OneAfrica MARKETS

Start & Succeed in Commodities Reselling

A Practical Guide to Buying, Holding & Selling Staple Goods for Profit in Africa

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Introduction

Factors such as poor storage infrastructure, lack of cold chain systems, and inconsistent rural-urban supply linkages create frequent market inefficiencies. According to USAID-Ghana's agricultural market systems report, over 30% of post-harvest losses occur annually, further tightening supply during lean seasons and increasing commodity prices.

Commodities reselling remains one of the oldest and most effective ways to build wealth in Ghana, especially for individuals looking to leverage agriculture without becoming full-time farmers. With over 60% of Ghana's working population engaged in agriculture (GSS, 2022), food remains both a daily necessity and a strategic investment asset.

In Ghana, staple crops like maize, rice, beans, millet, sorghum, and groundnuts experience significant seasonal price fluctuations sometimes rising by 30% to 80% between harvest and scarcity periods. For instance, data from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) shows that the average wholesale price of maize increased by over 72% between October and March in some regions due to storage bottlenecks and rising urban demand.

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Individuals and small-scale investors who understand these cycles and can buy, store, and strategically sell during off-season periods are well-positioned to earn consistent profits. Whether it's buying sacks of maize in Techiman during harvest or sourcing rice in Tamale for Accra's markets in March, the opportunity is clear and repeatable.

What are staple commodities in Ghana?

In the Ghanaian context, staple commodities are essential food crops consumed daily across households, schools, markets, and institutions. They form the backbone of local diets and are traded in large volumes in both rural and urban areas.

Common staple commodities in Ghana

Commodity	How they are widely consumed with other use cases
Maize	Used for kenkey, banku, and porridge.
Rice	A household staple with growing demand, both locally produced and imported.
Beans (Cowpea)	Key protein source; widely used in waakye, gari and beans.
Millet & Sorghum	Popular in the northern regions for porridge and local brews like pito.
Cassava	Used for gari, fufu, and starch.
Groundnuts (Peanut)	Used in soups, snacks, and oil production.
Yam & Plantain	Household staple, snacks and exports

These commodities are grown across Ghana's major farming belts such as the Bono, Ashanti, Northern, and Upper East/West Regions, and play a vital role in both domestic food security and trading opportunities.

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The reselling of staple commodities offers a practical and accessible path to building wealth in Ghana. Here's why many traders and small investors are turning to it:

Year-Round Demand

Food is always in demand. Ghanaians spend over 35% of their household income on food (GSS, 2023).

Seasonal Price Gaps

Prices of staples like maize, rice, and groundnuts can increase by 30–80% between harvest and lean seasons.

Low Startup Barrier

You can begin with as little as GHS 500–1,000, purchasing a few bags of maize or gari during harvest.

Economic Resilience

Even during inflationary periods, food commodities remain in demand and often serve as a hedge against currency fluctuations.

Reselling staple goods isn't just a rural hustle it's a high-demand, high-turnover business model grounded in everyday economics.

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Timing is everything in the commodity market. Here's how the cycle typically works in Ghana

Harvest Season(Oct-Jan)

Prices drop due to surplus. **This is the best time to buy in bulk.**

Seasonal Price Gaps(March-July

Prices begin to rise due to reduced supply and higher demand. **This is the best time to sell.**

Rainy Season Effects(April-June)

Transport difficulties and post-harvest losses further tighten supply, driving up prices especially for grains and root crops.

Example

In Techiman (a major food market hub), a 100kg bag of maize that sells for GHS 250 during harvest can rise to GHS 420 or more during scarcity

Useful tips

Buy low during harvest (Oct-Dec for maize), store properly in hermetic bags or warehouses, then sell high during scarcity (Mar-Jun) to retailers and exporters. This seasonal strategy leverages predictable price swings in African commodity markets for reliable profits.

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The Traders Playbook

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Phase 1

Best sources

- Farmer cooperatives (15-20% below market)
- Rural collection centers (avoid middlemen)

Phase 2

Storage option	Cost	Duration	Best for
Hermetic bags	15/bag	12 Months	Small starters
Shared warehouse	500/month	24+ Months	10+ tons

Critical checks

Use moisture meters to keep grain below 14%, phosphine tablets to control weevils, and insure against fire and floods.

Phase 3

Strategic Selling (Time the Peak)

- Food processors (30% markup)
- UN/WFP contracts (bulk tenders)
- Export corridors (Côte d'Ivoire → Mali routes)

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"It won't rain next year" → Always hedge with drought-resistant crops (cassava)

"My cousin will guard the store" → Professional warehouses only

"Prices must rise by Christmas" → Fix 70% at target price, gamble 30%

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About us

Over the past 12 years, One Africa Markets has grown into a leading force in the financial services industry, marked by consistent innovation, strategic execution, and measurable impact. We have surpassed key milestones including over $14 billion transaction volumes across the diverse markets we operate in, from Accra and Lagos to London and beyond. Today, One Africa Markets stands as a global leader in payments, fixed income, commodities, data, technology, and financial talent. We serve as a vital bridge connecting the world to Africa and Africa to the world by creating seamless pathways for trade, investment, and sustainable economic growth across the continent.

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teams across our global offices

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global client coverage

100+
global banking partnerships

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