

Agricultural Exports Volume

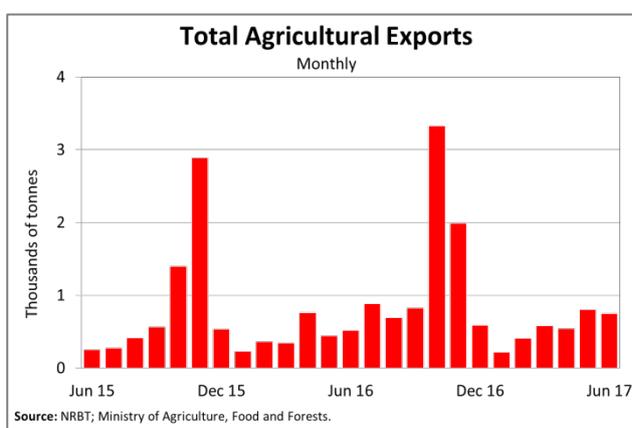
June 2017

Release date: 6 September 2017

	Jun 17	May 17	Apr 17	Mar 17
Total volume (tonnes)	751.3	800.4	537.5	583.1

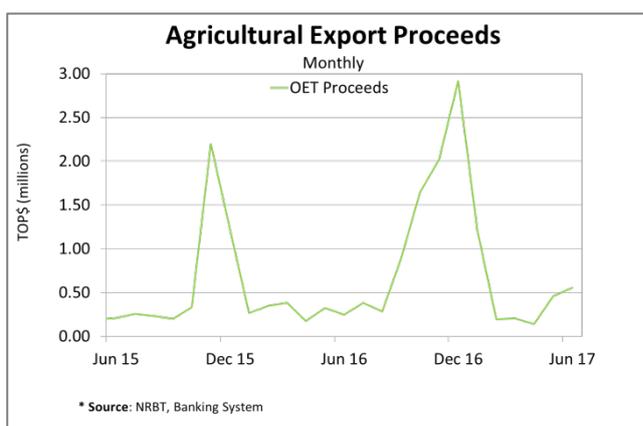
No watermelon exports drove agricultural exports lower

The total agricultural exports declined by 49.0 tonnes (6.1%) over the month largely attributed to no watermelon exports during the month compared to the 93.0 tonnes exported in the previous month. However, the favourable root crops harvest season continued, particularly for yam, sweet yam, and giant taro. The export of these crops rose by 49.6 tonnes (8.7%) which outweighed the decline in the export of swamp taro, taro tarua, cassava, and sweet potato. Exported green-drinking coconuts also increased over the month.



During the month, exported commodities decreased due to the seasonality of local produce such as watermelon, breadfruit, kava powder, plantain, brown coconuts, pele leaves, and chestnut.

The agricultural export proceeds received slightly rose by \$0.1 million (21.1%) to \$0.6 million as export proceeds for both root crops and kava increased in June 2017. The proceeds for the export of root crops amounted to \$0.3 million. This was followed by kava export receipts of \$0.2 million, reflecting the increase in the price of kava-Tonga last month and lagged effects of receipt of export proceeds, as most of the kava were exported to the United States.



Over the year, the total agricultural export volume rose by 2,875.9 tonnes (33.0%), supported by better harvest of root crops, the favourable squash, watermelon, and breadfruit season. These offset the decline in the export of kava-Tonga, coconuts, sandalwood, vanilla, onion, and mulberry juice over the year. The continuous support from the Government's development loan scheme also supported the growth in the agricultural sector, with a rise of \$2.4 million (27.5%) growth in loans to the agricultural sector. The annual agricultural export receipts also rose by \$4.7 million (76.1%) to \$10.9 million. The higher export receipts were for squash and crops (root crops and traditional crops), supported by the strengthening of the Japanese Yen and US dollar against the Tongan Pa'anga.

On the outlook, the Reserve Bank anticipates that the volume of exports will continue to increase in the near term supporting the expected growth in the agricultural sector. The year 2016/17 has seen better weather conditions than that of the previous years which will likely have favourable effects on the agricultural sector's 2017/18 growth. On the downside, the export of Kava Tonga will continue to decline due to its low supply as a result of the drought in 2015 which also affected the kava rootstock.

Total Agricultural Export Volumes by Major Categories							
Tonnes							
	Month-ended*				Year-ended		Memo: Share
	Jun 17	May 17	Apr 17	Jun 16	Jun 17	Jun 16	
Total	751.3	800.4	537.5	515.4	11,592.7	8,716.8	100
Fruit products	122.7	215.5	117.4	162.8	5,632.1	5,674.9	48.6
Root vegetable products	621.3	571.7	409.8	344.9	5,842.9	2,850.2	50.4
Other vegetable products	1.9	3.6	4.4	1.7	30.6	19.1	0.3
Sandalwood	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.6	0.0
Vanilla	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	5.9	0.0
Other**	5.5	9.6	5.9	6.0	87.1	172.0	0.8

* Series is volatile due to seasonality of crops
** Includes kava products and coffee beans.
Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests.