

UGANDA Agriculture, Markets & Weather Report

28 MARCH - 04 APRIL 2025

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Executive Summary

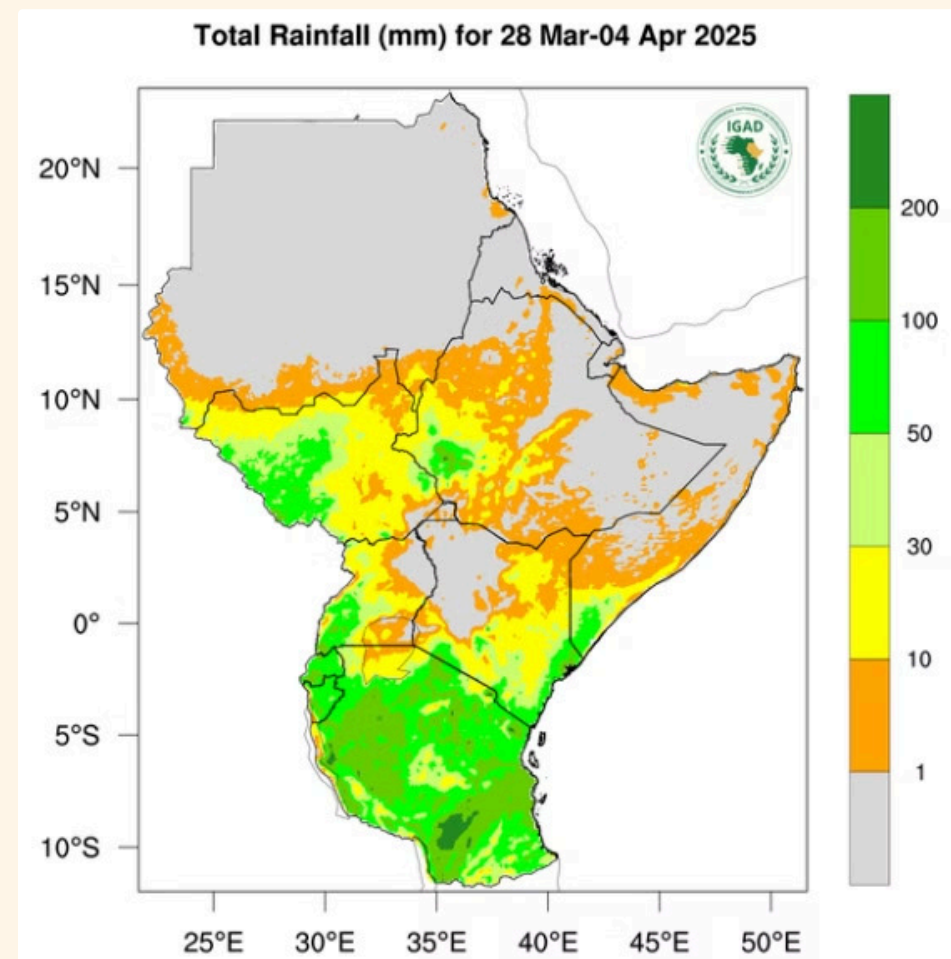
Uganda's first rainy season is underway with near-normal rainfall expected countrywide. Moderate rains are forecast in western and Lake Victoria regions, while eastern areas may receive below-average precipitation. Farmers are actively engaged in Season A planting – central and eastern regions show emerging maize and beans, while northern and Karamoja areas are beginning to sow. Food prices remain stable and lower than last year, supporting food security. Livestock conditions are improving with regenerating pastures, though vigilance against disease outbreaks (particularly Foot-and-Mouth) is essential as herds migrate.

Key Highlights: Rains have begun normally with regional variations; farmers are planting and weeding first-season crops; livestock are recovering post-dry season, supported by government vaccination efforts. Markets remain well-supplied with affordable staples. Technical advisories focus on soil health and pest management. New government initiatives target climate-smart agriculture, value chain development, and Karamoja resilience. Farmers should monitor weather alerts, follow regional agronomic recommendations, and utilize available input and veterinary services.

Weather Forecast (28 March – 4 April 2025)

Overall Forecast: Expect moderate rainfall in southwestern and central Uganda with lighter precipitation in northern and eastern regions. UNMA and ICPAC confirm seasonal rains are establishing nationwide. Average temperatures will range 28–30°C across most areas. While no extreme weather is broadly anticipated, localized thunderstorms may affect highlands. A recent severe storm in Bulambuli District caused damage, highlighting the need for preparedness despite below-normal rainfall in eastern areas.

Rainfall anomalies for 28 Mar–04 Apr 2025: Green areas show above-average rainfall, orange indicates below-average. Southern Uganda expects drier conditions while there are reports wetter conditions for parts of eastern Uganda.



Regional Breakdown

Karamoja (Northeastern Uganda)

Scattered light showers (<20 mm) expected, increasing toward April. Temperatures remain hot (~30°C) with cooler nights. Soil moisture remains low but improving. Seasonal Outlook: Above-normal March-May rainfall forecast, promising better pasture and crop yields. Communities should begin sowing staple crops by early April.

Eastern Region (Teso, Bugisu, Busoga)

Below-average rainfall (10-30 mm) forecast this week, mainly around Mt. Elgon and Teso, while lower areas may remain dry. This follows earlier storms including destructive rains in Bulambuli. Farmers should conserve soil moisture through mulching. Conditions expected to improve in April with more regular rainfall. Seasonal trend: Eastern Uganda still predicted to have wetter-than-normal March-May overall.

Central Region (including Kampala hinterland)

Moderate, well-distributed showers (30-50 mm) expected across central districts. Lake Victoria Crescent will experience almost daily afternoon showers or thunderstorms. Kampala can expect several rainy evenings with temperatures in the mid-20s°C. Farmers should finalize planting and begin weeding. Current patterns align with UNMA's forecast of near-normal to above-normal rainfall this season.

Northern Region (Acholi, Lango, West Nile)

Light to moderate rains (20-50 mm) expected, especially in West Nile and parts of Acholi. Soil moisture will support germination of recent plantings. Temperatures in Gulu/Lira: 29-32°C. Farmers should complete planting within 1-2 weeks to capitalize on the early onset of rains (mid-March).

Western Region (Toro, Bunyoro, Kigezi, Ankole)

Moderate rains (40-80 mm) expected in southwest areas, with lighter rainfall (under 30 mm) in mid-west districts. Scattered thunderstorms possible near Lake Albert. Rainfall sufficient for crop moisture, though western Uganda may experience slightly below-normal seasonal totals. Monitor local alerts for possible minor landslips in Kigezi highlands where soils may become saturated.

Lake Victoria Islands & Coastal

Frequent showers with some heavy downpours expected, potentially exceeding 50 mm in localized storms due to lake-breeze convergence. Boaters should watch for gusty winds and lightning. This wet pattern supports pasture growth and water source replenishment. No severe lake flooding expected this week.

Crop Calendar & Growth Stages

Current Crop Stages (Late March 2025): Uganda's first growing season (Season A) is now underway with regional variations across the country.



Regional Crop Status

Central, Lake Victoria Crescent, and Eastern Regions

Farmers in central and eastern districts completed planting in February and early March. Maize, beans, groundnuts, and sorghum are in germination to early vegetative stages. Bean fields should have 2–3 trifoliate leaves, while maize is emerging (10–15 cm tall). Current activities include first weeding and thinning. Early-planted beans may reach flowering by late April. Perennial banana crops are in active growth.

Northern Region (Lango, Acholi) and West Nile

First rains arrived in mid/late March, so northern farmers are actively planting maize, sorghum, millet, sesame, and beans. Early-planted crops from mid-March are just germinating, while most fields are at seedling emergence or planting stage. Key activities include weeding and gap-filling, with fertilizer application expected by mid-to-late April. Northern Uganda follows a uni-modal cropping calendar with single season, making timely planting crucial for crops harvested around August.

Karamoja Region

This agro-pastoral region has one main planting season starting later than the rest of Uganda. Land preparation is the primary activity, with some early sorghum and millet sowing in wetter zones. Widespread planting will begin in early April once rains are steady. Many households are preparing to plant pulses in April. With forecasts of above-normal rainfall, timely planting is encouraged. Current activities focus on final land tillage, mound-building for root crops, and traditional early sorghum planting around anthills.

Western Region

The western region shows sub-regional variation: Bunyoro and Toro (mid-west) mirror central Uganda's first season progress, with March-planted maize and beans now emerging. Southwestern highlands (Kigezi, Ankole) treat this as a minor season, with main crop planting in August. Current activities include potato planting in high-altitude areas, banana plantation mulching, and coffee garden maintenance as the perennial cash crop enters flowering/fruiting stage with the return of rains.

Field Activities Summary (late March – early April)

Farmers across Uganda are engaged in planting, gap-filling, and first weeding. In central/eastern regions where crops are 3-4 weeks old, farmers are applying basal fertilizers and beginning to top-dress nitrogen on maize. Extension manuals recommend nitrogen application ~5 weeks after germination, making early April the optimal time for March plantings. Weed management is critical now, with experts recommending two weedings (2-3 weeks and 5-6 weeks after planting) to prevent yield loss. Pest monitoring has begun, with Fall Armyworm moths detected in pheromone traps in central and eastern Uganda. Farmers are advised to scout young maize and prepare controls if damage appears.

Regional Variations: Southern Uganda follows a bimodal schedule with Season 1 planted in Feb-Mar (harvest by June/July) and Season 2 in Sept-Dec. Northern regions and Karamoja operate on a single extended season, planting through April and harvesting August-September. Consequently, southern farmers focus on early crop management while northern farmers continue planting. Rice nurseries in eastern lowlands are established, with transplanting scheduled for April when water levels are sufficient.

Upcoming Milestones: In the next 2-4 weeks, most areas will complete first weeding and enter the critical growth phase for cereals. This period is ideal for applying remaining fertilizers and thinning plants to optimal spacing. With typical growing periods of 100-120 days for maize and sorghum, proper management now will determine harvest yields. Quick-maturing vegetables should begin harvesting by late April, providing interim food and income.

Input Recommendations & Technical Advisory

Farmers should prioritize proper input application and field management during early growth stages (through April) to maximize yields this season. Current rainfall patterns and crop development timelines make this the optimal window for intervention.

Fertilizer Application

For areas with sufficient rainfall to dissolve fertilizers, apply or top-dress as needed:

Basal Fertilizer

If not applied at planting, side-dress phosphorus (DAP) or organic manure for young crops. For maize, apply 125 kg/ha DAP at sowing. If missed, incorporate well-decomposed manure around the root zone.

Nitrogen Top-Dressing

Apply Urea or CAN to 3-5 week old maize and sorghum (when maize is knee-high). For yields of ~3 tons/ha, apply 125 kg/ha of Urea. Split application if heavy rains are expected. Place fertilizer a few inches from stems and lightly cover with soil to prevent losses.

Use of Fertilizer Blends

Where available, use NPK blends or foliar feeds to supplement soil nutrients. Even moderate application can significantly increase yields in Uganda, where usage averages ~3 kg/ha (recommended: 50 kg/ha). Check with local agro-dealers or NAADS for subsidized inputs through government programs.

Soil Health & Amendments

This week's Tech Tip focuses on knowing your soil:

Tech Tip: Soil Testing and pH Management

Soil testing pays dividends by enabling targeted fertilizer application, saving costs while improving yields. **The Ministry's "Farmer, Know Your Soil"** program promotes testing awareness. Many Ugandan soils are acidic (pH < 5.5), which limits nutrient availability. For acidic soils (common in high rainfall areas), apply agricultural lime (1–2 tons/ha) early in the season to improve nutrient uptake. The government is establishing 69 soil testing laboratories nationwide – utilize these services when available. Balance both macro and micronutrients for optimal crop health. Add organic matter through compost or manure (1–2 dekes per planting hole) to enhance soil structure and water retention. For best results, practice integrated soil fertility management by combining organic and inorganic inputs.

Weed Control

Timely weeding is critical for protecting yields. Complete first weeding at 2-3 weeks after crop emergence and second weeding by 5-6 weeks. Hand-hoe or pull weeds carefully to avoid disturbing crop roots. Striga (witchweed), common in eastern and northern Uganda, requires special attention - uproot before flowering to prevent severe yield losses in cereals. Effective Striga management includes intercropping cereals with legumes or using herbicide-coated seeds where available. Consider selective pre-emergence herbicides (like metolachlor) immediately after planting or post-emergence options (like 2,4-D for broadleaf weeds in maize) at 3-4 weeks if accessible. Always follow label instructions and use protective gear when applying chemicals. Effective early-season weed control ensures strong root development and reduces nutrient competition.

Pest and Disease Management

The onset of rains and young crop stage often bring certain pests/diseases:



Fall Armyworm (FAW)

Scout for FAW larvae in maize whorls (look for Y-shaped mark on head). Handpick if few plants affected. If >5% infested, spray Lambda-cyhalothrin or Spinetoram in evening. Traditional remedy: apply ash/lime into whorls. Increase monitoring after rains followed by warm days, as FAW spreads rapidly in these conditions.



Stem Borers

Look for "shot hole" patterns on sorghum and maize leaves. Use push-pull method (intercropping with Desmodium, border planting with Napier grass) to repel and trap borers. For active infestations, use insecticides similar to those for FAW control.



Bean Pests & Diseases

Monitor for bean fly and aphids in emerging beans. Apply insecticidal soap for heavy aphid colonies that can spread Bean Common Mosaic Virus. Prevent fungal diseases through certified seeds, proper spacing, and preventive Mancozeb spray during rainy periods.



Banana Diseases

Watch for Black Sigatoka leaf spots as humidity rises. Remove heavily infected leaves and apply fungicide for severe cases. Continue routine banana weevil trapping.



Livestock Pest Carryover to Crops

Prevent free-roaming livestock from grazing on young crops. Coordinate with neighbors to ensure animals are tethered or herded away from fields, as young maize and sorghum shoots are attractive to goats and cattle.

Water Management

With uneven rainfall patterns, implement these water conservation techniques:

Mulching

Apply dry grass, banana leaves, or maize stover around crop bases to conserve soil moisture, suppress weeds, and regulate temperature. Essential in regions expecting below-normal rainfall (southwestern Uganda) or during dry spells.

Rainwater Harvesting

Capitalize on every rainfall. Maintain trenches on sloping land to increase water infiltration. Repair farm ponds to collect runoff for vegetable irrigation or livestock during dry intervals. UNMA experts strongly recommend rainwater harvesting.

Drainage

In areas prone to heavy downpours (Mt. Elgon region, low-lying Busoga), keep drainage channels clear to prevent waterlogging that can stunt roots and cause rot diseases. Farmers in Kasese are preparing small drains in anticipation of April's heavier rains.

Seedlings and Reseeding

Check germination of recent plantings and replant gaps immediately using spare seeds or nursery seedlings to ensure uniform crop stands. For unplanted fields, don't delay beyond early April to avoid yield decline. Consider switching to quicker-maturing varieties for late planting (e.g., 90-day maize varieties can still be planted in early April in northern Uganda). Consult local extension offices for appropriate late-planting seed varieties.

Labor Saving & Mechanization

Address labor constraints by considering group labor or mechanized options where available. Motorized weeders or tractor hire services (supported by MAAIF/NAADS) can expedite land preparation and weeding. Some Eastern Uganda farmers have successfully pooled resources to hire tractors after delayed rains, enabling timely planting within the optimal window.

Summary of Recommendations

Prioritize these key actions this week for a successful harvest:



Weed at 2-3 and 5-6 weeks to prevent yield loss.



Apply DAP at planting and Urea at 5 weeks to potentially double or triple yields.



Invest in soil health through testing, liming and adding organic matter.



Manage pests early (FAW, Striga) to prevent harder-to-control outbreaks.



Livestock & Ranching

Ugandan livestock farmers are seeing improvement as seasonal rains restore water and pasture. Strategic management is now critical for herd recovery after the long dry season. Current conditions show previously dry pastures greening across many areas, with increasing water availability in streams and ponds. Key advice for each sub-sector follows:

Pasture and Water Resources

Central and western rangelands show first new grass growth after recent rains, though most areas still have short grass. Biomass will increase rapidly through April. Practice controlled grazing to allow establishment - rotate animals between plots and avoid overstocking regenerating paddocks. Continue supplementary feeding until pastures fully recover using conserved hay, silage, or crop residues from last season where available.

Karamoja's pastures remain poor with rains just beginning after extreme forage scarcity. Many pastoralists relocated to dry-season reserves. Grass growth and water points will improve by late April. Government relief efforts continue in worst-hit areas, providing maize bran and molasses to targeted kraals. All pastoralists should provide mineral licks as livestock transition to fresh grass diets to address common mineral deficiencies.

Livestock Body Condition

Livestock body conditions range from fair to poor across regions following the dry season. Animals in Karamoja and Teso will recover slowly after months of weight loss. Southwestern Uganda shows earlier improvement due to earlier rains. Milk production is increasing as nutrition improves, with dairy farmers around Mbarara and Masaka reporting slight yield increases. For weak animals: provide high-energy supplements to lactating cows and draft oxen, and ensure clean drinking water access as natural sources refill.

Disease Outbreaks & Veterinary Advisory

The wet season transition increases livestock disease risks. Key concerns and actions:

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)

The FMD quarantine in Nakasongola was lifted in January 2025. The government has supplied 3 million vaccine doses, with 900,000 already dispatched to 46 high-risk districts. Vaccinate your cattle if not done in the past 6 months, taking advantage of free or subsidized programs through district veterinary offices. Limit cattle mingling at watering points until FMD is confirmed under control. Report symptoms (drooling, mouth sores, limping) immediately. The new FMD control policy requires cost-sharing on vaccines and stricter movement controls.

Tick-Borne Diseases

Wetter conditions increase tick populations that spread East Coast Fever (ECF), Anaplasmosis, and Babesiosis. Resume weekly cattle spraying or dipping with acaricides (amitraz or cypermethrin-based). Inspect animals for ticks around ears, tail, and underbelly. Consider aggressive initial treatment if many engorged ticks are found. ECF cases increased in central Uganda last year - the Ministry promotes integrated tick management including ITM vaccination for calves where available. Keep grass around kraals short to reduce tick habitat.

Trypanosomiasis (Nagana)

In areas near game parks and tsetse-infested woodlands (West Nile, parts of Bunyoro and Acholi), humidity increases tsetse fly activity. Watch for Nagana signs: emaciation, anemia, and intermittent fever. Use tsetse traps along cattle routes. Veterinarians can provide trypanocidal drugs for outbreaks. Coordinate with local officials for traps through FAO and COCTU programs in West Nile.

Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) & Others

LSD spreads after rains via biting insects. Vaccinate cattle if not done in the past year, as many districts include LSD vaccine in their annual schedule. Apply pour-on insecticides to reduce biting flies. Report any nodular skin lesions promptly. For PPR (Peste des Petits Ruminants) affecting goats and sheep in Karamoja and Teso, vaccination campaigns are ongoing. Vaccinate your small ruminants if not done in the last year.

Endoparasites

Rainy conditions increase internal parasite vectors. Deworm animals with broad-spectrum anthelmintics (albendazole or ivermectin) at the start of the rainy season to improve weight gain and milk production. For flukes in swampy grazing areas, use triclabendazole, especially for cattle.

Poultry Health

Rural poultry production increases with rain as feed becomes plentiful, but disease risks rise. Vaccinate chickens against Newcastle Disease every 3 months using the Lasota eye-drop vaccine. Check with local vets about mass ND vaccination programs. Monitor for coccidiosis (bloody droppings) in chicks due to damp conditions. Keep coops dry and consider anticoccidial feed additives if outbreaks occur.

Breeding and Management

The rain season is breeding time for many herds as nutrition improves:

Cattle Breeding

Cows regaining condition will resume cycling. Introduce bulls or arrange AI for genetic improvement. The Dairy Development Authority is promoting AI in central Uganda. Ensure cows reach body condition score 2.5+ for successful conception. Use phosphorus-rich mineral supplements to enhance fertility. Plan for calving - cows bred now will deliver next January during dry season, so prepare feed reserves accordingly.

Housing

Keep livestock housing dry and clean. Zero-grazed dairy cows need regular bedding changes to prevent mastitis. Provide raised slatted floors for goats to keep them out of mud. Ensure chicken coops are well-ventilated to prevent respiratory issues in humid conditions.

Biosecurity

With communal grazing, diseases spread quickly. Disinfect equipment, isolate new animals, and avoid illegal movements from quarantine zones. Government has lifted FMD quarantines in many sub-counties, reopening cattle markets. When purchasing animals, always verify movement permits and health certificates.

Goats/Sheep

Small ruminants show increased fertility with better feed. For synchronized breeding, introduce males after a short separation to induce estrus, resulting in concentrated births year-end. Teso communities are distributing improved Boer goats - manage these carefully to prevent loss and use them for crossbreeding to improve local stock growth.

Foot Rot

Provide dry resting areas to prevent foot rot from continuous standing in mud. Inspect hooves regularly and apply copper or zinc sulfate footbaths if limping occurs, especially in sheep and goats.

Vaccination Calendar

Key livestock vaccination timing:



Cattle

FMD (biannually in endemic areas); LSD (annually pre-rains); Brucellosis (calves only); Blackquarter & Anthrax (outbreak-prone areas); ECF (for calves where available).



Goats/Sheep

PPR (annual, pre-wet season); CCPP in goats (annual where common); Sheep pox (if previously affected).



Poultry

Newcastle (quarterly); Gumboro/IBD (chicks); Fowl pox (once if history of outbreaks); Regular deworming.

Many districts designate April as "vaccination month" with free services. Listen for local announcements from veterinary offices.

Government/NGO Support

Current MAAIF and partner initiatives:

- FMD vaccination drive - coordinate with district vets (cost-sharing may apply).
- FAO/WFP/EU Resilience Project in Karamoja - training on fodder production and drought-resistant crops.
- Water infrastructure projects in cattle corridor districts - solar boreholes and valley tanks.
- Disease surveillance for FMD and Avian Flu - report unusual animal illnesses promptly.

Outlook

Livestock conditions should improve with continued rains, peaking by May/June. Expect weight gain, increased milk yields, and better conception rates. Key risks include disease outbreaks and parasites. The government aims to eradicate FMD within 3 years. In flood-prone areas, prepare to move animals to higher ground during heavy rains.

Take advantage of the rainy season to improve herd health through pasture recovery, targeted supplementation, parasite control, and timely vaccinations. These actions will enhance productivity, contributing to household nutrition, income, and resilience against future dry spells.

Market Analysis (Prices for Staple Foods and Livestock)

Uganda's staple food markets remain well-supplied as of March 2025. Prices are stable or below last year's levels due to good second-season harvests (late 2024) and regional trade. Below are average retail prices by region in Ugandan Shillings per kilogram.

| Region | Maize | Beans (dry) | Sorghum | Millet | Matooke (Plantain, Banana) |
|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Northern | 1,500 UGX | 3,500 UGX | 1,200 UGX | 2,300 UGX | |
| Eastern | 1,200 UGX | 3,000 UGX | 1,300 UGX | 2,000 UGX | |
| Western | 1,400 UGX | 3,200 UGX | 1,500 UGX | 2,500 UGX | 800 UGX |
| Central | 1,500 UGX | 3,300 UGX | 1,600 UGX | 2,400 UGX | 1,200 UGX |

Sources: WFP Uganda market price data (February–March 2025) and Selina Wamucii Marketplace. Note: Matooke is primarily consumed in western/central regions and typically sold by bunch; per kg estimates shown.

Analysis of Price Trends

Maize

Maize prices remain low to moderate due to ample supply. Farm-gate prices in eastern producing areas hover around UGX 1,000/kg, while Kampala retail prices reach UGX 1,500/kg. Eastern Uganda enjoys the cheapest maize (1,200 UGX) as a major production zone, while northern (1,500 UGX) benefits from eastern imports plus recent local harvests. Western prices (1,400 UGX) remain affordable despite some reliance on imports. Currently 35% lower than last year nationally, prices are expected to remain stable or increase slightly approaching the April-May lean period. Cross-border demand from Kenya could push prices up by May if their below-normal harvest drives higher imports from Uganda. This price trend benefits consumers but creates thin margins for farmers.

Sorghum

Sorghum prices are generally lower than maize, ranging from 1,200-1,600 UGX/kg across regions. Northern and eastern prices (1,200-1,300 UGX) remain low due to good harvests in Karamoja and Teso regions, alongside limited demand outside traditional sorghum-consuming communities. In Karamoja markets, where sorghum significantly impacts food security, prices range from 1,000-1,200 UGX. Western and central regions show higher prices (1,500-1,600 UGX) as sorghum serves as both a brewing ingredient and maize substitute. Prices may increase slightly mid-year if expensive maize drives consumers to switch, but the outlook remains stable given steady supply. Cross-border trade with South Sudan continues but isn't currently sufficient to significantly impact prices.

Matooke (Cooking Bananas)

Matooke prices show significant regional variation: approximately 800 UGX/kg in western production zones (Ankole/Kigezi) versus 1,200 UGX/kg in central urban markets. This aligns with reports of bunches costing 20,000-30,000 UGX in Kampala compared to 10,000 UGX farm-gate prices in production districts like Isingiro. Current tight supply stems from previous drought impacts and localized Banana Bacterial Wilt outbreaks. Prices have eased slightly since the December holiday peak but remain elevated compared to previous years. Premium matooke sells for over 1,200 UGX/kg in urban centers due to production constraints and consistent demand. Prices may decrease by 15-20% in April-May as seasonal rains improve yields and increase market supply. However, structural challenges including disease pressure and decreasing cultivation area due to land constraints suggest prices will likely remain above historical averages.

Beans

Dry bean prices remain moderately high but stable, averaging 3,000-3,500 UGX/kg across regions. Eastern region sees lower prices (3,000 UGX) due to significant production in Mbale and Iganga, while northern and central regions face higher prices (3,300-3,500 UGX) as they import beans from southwest Uganda or neighboring countries. Prices were approximately 15% lower in August 2024 than the previous year, indicating a good harvest. Current prices reflect the gradual depletion of December 2024 harvest stocks. Farm-gate prices in major producing areas like Kabale stand around UGX 2,500/kg, translating to about 3,000 UGX in urban markets. Prices should remain stable until May, potentially rising before the June harvest. Ongoing exports to Kenya and South Sudan might gradually increase domestic prices.

Millet

Millet commands higher prices than sorghum, with regional averages of 2,000-2,500 UGX/kg. Northern and western regions show the highest prices (2,300-2,500 UGX) due to strong cultural demand but declining production. Eastern Uganda maintains lower prices (2,000 UGX) thanks to Teso region's good finger millet harvest in late 2024. Central region prices (2,400 UGX) reflect transport costs and minimal local production. Market volumes remain relatively small as millet is often grown for household consumption rather than commercial sale. Prices have remained stable in recent months with slight increases as last year's stocks diminish. No significant price changes are expected until the next harvest (July in Teso, August in northern areas), unless large aid procurement or export deals emerge.

Livestock Prices

Livestock markets are active following quarantine lifts. Cattle prices in Uganda range from UGX 7,400 to 18,600 per kg live weight, with indigenous cows (~250 kg) fetching between UGX 1.8-4.6 million. Currently, mature local zebu bulls in northern Uganda sell for UGX 1.5-2.0 million, while premium Ankole bulls in Kiruhura command UGX 3-4 million. Cattle prices have slightly decreased since late 2024 as farmers who couldn't sell during quarantine are now offloading stock, though restocking demand may offset this decline. Medium-sized goats sell for UGX 150,000-250,000 in central regions (UGX 7,400-11,000 per kg live weight), with goat meat retailing at UGX 14,000-25,000/kg. Local chicken prices range from UGX 25,000-30,000 per bird, slightly higher due to increased feed costs and Easter demand. Egg prices in Kampala have risen to UGX 12,000-13,000 per tray compared to last year.

Regional Market Dynamics

Cross-Border Trade

Uganda exports staples to regional markets, notably:



Kenya

Demand for Ugandan maize, beans, and matooke remains significant. Kenya's stocks from early 2025 harvest are moderate, with potential import increases by May. Currently, 1000–1500 MT of maize grain moves to Kenya weekly through Busia border. A Kenyan shortfall could elevate Ugandan maize prices.



South Sudan

South Sudan depends on Ugandan grain, flour, and livestock. Active trade through Elegu border maintains higher prices for Ugandan traders, supporting local farmgate prices. Continued trade depends on South Sudan's currency stability.



Rwanda/DRC

Maize flour and beans export to eastern DRC and Rwanda occurs via southwestern Uganda. While Rwanda approaches self-sufficiency in maize, these export channels provide a price floor without causing domestic shortages.

Imports

Uganda imports minimal staple grain (mainly rice and wheat). Global factors have increased wheat flour prices, affecting bread but not core staples.

Inflation and Purchasing Power

Uganda's food inflation remains moderate with single-digit food crop inflation in early 2025. While prices for fish and tomatoes have increased, cereal prices remain stable. Urban consumers benefit from steady posho prices (~UGX 1,800/kg in Kampala), while rural incomes gradually recover from previous shocks.

World Food Programme and Relief Purchases

WFP supports approximately 1.3 million refugees in Uganda through food assistance and cash transfers. Their late 2024 purchases of maize and beans helped absorb surplus and stabilize prices. Current rations remain reduced due to funding constraints, limiting market intervention. Any changes in WFP funding or procurement strategies could significantly impact local market dynamics.

Livestock Markets and Input Prices

Livestock Markets

The lifting of FMD quarantines in central Uganda has revitalized livestock trade. Reopened cattle markets in Nakasongola and Nakaseke have increased supply to Kampala's abattoirs, slightly lowering beef prices to UGX 13,000–15,000/kg for common cuts. Areas still under quarantine maintain robust farmgate cattle prices. Karamoja livestock markets have recovered as animals return from dry-season grazing, with medium bulls fetching around UGX 1 million (below national average). Goat prices in Karamoja are rising as outside traders purchase for fattening or resale.

Fertilizer and Input Prices

Fertilizer prices have declined from their 2022 peak, though remain costly for smallholders. In Kampala, 50-kg bags of Urea cost approximately UGX 170,000, while DAP costs around UGX 200,000. The government's initiatives to improve fertilizer accessibility through policy review and a potential Fertilizer Fund may ease production costs in future seasons rather than immediately.

Outlook for Coming Weeks

Food prices should remain stable through April, then likely follow seasonal upward trends until June harvests. With forecasted favorable rains, good yields are expected, keeping prices in check. However, heavy rains could cause post-harvest handling issues that might tighten supply. Overall, markets are functioning well and Uganda maintains its position as a regional food supplier.

We'll continue monitoring trade flows and markets. Farmers with stored grain may benefit from slight price increases by May. Deficit areas like Karamoja are currently stable due to market access, humanitarian aid, and cash programs, though any delayed rains could pressure prices.

In conclusion, Uganda's food price environment remains favorable for consumers and stable for traders, with minimal regional variations. Recovering livestock markets and generally positive price conditions support food security across most regions heading into the lean season, contingent on successful first-season crop development.



Government & NGO Updates

Key agricultural stakeholders have recently launched significant initiatives and policies to bolster farming and food security across Uganda. Several notable developments emerged during this period:

Climate-Smart Agriculture Project Roll-out

MAAIF has launched the World Bank-funded Uganda Climate-Smart Agricultural Transformation Project (UCSATP) targeting 69 districts. The project supports 10 priority crops (maize, sorghum, soybeans, coffee, cocoa, mango, citrus, avocado, cashew), livestock, and aquaculture through improved seeds/breeds distribution, climate-smart farming training, and market access enhancement. District stakeholder engagement began in December 2024, with regional workshops already underway. Farmers should contact their District Agricultural Office to check eligibility for inputs or demonstration plot participation. The initiative aims to build resilience against climate challenges through an inclusive approach.

Fertilizer and Soil Fertility Agenda

The government is addressing Uganda's low fertilizer usage (~3 kg/ha) through several initiatives. MAAIF is reviewing the 2016 National Fertilizer Policy and finalizing new Control Regulations. Key developments include: a planned Fertilizer Fund to subsidize procurement; 69 integrated soil testing laboratories being established nationwide; a "Farmer, Know Your Soil" educational campaign; and a new quality control authority to combat counterfeit products. While implementation timelines weren't specified, the government is simultaneously working to fill extension worker positions (currently 4,272 of 9,627 filled) to support fertilizer education. These combined efforts aim to improve fertilizer accessibility, affordability, and proper application to enhance yields and food security.

MAAIF Takes Over Coffee & Cocoa Project

MAAIF assumed control of the EU-funded Coffee and Cocoa Value Chain Development Project (CoCoDev) from Uganda Coffee Development Authority in March 2025. This UGX 25.5 billion initiative (2022-2027) aims to strengthen policies, enhance production, reduce post-harvest losses, and improve market access for coffee and cocoa.

CoCoDev has already provided UGX 12.6 billion in matching grants (55% government co-funded) to 152 farmer groups, supporting the planting of 3,497 acres of coffee and 552 acres of cocoa. The Permanent Secretary advised beneficiaries to prepare for the March 2025 planting season.

Farmers will continue receiving elite seedlings, pest control training, and post-harvest equipment. This transition aligns with national strategies, including the goal of producing 20 million coffee bags by 2030. Coffee and cocoa stakeholders should anticipate closer monitoring and potential new opportunities under MAAIF's management.

Karamoja Food Security Projects

The Karamoja sub-region, facing recurrent hunger, is the focus of renewed interventions:

FAO & WFP Joint Project

In late 2024, FAO and WFP partnered with the Government to launch the EU-funded "Improving Food Security and Resilience of Food Production Systems in Karamoja" project. This three-year, €5 million initiative will support 16,000 Karamoja households. The project addresses droughts and insecurity through: distributing fast-maturing climate-adapted seeds, establishing community vegetable gardens and poultry units, training on rangeland management, and strengthening drought early warning systems. It aligns with the Parish Development Model and has already identified priority needs including agricultural water access and small ruminant restocking. Currently, FAO is providing sorghum and cowpea seeds to selected Karamoja demo farmers. Local communities should watch for field teams collaborating with district production offices on implementation.

Emergency Appeal

The United Nations in Uganda launched a joint emergency appeal on March 3, 2025 seeking USD 11.2 million for Uganda's Ebola response. While primarily health-focused (following the January 2025 outbreak), some funds may address socio-economic impacts including potential food support for affected farming communities. With only 10 cases reported as of early March, mostly in central Uganda, this remains predominantly a health initiative but forms part of the broader UN support context.

Policy and Institutional Developments



Agricultural Extension Strategy

Government is developing a new National Agricultural Extension Strategy to address the current ratio of 1 extension worker per 2,000 farmers. Expected later in 2025, the strategy aims to professionalize staff and integrate digital tools like MAAIF's E-Extension system and M-Omulimisa platform for price updates.



Agricultural Policy Research Centre

Makerere University established an Agricultural Policy Research Centre (APRC) in early 2025 to provide evidence-based policy analysis to MAAIF, potentially improving policies on subsidies and value chain development.



Fisheries

Government increased funding to combat illegal fishing on Lake Victoria, with MAAIF/UPDF intensifying patrols in response to complaints about illegal gear trade, impacting both fish supply and livelihoods.

NGO and INGO Activities

Key organizations active in Uganda:

World Food Programme (WFP)

WFP supports agriculture through Purchase for Progress (P4P) and resilience programs, working with eastern Uganda farmer groups to improve grain quality for institutional markets.

USAID Programs

Feed the Future projects for Inclusive Agricultural Markets (IAM) provide finance and market linkages to farmer cooperatives, focusing on coffee, horticulture, and oilseeds in 2025. A new USAID Climate Resilience activity is expected to complement government climate-smart initiatives.

Other NGOs

Mercy Corps and Save the Children continue resilience work in Karamoja through apiculture and VSLA groups. HarvestPlus (IFPRI) promotes biofortified crops in eastern and northern districts, offering improved varieties through NGO channels.

International Support

The 8th Uganda Water and Environment Week (March 2025) highlighted climate adaptation for agriculture. EU, FAO, and GIZ committed to funding irrigation schemes and agro-forestry, while FAO pledged continued technical support for livestock disease control.

Notable Events

- Kenya's First Daughter Charlene Ruto visited youth-led farms in Oyam to promote climate-smart agriculture and regional cooperation.
- NARO celebrated International Women's Day by featuring women-focused agri-innovations including labor-saving devices and improved crop varieties for women farmer groups.









Parish Development Model (PDM) & Local Government

The PDM strategy continues to roll out, injecting funds at parish level for income-generating activities with agriculture as a key component. Many parishes use PDM funds to support SACCOs that provide low-interest loans to farmers for inputs or value addition. In some districts, PDM funds have purchased community tractors or processing equipment. Check if your local parish SACCO offers these loans for investments like dairy cows or fertilizers.

The policy environment currently prioritizes climate-smart practices, input quality control, and value chain development for export crops. To benefit, farmers should join registered groups to access grants, learn climate-smart techniques, and utilize revitalized extension services. NGOs and donors complement these efforts in vulnerable regions through resilience-building and emergency support. These collective initiatives aim to mitigate risks and improve productivity, with updates on subsidies, credit facilities, and training opportunities shared as they become available.

Relevant Publications & Links

Key resources providing analysis and data on Uganda's agriculture, markets, and climate:

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
|  | ICPAC Weekly Climate Forecast (28 Mar – 4 Apr 2025) |  | ICPAC Seasonal Outlook (MAM 2025) – Press Release |  | UNMA Seasonal Rainfall Outlook (March–May 2025) |
| | 7-day forecast with rainfall and temperature maps by IGAD Climate Prediction Centre. Useful for short-term planning. (URL: ICPAC Weekly Forecast) | | Released 21 Jan 2025, forecasts below-normal rainfall across the Greater Horn of Africa. For Uganda: Eastern parts wetter, southwestern drier, with early onset observed. (URL: ICPAC News – MAM 2025 Outlook) | | Uganda National Meteorological Authority predicts near-normal to above-normal rainfall across most regions. Provides region-specific expectations. (Check: UNMA Facebook or Ministry of Water and Environment) |
|  | FAO GIEWS Country Brief – Uganda (October 2024) |  | WFP Uganda – National Market Monitor Report (Dec 2023) |  | Selina Wamucii Uganda Daily Prices |
| | Update on 2024 harvests and market prices, noting below-average first season harvest and low staple prices as of August 2024. (URL: FAO GIEWS Uganda Brief) | | Analysis of food prices across Uganda through early 2024, showing price changes, regional disparities, and contributing factors. (URL: ReliefWeb – WFP Market Monitor Dec 2023) | | Real-time commodity price platform showing current ranges for key crops. Example: Maize (UGX 1,881-7,525 per kg) and bananas in March 2025. (URL: selinawamucii.com/prices/uganda/[commodity]) |
|  | IPC Analysis for Karamoja (Aug 2024 – Feb 2025) |  | "Hunger Hotspots" FAO-WFP Early Warning Report (Nov 2024 – May 2025) | | |
| | Shows 30% of Karamoja population in Crisis or worse, detailing livelihood conditions for vulnerability assessment. (URL: ipcinform.org) | | Identifies Uganda (particularly Karamoja) as a country of concern, providing early warnings on acute food insecurity and climate impacts. | | |

MAAIF/Ag Extension Manuals

Technical reference guides available through MAAIF:

- Maize Training Manual for Extension Workers in Uganda (2019)
- Beans Training Manual for Extension Workers (2020)

NARO Research Publications

Recent highlights include improved pastures and forage seed systems in Eastern Africa, and FMD vaccine development progress reported by The Observer.

Agricultural Finance and Markets

- UBOS CPI Report (February 2025) – Details food price inflation
- Harvest Money (New Vision) – Weekly farming tips and market trends

Policy Documents

- Parish Development Model Handbook
- National Fertilizer Policy 2016 (with upcoming revision)
- Draft Uganda National Extension Strategy 2025

For quick weather updates, check UNMA website and Twitter (@MeteoUganda). Market prices available via @AgriPriceUG on Twitter.

References

1. IGAD ICPAC – Weekly Climate Forecast, 28 Mar–04 Apr 2025
2. IGAD ICPAC – Press Release: MAM 2025 Seasonal Outlook (21 Jan 2025)
3. NTV Uganda – "Ugandans told to expect increased rainfall as heatwave ends" (6 Mar 2025)
4. FAO/WFP – Karamoja Resilience Project Launch (13 Nov 2024)
5. Business Focus – "MAAIF Takes Over Coffee, Cocoa Value Chain Project" (27 Feb 2025)
6. Nile Post – Report on Fertilizer & Soil Health Workshop (Jan 2025)
7. Uganda Daily Monitor – "Government lifts livestock quarantine" (5 Feb 2025)
8. NARO News – "3 million FMD vaccine doses arrive in Uganda" (Feb 2025)
9. Selina Wamucii – Uganda Maize and Live Cattle Price Insights (Mar 2025)

(All links accessed March 2025)

Looking Ahead & Key Reminders

Weather Watch

April rains will intensify, benefiting crops but raising flood risks. Ensure proper field drainage and clear blocked ditches to prevent waterlogging. Areas with slow rain onset should normalize in April. Complete fieldwork during dry periods, as late April may bring continuous rains. Livestock farmers should plan to harvest excess fodder by late May as pasture growth accelerates.

- **Fertilizer Top-Dress:** Apply top-dressing to maize 4-5 weeks after emergence. Procure Urea or CAN in advance. Monitor crop color for nitrogen deficiency if using manure.
- **Pest Surveillance:** Scout crops twice weekly for Fall Armyworm, stem borers, and aphids. Control pests when populations are low. Consider integrated pest management and use pesticides judiciously during calm weather.

Harvest Prep

Prepare now for upcoming harvests:

- Clean and repair storage facilities to eliminate pest hiding places.
- Acquire hermetic storage bags or silos for grain preservation.
- Secure tarpaulins or drying mats for crops harvested during rainy conditions.
- Plan market timing for horticultural crops. Consider staggered planting or cooperative marketing to avoid price drops at peak harvest times.

Crop Management To-Do List

- **Complete Planting:** Northern Uganda and Karamoja farmers should finish sowing by April 10. Consider short-duration varieties or postpone to second season if behind schedule. South/west regions should focus on crop maintenance.
- **First Weeding & Thinning:** Weed 2-3 week old crops immediately. Thin maize and sorghum to recommended spacing when soil is moist to reduce competition and pest incidence.
- **Disease Caution:** Monitor for fungal diseases in wet conditions. Remove infected bean plants to prevent blight and anthracnose spread. Stake climbing beans and improve banana mat airflow through proper de-suckering and de-leafing.
- **Pollination Support:** Avoid disrupting maize pollination in late April. Ensure adequate soil moisture during flowering to protect yields, as moisture stress during this period is particularly damaging.

Community Engagement and Final Outlook

Community and Extension Engagement

April is critical for agricultural advisory services. Many sub-counties will host farmers' field days or training sessions on pesticide safety, financial literacy, and new technologies. We encourage participation in these events and joining farmer groups for knowledge sharing. Maintain contact with extension workers through WhatsApp groups or radio programs for timely advice on pest management and seed availability. The Ministry's e-voucher system offers subsidized inputs in certain districts - check if your area qualifies.

Livestock Reminders

As pastures improve, focus on livestock breeding and health:

- Allow cattle and goats to recover on fresh pasture before selling. Consider timing sales around Eid and school reopenings in late April when meat demand typically increases.
- Complete necessary vaccinations by month-end, including Newcastle Disease for chickens and Lumpy Skin Disease for cattle before peak vector season. Maintain routine tick control as previously advised.

Bee-keeping and Fisheries

With flowering season beginning, bee-keepers should ensure clean, properly placed hives away from pesticide drift to maximize honey production. For those in fishing communities, while rainy season often improves catches, adhere to regulations regarding net sizes to avoid legal issues and ensure sustainable harvests.

Monitoring and Early Warning

The Ministry's Crop Monitor and Livestock Early Warning units will issue updates about anomalies like pest outbreaks or weather events. Subscribe to "EAFF agromet" SMS alerts if available. Current conditions appear stable with high confidence in a normal season, but maintain adaptive practices like crop diversification as a safeguard against climate variability.

Next Season Prep

Forward-thinking farmers should begin planning for Season B by saving seeds or funds for certified seed purchases for August planting. Consider preparing land in June/July for longer-duration crops, and planting green manure or cover crops like mucuna or lablab after early harvests to enrich soil by August.

The outlook remains positive with supportive weather conditions, stable markets, and mobilizing services. With proper implementation of recommended practices, we anticipate a strong first-season harvest in June-July. The government and partners continue addressing challenges from FMD control to market access. Report any anomalies to your extension officer for inclusion in future updates.

Focus on crop and livestock management during these critical weeks to achieve improved yields, better prices, and enhanced food security. By staying informed and working collaboratively, we can make this season successful.



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