

Category	: International Rice Research Conference
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Title of Entry	: Implications of rice price seasonality for value chains
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Abstract : Agricultural prices exhibit seasonal patterns because demand is relatively constant throughout the year, while production exhibits peaks and troughs at relatively predictable times due to changing weather patterns throughout the year. The seasonal patterns for prices have implications for both producers and consumers. Producers receive lower prices for their output if they sell immediately at harvest than if they store and sell at seasonal peaks, while poor consumers can find it difficult to afford food during the “hungry” season just before the main crop is harvested. But while agricultural prices do exhibit seasonal patterns, these patterns may vary from year to year as there are a multiplicity of factors that influence price movements. The fluctuations in prices introduce risk into a strategy of waiting to sell until after the harvest. The objectives of the paper are to compare the seasonal patterns of rice prices across countries and explain the differences on the basis of variables such as infrastructure and trade policy. The paper will also compare seasonal patterns across different levels of the marketing chain (farm, wholesale, retail), as well as assess changes in these patterns over time. Finally, the paper will also make an assessment of the risk involved in storing and waiting for several months after harvest and draw implications for farmers integrating more deeply into value chains.

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