



Asia Pacific Weekly Price Monitor  
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

17 August 2012



### Policy

The central government in **India** has submitted a “Plan B” to the parliamentary standing committee for consideration on the expansion of the Food Security Bill coverage from 63.5 to 67 percent of the population. The original bill suggested giving 7 kg grains per person per month to a household belonging to the priority category and 3 kg per person per month to a household belonging to the general category, while the “plan B” proposes a food grain quota of 5 kg per person per month for the entire 67% population. The new plan also suggests giving states the power to identify beneficiaries according to their own criteria, ruling out any difference with the central government in this regard.

### Weather conditions

- Despite flooding across the Irrawaddy delta due to heavy rain, drought has hit central **Myanmar** destroying the crops of farmers in Mandalay Division (Irrawaddy, 16 August 2012).
- The recent outbreak of armyworms in major grain producing regions in northern and northeastern **China** has posed a severe threat to the production of corn and rice in the country. To date, at least 2 million hectares of autumn crops nationwide have been affected by the outbreaks in Hebei, Jilin, Liaoning, Heilongjiang and Shanxi provinces, as well as in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Beijing and Tianjin municipalities (Chinese Government, 15 August 2012).
- The Ministry of Agriculture in **India** has prepared District Contingency Plans for 320 districts in response to the uneven monsoon situation, such as a Diesel Subsidy Scheme, whose objective is to mitigate the hardships of small and marginal farmers by saving the standing crops (Press Information Bureau, 14 August 2012).

### Prices

From August 2012, AP Weekly Price Monitor team has adjusted the criteria to flag unusual price movements. On a **weekly** basis, nominal price variations below 5 percent are considered “stable”. On a **monthly** basis, nominal price variations below 10 percent are considered “stable”. On an **annual** basis, nominal price variations below 25 percent are considered “stable”. These modifications are also reflected in the price and policy section, as well as the monthly highlights.

Over the past week, staple food commodity prices remained relatively stable in most countries except for the following:

- In **Fiji**, corn prices fell by 22 percent during the first week of August, which reflects recent supply normalization in local markets, after an eight week period of no supply of corn in the markets. Cassava and dalo-tausala prices (root crops) increased by 46 and 25 percent, respectively, over the first week of August. These variations are mainly caused by a sustained low supply in local markets.
- Rice prices in **Viet Nam** fell by 8 percent over the past week but have remained relatively stable from those observed a month and a year ago.

For further details, please refer to the section on “Price and policy information at country level”.