

El Niño in Ethiopia Pulses Price Trends - December 2015

Introduction

In January 2016 the AKLDP reported on cereal price trends in Ethiopia.ⁱ In this Food Price Brief the AKLDP analyses nominal Ethiopia Grain Trade Enterprise (EGTE) price dataⁱⁱ for pulses from March 2014 to December 2015.

Pulses account for some 12 per cent of arable cropping in Ethiopia. Grown throughout the country, pulse production is concentrated in the Amhara and Oromiya regions, where pulses are commonly sold as a cash crop. Pulses play an important role in household food security, being an important protein source in for poorer households who cannot afford animal source protein. Pulse price trends serve as a useful proxy indicator for a balanced diet.

Pulse Prices

Since March 2014, prices of lentils, haricot bean, field pea, chickpeas and horse beans have increased substantially. In contrast the price of haricot beans has declined by 17 per cent.

Lentils registered the steepest increase, with prices rising from Eth Birr 1,583/quintal in September 2014 to Eth Birr 3,520/quintal in September 2015 - an increase of 122 per cent. Lentil prices declined slightly to Eth Birr 3225/quintal in November 2015, but rose again in December 2015 to a level of 84 per cent higher than December 2014.

Price trends of other pulses - field peas, chickpeas, and horse beans – were less dramatic, but still substantial. The price increase of chickpeas from December 2014 to December 2015 was 94 per cent, while price increases for horse beans and field peas were 56 per cent and 47 per cent respectively.

A mix of domestic and international factors is driving pulse price trends. Domestic factors include a reduction in the area of land planted with pulses, which has restricted supply. Supply has further been restricted by the failed *belg* and erratic and poor *kiremt* rains and associated harvests. Globally, a poor harvest in India - the largest pulse importer in the world - has resulted in increased international demand and has put upward pressure on prices.

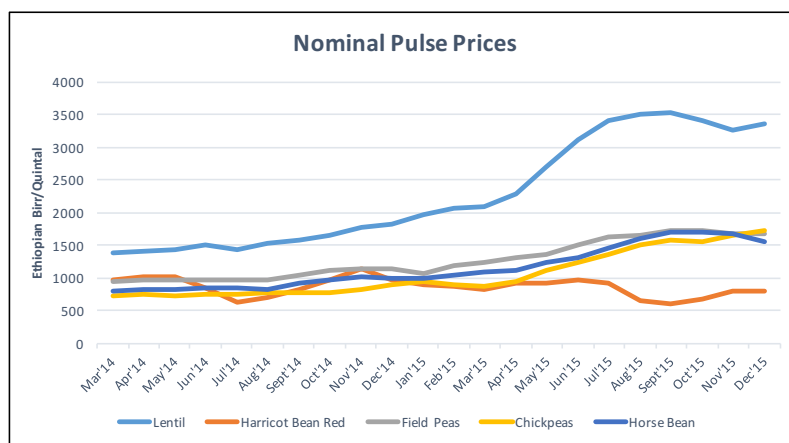
Conclusion

Pulses play an important role in household food security as they offer an affordable protein source. Although high pulse prices benefit surplus producers, rising pulse prices result in reduced protein intake for poorer households.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this food price brief are those of the AKLDP project and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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ⁱ AKLDP (2016). El Nino in Ethiopia: Maize and sorghum price trends – December, 2015 <http://www.agri-learning-ethiopia.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Maize-and-Sorghum-Jan2016.pdf> and El Nino in Ethiopia: wheat and teff price trends – December, 2015 <http://www.agri-learning-ethiopia.org/resources/ethiopia-food-price-briefs>

ⁱⁱ See Ethiopia Grain Trade Enterprise, Market Statistics, <http://www.egte-ethiopia.com/en/2014-04-07-05-30-44/market-statistics.html>