



INTERNATIONAL COFFEE ORGANIZATION
ORGANIZACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DEL CAFÉ
ORGANIZAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL DO CAFÉ
ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DU CAFÉ

E

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COFFEE MARKET REPORT

December 2008

Price levels in December confirmed the downward trend recorded in the coffee market since September 2008. The monthly average of the ICO composite indicator price was 103.07 US cents per lb compared to 107.88 US cents per lb in November, a further drop of 4.5%. This fall was most marked in the case of Robustas, whereas Colombian Milds managed to resist this downward pressure. The US dollar remained firm in relation to most major currencies, particularly those of some exporting countries, notably Brazil. This contributed to the rise in the costs of imported inputs and agricultural equipment needed by the coffee industry.

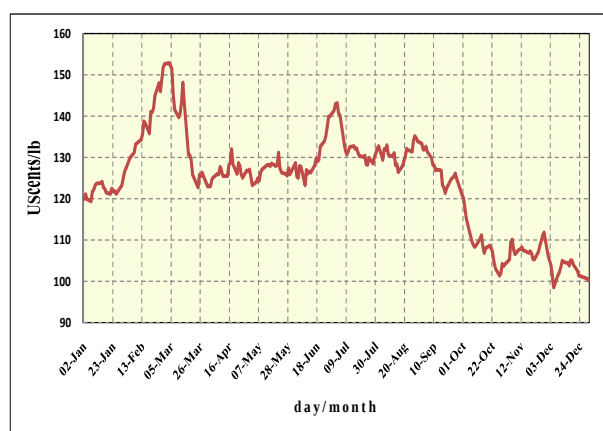
In regard to market fundamentals, it may be noted that new crop coffee from exporting countries whose crop year 2008/09 starts in October is beginning to arrive in greater quantities on the market. This crop year has witnessed increased production in a number of countries, notably Ethiopia, India and Vietnam. However, some important Latin American producers have been affected by adverse weather and their production is expected to decline. Preliminary forecasts for crop year 2009/10 indicate a relatively low level of production, mainly as a result of reduced output in Brazil. The first estimate released by CONAB, the government agency responsible for agricultural estimates in Brazil, indicates a production figure of between 36.9 and 38.8 million bags, comprising between 26.9 and 28.3 million bags of Arabicas and between 10 and 10.5 million bags of Robustas.

Exports by all exporting countries in November totalled 7.1 million bags, bringing the total for the first eleven months of calendar year 2008 (January – November 2008) to 87.7 million bags compared to 88.9 million bags for the same period in the previous year, a fall of 1.3%.

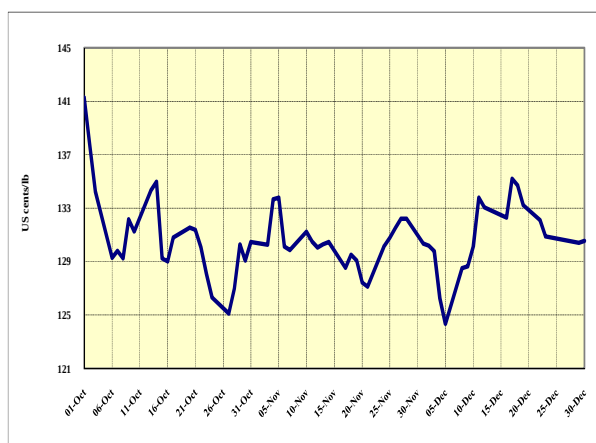
Price movements

The monthly average of the **ICO composite indicator price** fell further, down from 107.88 US cents per lb in November to 103.07 US cents per lb in December. The fall was much more marked in the case of Robustas, which fell by 9.1%, while Colombian Milds resisted the downward trend, recording a slight rise of 0.3% (Table 1). Graph 1 shows changes in the ICO daily composite indicator price in 2008¹. Graphs 2 to 5 show changes in daily indicator prices for the four groups of coffee since 1 October 2008.

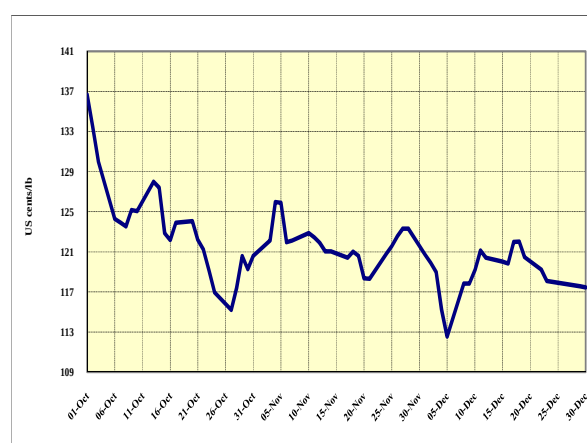
**Graph 1: Daily composite indicator price
2 January 2008 – 30 December 2008**



**Graph 2: Daily indicator prices
for Colombian Milds
1 October – 30 December 2008**



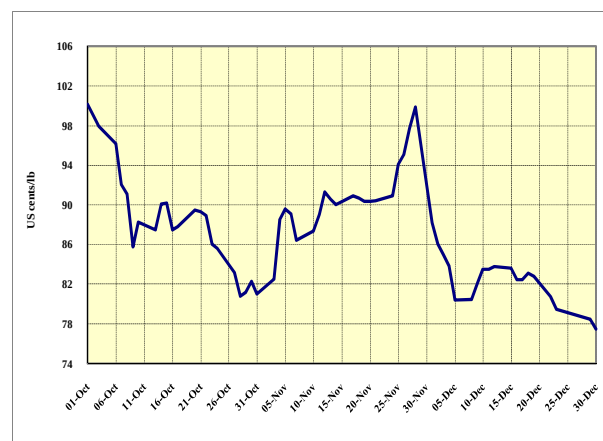
**Graph 3: Daily indicator prices
for Other Milds
1 October – 30 December 2008**



**Graph 4: Daily indicator prices
for Brazilian Naturals
1 October – 30 December 2008**



**Graph 5: Daily indicator prices
for Robustas
1 October – 30 December 2008**



¹ The price recorded on 12 January was 107.99 US cents per lb.

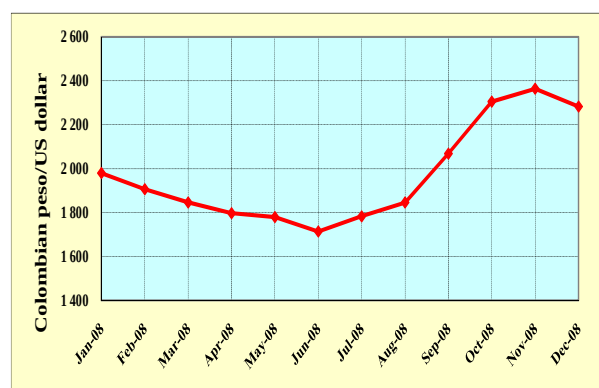
Table 1: ICO daily indicator prices and futures prices (US cents per lb): December 2008

	ICO composite	Colombian Milds	Other Milds	Brazilian Naturals	Robustas	New York*	London*
Dec-08							
01-Dec	106.09	130.35	120.72	105.89	88.21	114.83	79.15
02-Dec	104.92	130.20	119.92	105.15	86.04	113.20	78.11
03-Dec	104.02	129.78	118.97	104.20	85.02	112.53	77.56
04-Dec	101.39	126.26	115.24	101.01	83.85	107.45	73.53
05-Dec	98.53	124.35	112.56	98.23	80.44	104.50	73.01
08-Dec	101.41	128.53	117.85	102.23	80.45	110.80	74.84
09-Dec	102.03	128.64	117.85	102.29	82.13	111.15	75.18
10-Dec	103.46	130.13	119.17	103.80	83.50	112.35	76.07
11-Dec	104.95	133.80	121.13	105.65	83.54	113.92	76.79
12-Dec	104.62	133.07	120.41	105.06	83.81	113.38	76.36
15-Dec	104.38	132.48	120.03	105.00	83.64	111.73	75.89
16-Dec	103.76	132.29	119.82	104.55	82.46	112.25	75.50
17-Dec	105.06	135.20	121.99	105.99	82.49	113.45	75.98
18-Dec	105.07	134.70	122.01	105.55	83.12	113.65	76.23
19-Dec	103.99	133.22	120.47	104.09	82.78	114.40	74.21
22-Dec	102.49	132.10	119.22	102.86	80.76	111.85	73.05
23-Dec	101.33	130.88	118.10	101.84	79.48	110.93	71.92
24-Dec						111.40	72.14
26-Dec						111.75	Holiday
29-Dec	100.64	130.40	117.56	101.27	78.51	110.07	71.17
30-Dec	100.22	130.55	117.45	101.05	77.49	110.95	71.60
31-Dec						115.40	70.58
2007							
December	118.16	140.12	137.58	125.93	91.39	135.08	84.62
2008							
January	122.33	142.66	139.86	127.93	99.21	138.52	91.70
February	138.82	159.90	157.29	143.78	115.45	155.83	108.17
March	136.17	151.64	149.89	136.41	121.92	146.75	113.77
April	126.55	142.04	140.70	127.67	111.29	136.23	103.48
May	126.76	143.60	141.95	129.52	108.88	137.03	100.89
June	130.51	149.15	146.15	133.65	111.34	143.59	102.98
July	132.78	151.18	147.36	134.80	115.23	144.31	106.49
August	131.14	151.03	146.43	133.28	112.56	144.26	103.85
September	126.69	148.36	143.27	130.26	105.38	140.72	97.50
October	108.31	130.99	123.59	110.27	88.77	121.11	81.49
November	107.88	130.45	121.89	107.96	90.76	117.23	81.07
December	103.07	130.89	118.97	103.46	82.51	111.91	74.71
annual averages							
2003	51.91	65.33	64.20	50.31	36.95	65.24	34.11
2004	62.15	81.44	80.47	68.97	35.99	79.53	32.85
2005	89.36	115.73	114.86	102.29	50.55	111.38	46.80
2006	95.75	116.80	114.40	103.92	67.55	112.30	59.77
2007	107.68	125.57	123.55	111.79	86.60	121.83	78.56
2008	124.25	144.32	139.78	126.59	105.28	136.46	97.18
% change between Dec-08 and Nov-08	-4.46	0.34	-2.40	-4.17	-9.09	-4.54	-7.85
% change between Dec-08 and Dec-07	-12.77	-6.59	-13.53	-17.84	-9.72	-17.15	-11.71
% change between Dec-08 and 2007 average	-4.28	4.24	-3.71	-7.45	-4.72	-8.14	-4.90
volatility (%)							
Jan-08	0.86	0.99	1.01	1.02	0.96	1.41	0.98
Feb-08	1.34	1.15	1.15	1.26	1.86	1.51	1.88
Mar-08	2.66	2.68	2.74	2.81	3.23	3.02	3.37
Apr-08	1.39	1.57	1.54	1.58	1.44	2.02	1.77
May-08	1.15	1.29	1.32	1.23	1.54	2.01	1.54
Jun-08	1.58	1.69	1.69	1.68	1.58	2.02	1.78
Jul-08	1.32	1.21	1.22	1.25	1.71	1.75	1.90
Aug-08	1.31	1.27	1.31	1.30	1.79	1.64	1.82
Sep-08	1.08	1.21	1.22	1.20	1.24	2.04	1.56
Oct-08	1.48	1.86	1.86	2.05	2.20	2.15	2.47
Nov-08	1.35	1.23	1.30	1.35	2.15	1.78	2.48
Dec-08	1.43	1.51	1.71	1.65	1.51	2.22	1.62

*Average of the 2nd and 3rd positions

The US dollar continued to appreciate against the currencies of exporting countries, with the exception of Colombia, where the rate fell by 3.4% in December compared with November (Graph 6). In the case of the Brazilian *real*, the US dollar strengthened even further during December, with the exchange rate up from 2.27 in November to 2.42 in December (Graph 7). The opposite movement has been occurring, however, since the beginning of 2009, with the US dollar trading between 2.19 and 2.28 *reais* in early January.

Graph 6: Exchange rate
Colombian peso per US dollar
Calendar year 2008



Graph 7: Exchange rate
Real per US dollar
Calendar year 2008

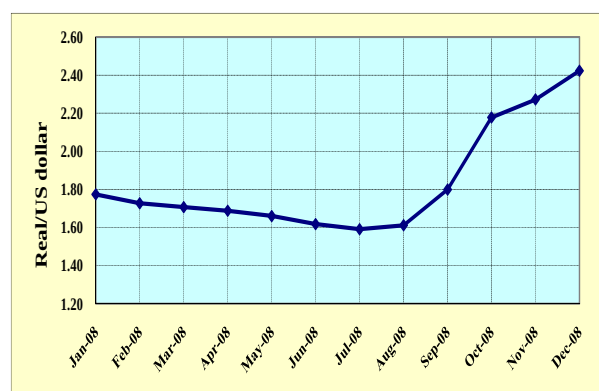


Table 2: Production in selected exporting countries

Crop year commencing	2005	2006	2007	2008	% change 2008 & 2007
TOTAL	109 630	126 820	116 212	134 163	15.45
Africa	13 044	15 233	14 605	17 634	20.74
Cameroon	849	836	602	800	32.92
Côte d'Ivoire	1 962	2 847	2 150	2 500	16.30
Ethiopia	4 003	4 636	4 906	6 133	25.02
Kenya	660	826	652	950	45.68
Tanzania	804	822	810	917	13.20
Uganda	2 159	2 700	3 250	3 500	7.69
Others	2 607	2 565	2 236	2 834	26.74
Arabicas	6 556	7 415	7 386	9 626	30.32
Robustas	6 488	7 818	7 219	8 008	10.93
Asia&Oceania	29 715	33 581	29 626	33 793	14.06
India	4 396	5 079	4 148	4 883	17.72
Indonesia	8 659	6 650	6 371	6 250	-1.90
Papua New Guinea	1 268	807	968	850	-12.16
Thailand	999	766	653	825	26.26
Vietnam	13 542	19 340	16 467	19 500	18.42
Others	851	939	1 019	1 485	45.74
Arabicas	3 893	3 460	3 318	3 566	7.45
Robustas	25 821	30 121	26 308	30 227	14.90
Mexico & Central America	17 118	16 936	18 270	18 313	0.24
Costa Rica	1 778	1 580	1 784	1 867	4.64
El Salvador	1 502	1 371	1 626	1 448	-10.96
Guatemala	3 676	3 950	4 100	3 900	-4.87
Honduras	3 204	3 461	3 842	3 833	-0.22
Mexico	4 225	4 200	4 150	4 500	8.42
Nicaragua	1 718	1 300	1 700	1 600	-5.88
Others	1 016	1 073	1 068	1 165	9.10
Arabicas	16 982	16 801	18 146	18 169	0.13
Robustas	136	135	124	144	15.99
South America	49 753	61 071	53 711	64 423	19.94
Brazil	32 944	42 512	36 070	45 992	27.51
Colombia	12 329	12 153	12 515	12 300	-1.71
Ecuador	1 120	1 167	1 110	640	-42.36
Peru	2 419	4 249	2 953	4 450	50.70
Others	941	990	1 063	1 041	-2.11
Arabicas	40 091	51 262	42 457	53 556	26.14
Robustas	9 662	9 808	11 255	10 867	-3.44
TOTAL	109 630	126 820	116 212	134 163	15.45
Colombian Milds	13 487	13 488	13 685	13 837	1.11
Other Milds	25 206	26 974	26 843	29 365	9.39
Brazilian Naturals	28 829	38 476	30 778	41 715	35.53
Robustas	42 107	47 882	44 906	49 247	9.67
Arabicas	67 523	78 938	71 307	84 916	19.09
Robustas	42 107	47 882	44 906	49 247	9.67
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
Colombian Milds	12.30	10.64	11.78	10.31	
Other Milds	22.99	21.27	23.10	21.89	
Brazilian Naturals	26.30	30.34	26.48	31.09	
Robustas	38.41	37.76	38.64	36.71	
Arabicas	61.59	62.24	61.36	63.29	
Robustas	38.41	37.76	38.64	36.71	

In thousand bags

Market fundamentals

Crop year 2008/09 is under way in all exporting countries. On the basis of available information, total production for the crop year is estimated at 134.2 million bags compared to 116.2 million bags in the previous season (Table 2).

Heavy rains in Colombia and Central America appear to have reduced the production potential of this area and may necessitate a further downward revision, in the order of 300,000 to 500,000 bags.

The Brazilian authorities have just published the first estimate of Brazilian production for crop year 2009/10 which is due to begin in April. Anticipated production will be between 36.9 and 38.8 million bags, comprising some 26.9 to 28.3 million bags of Arabicas and around 10 to 10.5 million bags of Robustas. As expected, this level of production, which corresponds to that for the low production year in the biennial cycle, is likely to be between 16 to 20% below the 2008/09 level.

Exports in November 2008 totalled 7.1 million bags, bringing the total volume exported during the first eleven months of calendar year 2008 to 87.7 million bags compared with 88.9 million bags for the same period in 2007, a fall of 1.3% (Table 3).

Table 3: Total exports of all forms of coffee (January – November 2007 and 2008)

Country of origin	2007	2008	% change
TOTAL	88 855	87 671	-1.33
<i>Colombian Milds</i>	<i>11 269</i>	<i>11 116</i>	<i>-1.36</i>
<i>Other Milds</i>	<i>19 591</i>	<i>20 941</i>	<i>6.89</i>
<i>Brazilian Naturals</i>	<i>26 475</i>	<i>25 949</i>	<i>-1.99</i>
<i>Robustas</i>	<i>31 520</i>	<i>29 664</i>	<i>-5.89</i>
Arabicas	57 335	58 007	1.17
Robustas	31 520	29 664	-5.89

In thousand bags

Table 4 shows the volume and total value of exports.

Table 4: Volume and value of annual exports (Calendar years 2004 – 2007)

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Colombian Milds				
- Volume	11.39	12.04	12.01	12.69
- Value	1.22	1.79	1.87	2.12
Other Milds				
- Volume	21.09	18.63	21.33	20.93
- Value	2.05	2.55	3.02	3.20
Brazilian Naturals				
- Volume	27.31	26.52	28.51	28.74
- Value	2.16	3.13	3.59	4.07
Robustas				
- Volume	31.29	30.41	30.37	34.01
- Value	1.48	1.82	2.38	3.35
Total				
- Volume	91.07	87.60	92.21	96.37
- Value	6.91	9.29	10.85	12.74

Volume in million bags – Value in billion US\$

Preliminary information on **world consumption** in calendar year 2008 indicates a level of at least 128 million bags compared to around 125 million bags in 2007 (Table 5). Although it is still too early to gauge the effects on consumption of the current financial crisis, early signs give some ground for optimism. Reported sales of food retailers have not shown the decline experienced in turnover of other products, such as clothing and consumer durable goods. World consumption has been growing steadily since 2000 at an average annual rate above 2.5%. If this rate of growth continues world consumption could exceed 132 million bags in 2009 and 134 million bags in 2010.

**Table 5: World consumption
(Calendar years 2003 – 2007)**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007*
WORLD TOTAL	112 919	118 437	118 389	121 424	125 028
Producing Countries	28 374	29 498	30 442	31 653	33 181
Brazil	14 088	14 763	15 363	16 100	16 900
Mexico	1 500	1 500	1 556	1 794	2 050
Indonesia	1 958	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000
Ethiopia	1 833	1 833	1 833	1 833	1 833
Colombia	1 400	1 400	1 400	1 400	1 400
India	1 142	1 188	1 272	1 337	1 360
Philippines	873	917	917	917	989
Vietnam	500	500	500	604	938
Venezuela	693	700	703	723	760
Others	4 389	4 698	4 899	4 945	4 952
Importing Countries	84 544	88 939	87 947	89 771	91 847
European Community	39 738	41 193	39 276	40 941	40 571
Germany	9 499	10 445	8 665	9 151	8 627
Italy	5 507	5 469	5 552	5 593	5 799
France	5 394	4 929	4 787	5 278	5 621
Spain	2 740	2 705	3 007	3 017	3 198
United Kingdom	2 236	2 458	2 680	3 059	2 824
Netherlands	1 743	1 978	1 927	2 129	2 292
Poland	2 242	2 281	2 267	1 953	1 531
Sweden	1 178	1 234	1 170	1 315	1 244
Belgium	1 579	1 396	1 158	1 537	1 103
Finland	966	1 034	1 102	1 047	1 057
Greece	929	871	870	857	1 015
Others	5 725	6 392	6 091	6 007	6 260
USA	20 193	20 973	20 998	20 667	21 033
Japan	6 770	7 117	7 128	7 268	7 282
Other Importing Countries	17 844	19 656	20 545	20 894	22 960
Russian Federation	3 582	3 086	3 212	3 263	4 055
Canada	2 146	2 747	2 794	3 098	3 535
Algeria	1 752	2 159	1 892	1 836	1 968
Korea, Republic of	1 305	1 401	1 394	1 437	1 425
Ukraine	647	739	1 025	968	1 057
Australia	873	864	1 039	992	1 031
Others	7 538	8 660	9 189	9 300	9 890

* Preliminary

In thousand bags

Tables 6 and 7 show per capita consumption in selected exporting and importing countries. Table 8 shows retail prices in selected importing countries in the month of June (2006 to 2008). These price changes show increases greater than 15% in almost all markets, as a result of the rise in green coffee prices during that period, and do not take into account price behaviour since the beginning of the financial crisis in September.

**Table 6: Per capita consumption in
selected exporting countries
(Calendar years 2003 – 2007)**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Brazil	4.65	4.81	4.93	5.10	5.29
Costa Rica	3.40	4.17	5.04	4.77	4.18
Honduras	1.83	1.86	2.02	1.98	2.43
Dominican Republic	2.22	2.31	2.39	2.36	2.32
Haiti	2.27	2.23	2.19	2.16	2.13
Nicaragua	2.10	2.12	2.09	2.06	2.04
El Salvador	1.42	1.44	1.62	1.85	1.96
Colombia	1.92	1.90	1.87	1.84	1.82
Venezuela	1.61	1.60	1.58	1.59	1.65
Madagascar	1.03	1.43	1.50	1.46	1.42
Guatemala	1.49	1.45	1.42	1.38	1.35
Ethiopia	1.47	1.43	1.39	1.36	1.32
Panama	1.29	1.26	1.24	1.22	1.20
Cuba	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
Mexico	0.88	0.87	0.90	1.02	1.15
Côte d'Ivoire	1.06	1.04	1.02	1.00	0.99
Ecuador	0.70	0.70	0.69	0.68	0.67
Philippines	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.64	0.67
Vietnam	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.42	0.64
Indonesia	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.52	0.52

In kilogrammes

Table 7: Per capita consumption in selected importing countries (Calendar years 2003 – 2007)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Algeria	3.30	4.00	3.46	3.30	3.49
Australia	2.64	2.58	3.07	2.90	2.98
Canada	4.07	5.16	5.20	5.71	6.45
European Community	4.89	5.06	4.81	5.00	4.94
Austria	5.26	7.24	5.59	4.41	6.08
Belgium	9.18	8.09	6.68	8.84	6.33
Bulgaria	3.04	2.81	3.33	3.28	2.86
Cyprus	3.89	4.32	4.97	3.92	4.89
Czech Republic	3.66	3.56	3.87	3.72	4.00
Denmark	8.06	9.43	8.80	9.09	8.75
Estonia	5.08	5.71	6.48	7.48	4.53
Finland	11.10	11.87	12.60	11.94	12.01
France	5.37	4.88	4.71	5.16	5.47
Germany	6.90	7.58	6.29	6.64	6.27
Greece	5.04	4.72	4.70	4.62	5.46
Hungary	3.82	4.20	3.39	3.57	3.12
Ireland	2.27	3.31	3.23	2.88	3.41
Italy	5.67	5.61	5.68	5.71	5.91
Latvia	4.08	4.01	3.76	4.74	3.44
Lithuania	3.01	3.44	3.38	3.76	4.07
Luxembourg	12.07	15.67	11.66	13.49	16.65
Malta	1.58	2.33	2.44	4.32	2.33
Netherlands	6.46	7.30	7.08	7.80	8.38
Poland	3.51	3.58	3.56	3.07	2.41
Portugal	3.79	3.93	3.74	3.85	4.28
Romania	2.08	2.26	2.38	2.33	2.30
Slovakia	3.18	3.15	3.26	3.13	3.97
Slovenia	5.02	5.55	5.44	5.27	5.85
Spain	3.91	3.79	4.16	4.12	4.33
Sweden	7.89	8.22	7.76	8.69	8.19
United Kingdom	2.25	2.46	2.67	3.03	2.79
Japan	3.18	3.34	3.34	3.41	3.41
Korea, Republic of	1.65	1.76	1.75	1.79	1.77
Norway	8.95	9.23	9.61	9.27	9.85
Russian Federation	1.48	1.28	1.34	1.37	1.71
Switzerland	6.95	5.86	8.89	7.51	7.93
Ukraine	0.82	0.94	1.31	1.25	1.37
USA	4.12	4.24	4.20	4.09	4.13

In kilogrammes

Table 8: Retail price of roasted coffee in selected importing countries

	June			% change
	2006	2007	2008	2008-2007
European Community				
Austria	422.27	428.46	499.45	16.57
Belgium	441.20	484.45	584.80	20.72
Cyprus	539.40	562.96	652.53	15.91
Denmark	448.67	471.08	580.47	23.22
Finland	293.75	318.91	395.05	23.87
France	300.64	333.52	403.51	20.99
Germany	440.63	467.41	544.59	16.51
Italy	633.40	686.51	831.70	21.15
Latvia	437.22	470.91	644.26	36.81
Luxembourg	647.17	654.86	809.84	23.67
Malta 1/	1 111.10	1 185.21	1 395.36	17.73
Netherlands	399.32	435.76		
Poland	268.90	330.31	490.94	48.63
Portugal	476.77	498.45	610.20	22.42
Slovakia	302.46	375.87	557.23	48.25
Slovenia	397.06	447.93	548.83	22.52
Spain	341.94	374.90	451.48	20.43
Sweden	319.09	345.13	411.95	19.36
United Kingdom 1/	1 530.39	1 783.40	1 719.25	-3.60
Japan	798.04	750.20	906.35	20.81
Norway	416.40	397.97	555.61	39.61
Switzerland				
USA	315.80	340.70		

In US cents per lb

1/ Soluble coffee

In conclusion, it should be noted that coffee prices continued to fall during December, reinforcing the downward trend recorded since September. This decline is linked more to movements in the exchange rates of the US dollar than to market fundamentals. Moreover, it is still too soon to confirm the impact of the current world economic crisis on coffee consumption. Since the balance between supply and demand is relatively stable, the behaviour of prices will very much depend on the flow of exports in 2009. For crop year 2009/10, the preliminary crop forecast from Brazil implies a shortfall of at least five million bags in world supply for that period. A more accurate picture will become available once production estimates for other countries are published over the next few months.