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## Global food prices hit highest level since 2022, sugar and cereals jump

FAO Food Price Index Hits 136, Highest Since 2022

By **Manasee Kurlekar** | October 9, 2026



Disruptions at the Black Sea and Hormuz are feeding into food costs. That is a warning sign for import-dependent economies, including much of Asia and Africa.

Key details: The FAO Food Price Index averaged 136 points in September, up 1.5% on the month and 5.8% on the year. That is the highest level since November 2022. Sugar rose 6.1%, cereals 5.1% and vegetable oils 0.9%, while meat and dairy fell. FAO chief economist Máximo Torero warned that consumer food prices will come under pressure if this continues, especially in countries that import both food and energy.

The FAO puts 2026 global cereal production at 2.979B tonnes, broadly unchanged. So the world isn't growing less food. Prices are rising because of moving it, the cost of growing it, and fear about next season.

The war-related supply issues works through two channels:

1. Direct: Blocked shipping routes. The FAO cut its 2026/27 world cereal trade forecast by 0.7% because wheat and maize can't move as freely through the Black Sea.
2. Indirect: higher farming costs. Farmers across Asia were already short of fertiliser and diesel because of the Iran war when the dry weather hit. Higher oil prices also raise transport and processing costs everywhere.

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