index has gradually declined on a monthly basis. Similarly, the Cereal Price Index averaged 148.3 points in February 2016, as much as 0.5 percent below January 2016 and lower by 13.6 percent compared to February 2015.

In the month of February 2016, the wheat price on local markets averaged USD 668.4/MT, which is more than four times higher compared to the price of wheat in the international market (USD 159/MT).

Data Source: <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/wfs-home/foodpricesindex/en/> and <http://www.indexmundi.com/commodities/?commodity=wheat>



2. The TOT are proxy indicators of the purchasing power of households that rely on livestock and/or casual labour as their main source of income for the purchase of cereals from local markets. TOT are important components of food security analysis. Changes in the terms of trade between wages/livestock and staple food commodities are indicative of the trends in purchasing power and the impact on the food security situation of households dependent on food purchases through income from daily wage labour and/or the sale of livestock.

Table 1. Market Price of Main Commodities in Syrian Pounds

Commodity	Governorate	Current Price	Price change (%)	Price change (%)	Average Change	Average Change	Commodity	Governorate	Current Price	Price change (%)	Price change (%)	Average Change	Average Change
		1M	6 M	1M	6 M	1M			1M	6 M	1M	1M	6 M
Bread Public (1.5 kg)	Aleppo	50	(15.0)	(12.4)	↓	↓	Rice (kg)	Aleppo	358	62.3	162.5	↑	↑
	Damascus	50	-	42.9	↔	↑		Damascus	325	13.8	131.4	↑	↑
	Dar'a	50	-	42.9	↔	↑		Dar'a	457	1.4	36.7	↔	↑
	Deir-ez-Zor	120	-	(16.7)	↔	↓		Deir-ez-Zor	1,400	25.0	24.5	↑	↑
	Hama	50	-	42.9	↔	↑		Hama	342	16.7	14.0	↑	↑
	Al- Hasakeh	48	-	35.7	↔	↑		Al- Hasakeh	513	-	41.4	↔	↑
	Homs	81	-	42.9	↔	↑		Homs	298	(11.0)	13.6	↓	↑
	Lattakia	50	-	42.9	↔	↑		Lattakia	287	14.6	4.2	↑	↔
	Quneitra	70						Quneitra	400				
	Ar-Raqqa	150	-	75.1	↔	↑		Ar-Raqqa	443	-	34.4	↔	↑
	Rural Damascus	225	-	21.4	↔	↑		Rural Damascus	500	1.3	125.0	↔	↑
	As-Sweida	50	-	42.9	↔	↑		As-Sweida	275	-	9.1	↔	↔
	Tartous	50	-	42.9	↔	↑		Tartous	350	(3.3)	28.9	↔	↑
Bread Shops (1.5 kg)	Aleppo	74	(30.8)	(59.0)	↓	↓	Sheep 2y old Male	Aleppo	79,531	12.7	64.9	↑	↑
	Damascus	100	-	40.2	↔	↑		Damascus	78,375	4.9	46.2	↔	↑
	Dar'a	169	(2.4)	2.9	↔	↔		Dar'a	66,250	(0.7)	90.6	↔	↑
	Deir-ez-Zor	200	-	(13.3)	↔	↓		Deir-ez-Zor	230,000	-	7.3	↔	↔
	Hama	86	28.0	120.0	↑	↑		Hama	73,667	-	63.5	↔	↑
	Al- Hasakeh	83	-	4.2	↔	↔		Al- Hasakeh	53,000	1.3	36.2	↔	↑
	Homs	96	1.9	38.9	↔	↑		Homs	65,063	0.2	33.6	↔	↑
	Lattakia	65	-	30.0	↔	↑		Lattakia	60,000	9.1	25.0	↔	↑
	Quneitra	108						Quneitra	94,688				
	Ar-Raqqa	175	-	75.0	↔	↑		Ar-Raqqa	61,000	-	34.7	↔	↑
	Rural Damascus	400	10.0	366.7	↔	↑		Rural Damascus	84,300	3.3	52.1	↔	↑
	As-Sweida	83	27.7	66.0	↑	↑		As-Sweida	63,250	4.5	31.4	↔	↑
	Tartous	63	-	50.6	↔	↑		Tartous	75,625	4.2	43.9	↔	↑
Butane Cylinder (25 k)	Aleppo	2,981	14.3	0.7	↑	↔	Sugar (kg)	Aleppo	271	15.0	32.5	↑	↑
	Damascus	2,000	-	17.6	↔	↑		Damascus	262	7.4	52.5	↔	↑
	Dar'a	3,300	(2.1)	(6.9)	↔	↔		Dar'a	262	6.1	30.8	↔	↑
	Deir-ez-Zor	13,650	-	4.4	↔	↔		Deir-ez-Zor	2,119	4.0	34.4	↔	↑
	Hama	4,833	110.6	202.9	↑	↑		Hama	258	11.3	45.8	↑	↑
	Al- Hasakeh	4,225	6.8	63.7	↔	↑		Al- Hasakeh	438	10.3	142.7	↑	↑
	Homs	3,890	11.8	25.1	↑	↑		Homs	236	3.5	16.7	↔	↑
	Lattakia	2,100	-	23.5	↔	↑		Lattakia	235	-	38.2	↔	↑
	Quneitra	3,475						Quneitra	250				
	Ar-Raqqa	5,950	-	36.3	↔	↑		Ar-Raqqa	248	14.5	43.1	↑	↑
	Rural Damascus	9,500	-	231.2	↔	↑		Rural Damascus	682	10.5	144.3	↑	↑
	As-Sweida	2,500	-	-	↔	↔		As-Sweida	254	1.6	42.7	↔	↑
	Tartous	2,200	13.0	29.4	↑	↑		Tartous	250	5.4	55.6	↔	↑
Diesel (L)	Aleppo	179	(19.2)	13.9	↓	↑	Tea (kg)	Aleppo	1,925	(5.9)	(2.2)	↔	↔
	Damascus	240	9.0	22.3	↔	↑		Damascus	2,050	231.7	240.6	↑	↑
	Dar'a	224	2.2	(12.1)	↔	↓		Dar'a	2,675	2.9	18.9	↔	↑
	Deir-ez-Zor	1,525	-	41.8	↔	↑		Deir-ez-Zor	9,975	(8.4)	42.1	↔	↑
	Hama	217	20.2	9.4	↑	↔		Hama	2,083	12.5	60.3	↑	↑
	Al- Hasakeh	55	-	16.8	↔	↑		Al- Hasakeh	2,775	2.8	37.9	↔	↑
	Homs	351	134.6	(1.4)	↑	↔		Homs	2,096	13.4	28.6	↑	↑
	Lattakia	160	-	6.7	↔	↔		Lattakia	2,000	-	33.3	↔	↑
	Quneitra	245						Quneitra	2,900				
	Ar-Raqqa	100	-	(11.8)	↔	↓		Ar-Raqqa	2,650	1.9	48.7	↔	↑
	Rural Damascus	355	1.7	52.5	↔	↑		Rural Damascus	3,350	4.0	41.7	↔	↑
	As-Sweida	250	-	(8.3)	↔	↔		As-Sweida	2,775	11.0	26.1	↑	↑
	Tartous	155	0.7	3.3	↔	↔		Tartous	2,250	6.3	52.5	↔	↑
Lentils (kg)	Aleppo	525	14.8	59.5	↑	↑	Unskilled Labor wage	Aleppo	1,475	(2.5)	15.0	↔	↑
	Damascus	500	18.1	25.5	↑	↑		Damascus	1,500	-	1.7	↔	↔
	Dar'a	400	-	68.9	↔	↑		Dar'a	900	-	28.6	↔	↑
	Deir-ez-Zor	2,325	(1.2)	(2.9)	↔	↔		Deir-ez-Zor	1,100	-	10.0	↔	↑
	Hama	475	(5.3)	22.0	↔	↑		Hama	1,167	-	(8.5)	↔	↔
	Al- Hasakeh	438	3.6	80.3	↔	↑		Al- Hasakeh	800	-	-	↔	↔
	Homs	475	6.9	19.4	↔	↑		Homs	738	(5.8)	5.0	↔	↔
	Lattakia	469	4.2	56.3	↔	↑		Lattakia	2,000	66.7	100.0	↑	↑
	Quneitra	438						Quneitra	1,200				
	Ar-Raqqa	488	-	27.4	↔	↑		Ar-Raqqa	1,500	-	-	↔	↔
	Rural Damascus	650	5.4	41.6	↔	↑		Rural Damascus	1,500	-	3.4	↔	↔
	As-Sweida	507	1.3	26.6	↔	↑		As-Sweida	1,200	-	-	↔	↔
	Tartous	500	-	51.7	↔	↑		Tartous	1,500	-	75.0	↔	↑
Oil (L)	Aleppo	528	17.5	47.5	↑	↑	Wheat Flour (kg)	Aleppo	170	2.3	40.0	↔	↑
	Damascus	483	0.9	32.3	↔	↑		Damascus	197	(0.0)	16.0	↔	↑
	Dar'a	507	1.3	48.3	↔	↑		Dar'a	182	12.0	(25.7)	↑	↓
	Deir-ez-Zor	2,100	-	27.5	↔	↑		Deir-ez-Zor	277	(2.2)	32.4	↔	↑
	Hama	513	5.1	41.6	↔	↑		Hama	180	(1.5)	32.8	↔	↑
	Al- Hasakeh	550	-	51.9	↔	↑		Al- Hasakeh	224	(2.7)	35.9	↔	↑
	Homs	476	2.5	20.4	↔	↑		Homs	168	2.7	14.3	↔	↑
	Lattakia	488	8.3	39.3	↔	↑		Lattakia	168	5.0	12.0	↔	↑
	Quneitra	507						Quneitra	175				
	Ar-Raqqa	425	-	8.1	↔	↔		Ar-Raqqa	250	-	61.5	↔	↑
	Rural Damascus	688	5.6	56.7	↔	↑		Rural Damascus	900	6.2	383.0	↔	↑
	As-Sweida	469	5.0	25.1	↔	↑		As-Sweida	200	3.5	19.8	↔	↑
	Tartous	469	3.4	28.4	↔	↑		Tartous	203	15.7	26.6	↑	↑

↑ Prices increase above normal price fluctuation
↓ Prices decrease below normal price fluctuation

 Price decrease below no

↓ The decrease below normal price fluctuation