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Agriculture

Fruit and Vegetables: Q1/2008

In the first quarter of 2008, the volume of fresh fruit and vegetables declined by 12.2 per cent, while the wholesale value rose by 23.5 per cent.

The volume of fresh fruit and vegetables passing through the official markets in the first quarter of 2008 amounted to 10.0 million kilograms implying a drop of 12.2 per cent over the same period last year. This decline in the quantity was contrasted by an increase of 23.5 per cent in the wholesale value, which amounted to €5.62 million.

During this period, the supply of fresh vegetables fell by 14.0 per cent, from 11.0 million kilograms in 2007 to 9.5 million kilograms in 2008. Noticable declines were recorded in the supply of Potatoes (-33.5 per cent), Vegetable Marrows (-24.0 per cent), Cabbages (24.4 per cent) and Cauliflowers (-11.0 per cent). In contrast, the wholesale value of fresh vegetables rose by 24.4 per cent to €5.13 million in 2008, as a result of a general increase in prices that resulted from the drop in the supply of fresh vegetables on the market.

Over the comparative period in 2007, the supply and wholesale value of fresh fruit registered gains of 44.6 per cent and 15.1 per cent respectively. Citrus fruit, namely Oranges (+128.5 per cent) and Sweet Oranges (+74.0 per cent), underpinned mainly for the increase in fresh fruit availability. The increase in the wholesale value is attributed to the increase in the supply of fresh fruit, as wholesale prices, in general over the comparative period, declined.

Regional Statistics

The volume of fresh fruit and vegetables supplied by Maltese farmers decreased by 13.7 per cent over the corresponding period in 2007. Maltese farmers supplied a total of 8.94 million kilograms of fresh fruit and vegetables, or 89.4 per cent of the total supply. The decline in the supply of Potatoes (-33.2 per cent) was the main factor behind the decrease. On the other hand, the wholesale value of fresh fruit and vegetables rose by 23.8 per cent, from €3.94 million in 2007 to €4.88 million in the same period this year.

Gozitan farmers contributed a total of 1.1 million kilograms of fresh fruit and vegetables, or 10.6 per cent of the total supply. The volume and wholesale value of fresh fruit and vegetables increased by 3.2 per cent and 21.4 per cent respectively over the comparative period last year.

Quarterly Indices

The quarterly 'All Items' fresh fruit price index decreased by 24.61 points (-16.3 per cent), from 150.53 points in the first quarter of 2007 to 125.92 points in the first quarter this year. Then again, the fresh fruit volume index rose by 22.89 points (+44.6 per cent), to 74.25 points in the first quarter of 2008, mainly due to the increase in Citrus fruit on the market. The quarterly 'All Items' fresh vegetables price index increased by 50.99 points (+48.9 per cent) from 104.22 points in the first quarter of 2007 to 155.21 points in the first quarter this year 2008. In contrast, the fresh vegetables volume index declined by 15.27 points (-14.0 per cent) to 93.88 points in the first quarter of 2008■

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Table 1. Total wholesale value and quantity of agricultural products sold through official markets

Item	January/March					
	Quantity (Kgs)			Wholesale value (€)		
	2007	2008	±% 2008/2007	2007	2008	±% 2008/2007
Total vegetables and fruit	11,384,356	9,997,035	-12.2	4,547,112	5,616,792	23.5
Total vegetables	11,034,767	9,491,636	-14.0	4,127,385	5,133,882	24.4
<i>of which:</i>						
Artichokes Globe	380,340	388,541	2.2	139,702	227,418	62.8
Beans Broad	187,653	153,307	-18.3	178,893	184,719	3.3
Bellpepper	85,228	81,569	-4.3	117,031	126,971	8.5
Cabbages	790,021	597,088	-24.4	65,743	201,542	206.6
Carrots	606,868	482,486	-20.5	147,436	154,500	4.8
Cauliflowers	1,477,113	1,314,861	-11.0	229,354	366,166	59.7
Celery	120,045	132,211	10.1	24,614	27,869	13.2
Cucumber	111,651	106,703	-4.4	108,015	123,287	14.1
Eggplant	71,717	55,321	-22.9	78,454	89,114	13.6
Kohlrabi	435,845	454,272	4.2	52,706	53,411	1.3
Lettuce	643,437	668,943	4.0	144,241	218,049	51.2
Marrows Vegetable	969,242	736,491	-24.0	491,341	812,563	65.4
Melons Sugar	577	18	-96.9	1,036	15	-98.6
Melons Water	-	-	-	-	-	-
Onions Dry	491,995	407,846	-17.1	325,511	412,240	26.6
Onions Green	171,016	48,107	-71.9	99,108	9,027	-90.9
Potatoes	2,014,732	1,340,407	-33.5	703,038	431,761	-38.6
Pumpkins	160,219	169,968	6.1	30,901	123,793	300.6
Tomatoes	1,078,136	1,093,662	1.4	643,125	849,820	32.1
Other vegetables	1,238,933	1,259,837	1.7	547,137	721,618	31.9
Total fruit	349,589	505,400	44.6	419,727	482,910	15.1
<i>of which:</i>						
Bambinella	-	-	-	-	-	-
Figs Dry	1,394	23	-98.4	526	27	-94.9
Figs Early	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grapes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lemons	73,928	72,753	-1.6	16,976	24,639	45.1
Nectarines	-	13	-	-	15	-
Oranges	42,430	96,937	128.5	29,807	42,884	43.9
Oranges Sweet	135,666	236,088	74.0	116,191	113,196	-2.6
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plums Cherry	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pomegranates	15	-	-100.0	2	-	-100.0
Strawberries	74,986	79,425	5.9	244,790	287,218	17.3
Other fruit	21,170	20,161	-4.8	11,435	14,930	30.6

Table 2. Wholesale value and quantity of agricultural products sold through official markets by Maltese farmers

Item	January/March					
	Quantity (Kgs)			Wholesale value (€)		
	2007	2008	±% 2008/2007	2007	2008	±% 2008/2007
Total vegetables and fruit	10,361,428	8,941,791	-13.7	3,937,371	4,876,325	23.8
Total vegetables	10,208,965	8,753,385	-14.3	3,671,280	4,559,825	24.2
<i>of which:</i>						
Artichokes Globe	372,958	355,606	-4.7	132,808	217,069	63.4
Beans Broad	173,633	143,289	-17.5	164,084	170,707	4.0
Bellpepper	63,297	59,497	-6.0	87,566	92,856	6.0
Cabbages	754,917	570,924	-24.4	58,971	189,219	220.9
Carrots	587,304	467,336	-20.4	139,120	147,341	5.9
Cauliflowers	1,372,157	1,244,132	-9.3	205,403	332,811	62.0
Celery	114,875	127,347	10.9	22,763	26,207	15.1
Cucumber	63,861	71,770	12.4	60,148	79,437	32.1
Eggplant	35,174	25,328	-28.0	38,355	41,008	6.9
Kohlrabi	410,193	441,246	7.6	45,520	48,484	6.5
Lettuce	607,238	633,406	4.3	134,404	202,063	50.3
Marrows Vegetable	847,564	614,414	-27.5	420,625	675,429	60.6
Melons Sugar	577	-	-100.0	1,036	-	-100.0
Melons Water	-	-	-	-	-	-
Onions Dry	479,341	401,237	-16.3	316,521	410,394	29.7
Onions Green	165,328	44,467	-73.1	97,885	8,059	-91.8
Potatoes	1,912,519	1,277,099	-33.2	668,594	408,855	-38.8
Pumpkins	149,107	162,407	8.9	28,854	118,199	309.6
Tomatoes	960,487	978,931	1.9	558,619	742,902	33.0
Other vegetables	1,138,436	1,134,951	-0.3	490,003	648,785	32.4
Total fruit	152,462	188,406	23.6	266,092	316,500	18.9
<i>of which:</i>						
Bambinella	-	-	-	-	-	-
Figs Dry	68	23	-66.2	128	27	-79.1
Figs Early	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grapes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lemons	41,432	44,261	6.8	9,237	14,579	57.8
Nectarines	-	13	-	-	15	-
Oranges	21,750	48,751	124.1	12,809	18,746	46.3
Oranges Sweet	9,207	20,947	127.5	6,668	8,349	25.2
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plums Cherry	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pomegranates	15	-	-100.0	2	-	-100.0
Strawberries	71,643	63,227	-11.7	232,998	266,687	14.5
Other fruit	8,347	11,184	34.0	4,249	8,096	90.6

Table 3. Wholesale value and quantity of agricultural products sold through official markets by Gozitan farmers

Item	January/March					
	Quantity (Kgs)			Wholesale value (€)		
	2007	2008	±% 2008/2007	2007	2008	±% 2008/2007
Total vegetables and fruit	1,022,929	1,055,244	3.2	609,741	740,467	21.4
Total vegetables	825,802	738,251	-10.6	456,106	574,057	25.9
<i>of which:</i>						
Artichokes Globe	7,382	32,935	346.2	6,894	10,349	50.1
Beans Broad	14,020	10,018	-28.5	14,810	14,012	-5.4
Bellpepper	21,931	22,072	0.6	29,465	34,116	15.8
Cabbages	35,104	26,164	-25.5	6,772	12,323	82.0
Carrots	19,564	15,150	-22.6	8,316	7,159	-13.9
Cauliflowers	104,956	70,729	-32.6	23,951	33,354	39.3
Celery	5,170	4,864	-5.9	1,850	1,662	-10.2
Cucumber	47,790	34,933	-26.9	47,866	43,851	-8.4
Eggplant	36,543	29,993	-17.9	40,099	48,106	20.0
Kohlrabi	25,652	13,026	-49.2	7,186	4,927	-31.4
Lettuce	36,199	35,537	-1.8	9,836	15,986	62.5
Marrows Vegetable	121,678	122,077	0.3	70,716	137,134	93.9
Melons Sugar	-	18	-	-	15	-
Melons Water	-	-	-	-	-	-
Onions Dry	12,654	6,609	-47.8	8,990	1,845	-79.5
Onions Green	5,688	3,640	-36.0	1,223	968	-20.9
Potatoes	102,213	63,308	-38.1	34,444	22,906	-33.5
Pumpkins	11,112	7,561	-32.0	2,046	5,594	173.4
Tomatoes	117,649	114,731	-2.5	84,506	106,918	26.5
Other vegetables	100,497	124,886	24.3	57,134	72,833	27.5
Total fruit	197,127	316,993	60.8	153,636	166,409	8.3
<i>of which:</i>						
Bambinella	-	-	-	-	-	-
Figs Dry	1,326	-	-100.0	398	-	-100.0
Figs Early	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grapes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lemons	32,496	28,492	-12.3	7,739	10,060	30.0
Nectarines	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oranges	20,680	48,186	133.0	16,998	24,139	42.0
Oranges Sweet	126,459	215,141	70.1	109,523	104,847	-4.3
Peaches	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plums Cherry	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pomegranates	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strawberries	3,343	16,197	384.5	11,792	20,531	74.1
Other fruit	12,823	8,977	-30.0	7,187	6,834	-4.9

Table 4. Monthly 'All Items' Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Index

Month	Fresh Fruit Index (2005 = 100)		Fresh Vegetables Index (2005 = 100)	
	Price Index	Volume Index	Price Index	Volume Index
2007				
January	156.51	61.99	104.88	106.72
February	181.07	43.58	87.69	108.24
March	144.08	48.51	122.01	112.48
April	100.99	69.41	123.13	113.13
May	127.00	82.02	111.82	130.47
June	159.77	105.08	102.95	148.20
July	113.99	80.41	128.53	170.90
August	114.57	152.86	120.12	120.32
September	108.87	119.61	118.36	77.19
October	147.73	47.91	125.70	81.27
November	132.87	83.82	160.17	73.26
December	131.43	72.48	154.81	80.91
2008				
January	118.31	90.05	160.37	92.64
February	131.07	60.33	168.17	83.11
March	134.62	72.39	150.85	105.90

Table 5. Quarterly 'All Items' Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Index

Quarter	Fresh Fruit Index (2005 = 100)		Fresh Vegetables Index (2005 = 100)	
	Price Index	Volume Index	Price Index	Volume Index
2007				
Q1/2007	150.53	51.36	104.22	109.15
Q2/2007	131.14	85.50	106.25	130.60
Q3/2007	108.32	117.63	119.62	122.80
Q4/2007	138.19	68.07	137.35	78.48
2008				
Q1/2008	125.92	74.25	155.21	93.88
Q2/2008				
Q3/2008				
Q4/2008				

Methodological Notes

1. The information is collected from the four official markets namely; Pitkali Malta, Co-op Malta, Pitkali Gozo, Co-op Gozo where all farmers deposit their produce for sale to licensed hawkers, through private middlemen. The information is compiled on a daily basis, Monday and Thursdays being the busiest days. The data is forwarded to the NSO on a monthly basis.
2. The data is recorded by crop where quantities and value are kept, together with average unit price.
3. The unit volume and prices are used in the compilation of monthly volume and price indices for each agricultural product. The indices are used to monitor developments in price and volume movements over a particular period. The price and volume indices have 2005 as the base year. Price indices are calculated using the Laspayres method with variable monthly baskets. Price indices from one month to another are not comparable and can only be compared to the same month in previous years.
4. The regional data are derived at source where every consignment at the official markets are classified by the residence of the farmer.
5. The data in this release are not normally subject to revision.
6. The Fruit and Vegetable News Release is being presented to show the dominant produce. A full list of all produce passing through the official markets will be made available upon request.
7. These statistics are published and disseminated by the National Statistics Office and can also be found on the NSO website <http://www.nso.gov.mt>