



## **Sellers blame wholesalers as vegetable prices spike across Malaysia & More Trending News Today**

KUALA LUMPUR, May 31 — Wholesalers have raised prices due to the shortage of some vegetables, retailers in several states said to explain the sharp increases that have upset consumers.

According to Berita Harian, prices of some vegetables in states such as Kedah and Kelantan were now over three times what they were previously.

“We have no choice (but to increase our prices) because wholesalers are starting to raise prices between RM2 and RM3 for every type of vegetable,” Mawardi Taha, a vegetable seller at the Alor Setar Central Market, was quoted as saying.

“There are buyers who get angry, but we ourselves do not make much profit in this situation. Only the prices of vegetables such as okra and mustard have not changed much.”

Identifying vegetables that were now more expensive, Mawardi said long beans were now RM10/kg compared to RM7/kg last month while chilies were RM13/kg versus RM10 before this.

According to the report, the most affected crop was the long eggplant that was now RM12/kg, up from RM10.50/kg last month. However, it was just RM7/kg earlier this year.

In Terengganu, the report said salad leaves have shot up to RM18/kg from RM5/kg previously. Okra, eggplant, mustard, red chili, cauliflower, and green beans have all seen a RM3 increase to their previous prices.

However, the price of long beans has gone down from RM22 to RM15/kg.

Vegetable seller Siti Farhana Hassan said the price of vegetables would typically fluctuate according to supply.

“The price is uncertain, there are times when it goes up and there are times when the supply changes. The price is different every day with the increase said to be due to a lack of supply.

“For example, salad prices have been quite high lately when they increased from RM15 to RM18 per kg compared to only RM5 per kg,” she said.

Some vegetable sellers said the price increases have forced them into shrinkflation, or the practice of reducing packet sizes to present the appearance of not increasing prices.

Roslina Ismail, who has been selling at the Siti Khadijah Market in Kota Baru for the past seven years, said she now put fewer vegetables in each pre-packed bag.

“There is a significant increase in the price of vegetables. For example, I used to buy long beans at RM5 to RM6 for a large bunch from wholesalers but now it can go up to RM10.

“Similarly, eggplants can no longer be sold at RM5 per kg, but RM8 to RM10 instead because we buy at high prices from middlemen or wholesalers.

“It’s true that a lot of complaints have been received, but we can’t do anything because the prices from wholesalers are already expensive,” Roslina said.

Like many countries worldwide, Malaysia has been hit by sharp food inflation stemming from supply disruptions since the Covid-19 pandemic, which have been exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

This has forced the government into measures such as eliminating approved permits (APs) for most food imports and banning the export of chickens from next month to stabilise local supply and prices.

The **Department of Statistics** previously reported that food inflation was officially 4.1 per cent in April but consumers have reported double- or triple-digit inflation for many food items including some staple foods.

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