

Agricultural Exports Volume April 2018

Release date: 20 August 2018

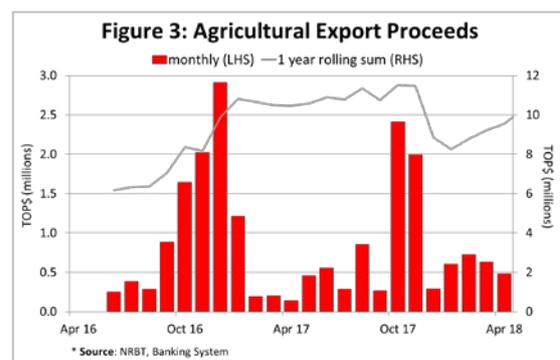
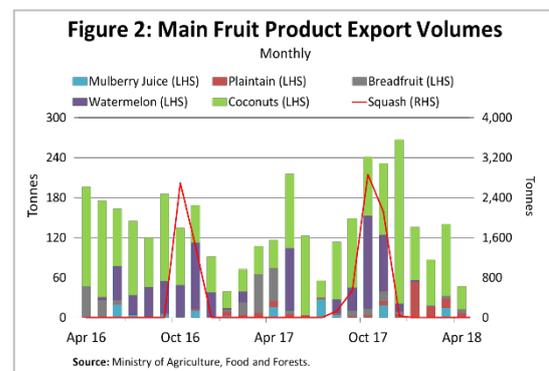
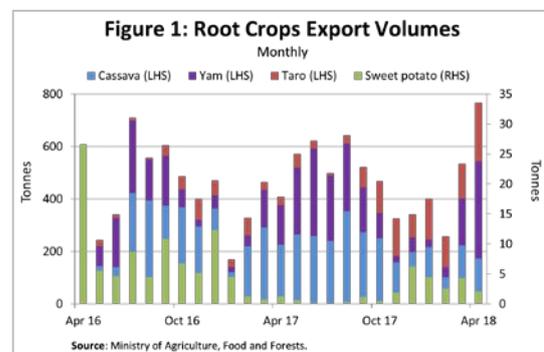
	Apr 18	Mar 18	Feb 18	Jan 18
Total volume (tonnes)	825.1	689.3	353.8	565.2

Yam and taro harvest increased total agricultural exports

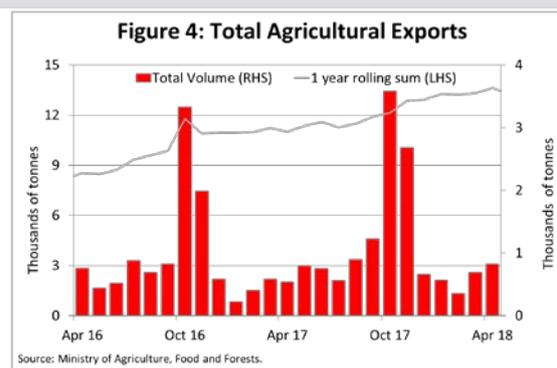
The total agricultural exports continued on a favorable trend over the month increasing by 135.7 tonnes (19.7%). This was mainly attributed to the harvest of various yam types and taro (tarua, swamp and giant taro) whose exports rose by 192.1 tonnes and 91.1 tonnes respectively during the month (Figure 1). Other exported agricultural crops which also increased over the month included breadfruit and taro tarua leaves. This was sufficient to outweigh the decrease in all other exported agricultural commodities such as cassava, coconuts, plantain, sweet potatoes and mulberry juice (Figure 1 & 2). According to the Consumer Price Index report released by the Statistics Department, the average monthly prices for yam and taro declined over the month whilst the price of cassava, coconuts and sweet potatoes increased. The movement in prices is associated with the supply of these crops. When there is abundant supply of a particular crops its price falls and vice versa when there is limited supply in the market.

The total agricultural proceeds however declined by \$0.2 million (23.9%) over the month to \$0.5 million (Figure 3). This may be due to lagged effects on the receipt of proceeds for agricultural exports.

In year ended terms, the total agricultural export volumes rose by 2,607.0 tonnes (23.7%),



supported by better harvest of root crops which included taro and yam, the exports of squash products, coconuts, plantain, pele leaves, mulberry juice, watermelon papaya, pineapple, kava-Tonga products. These offset the decline in the export volumes of cassava, sweet potato, and breadfruit over the year (Figure 4). The continuous support from the Government's Development Loan scheme also supported the



yearly growth in the agricultural sector. The annual agricultural export receipts however fell by \$0.9 million (8.6%) which may be due to proceeds left abroad as well as the time lag effect of receiving it. The increase in non-commercial agricultural exports where individuals sent crops to families abroad may have also contributed to the decline in receipts of export proceeds.

On the outlook, the Reserve Bank anticipates that the volume of agricultural exports will decline in the short term due to the devastation and damages from TC Gita on the plantations. However, the Reserve Bank projects the agricultural sector will reflect a positive growth in 2017/18 as TC Gita struck mid-way through the 2017/18 financial year hence losses are anticipated to be felt towards the latter part of 2017/18. This is supported by the various initiatives from the government to help growers, and the positive attitude reflected by growers through the Reserve Bank's liaison program towards recovery and replant of crops following the cyclone. The weather uncertainties still remain a risk to the outlook.

Total Agricultural Export Volumes by Major Categories							
Tonnes							
	Month-ended*				Year-ended		Memo: Share
	Apr 18	Mar 18	Feb 18	Apr 17	Apr 18	Apr 17	
Total	825.1	689.3	353.8	537.5	13,603.9	10,996.9	100
Fruit products	46.2	140.5	87.3	117.4	7,500.7	5,632.2	55.1
Root vegetable products	768.4	537.3	258.9	409.8	5,965.5	5,243.1	43.9
Other vegetable products	3.8	4.4	3.9	4.4	41.7	29.0	0.3
Sandalwood	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0
Vanilla	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	2.4	0.0
Other**	6.7	7.2	3.7	5.9	96.1	92.6	0.7

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