PNA Purse Seine Monthly Update

May 2025

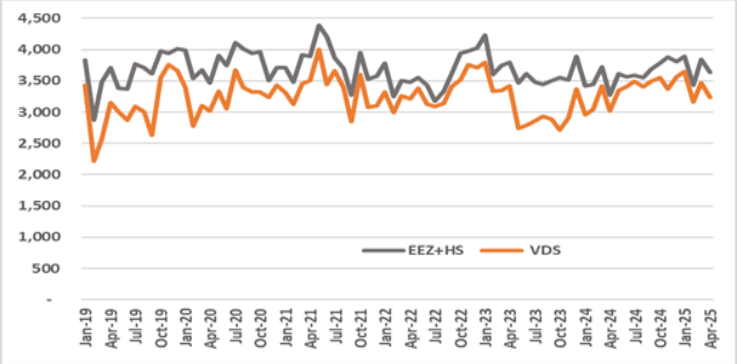
Key trends:

- Based on preliminary figures (and revised data), April saw declines in overall purse seine fishing effort and total catch, including overall catch rate. Fleet concentration remained heaviest in the east.
- Overall effort dropped 5% to 3,635 days in Apr with highest concentration in KI and PG accounting for 61%. Overall fishing intensity in EEZs decreased by 3% while intensity in HS increased slightly by 1%. Preliminary data in May showed similar concentration as in Apr being heaviest in PG and KI, while seeing some shift to FM and HS.
- The overall average daily catch rate in Apr was 26t with highest rates in NR and HS, both at 36t. Catch rate for SKJ declined to 20t but early May data pointed to an increased catch rate of 21t.
- The Apr overall catches decreased by 20% to 95,055t mainly due to the low SKJ catch component. On the other hand, large BET catch rates increased, while large YFT, small BET, and small YFT catch rates dropped. KI and PG accounted for 55% of total catch.
- Reported total transhipped volume increased to about 70,701t with most transhipping through PG and MH. These accounted for 69% of total.
- Bangkok SKJ prices in Apr as reported by Thai Union decreased to $1,550/mt while the Singapore MGO price decreased by 4% to an average $637/mt. The SKJ and MGO price differential decreased.
- ENSO-neutral oceanographic conditions are favored through the Northern Hemisphere summer 2025 (74% chance during June-August), with chances exceeding 50% through August-October 2025.

Overall Fishing effort (Days)

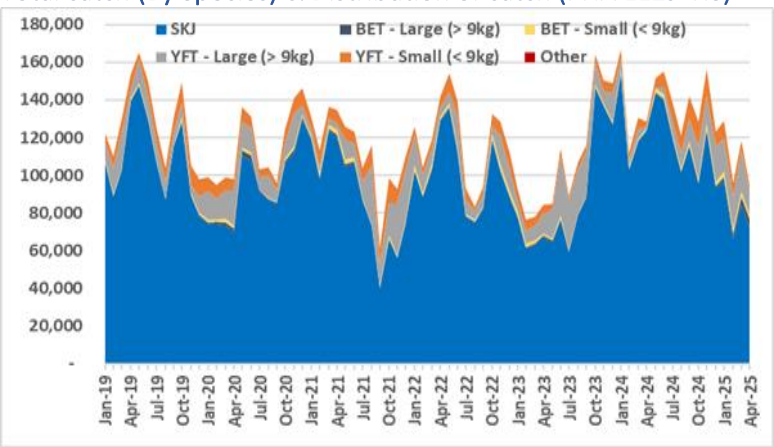
Overall Effort & Distribution of Effort (PNA EEZs+HS)

- The Apr overall fishing effort (EEZ+HS) decreased 5% to 3,635 days from Mar and 11% higher than last year. Overall fishing intensity in EEZs decreased by 3% while intensity in HS increased slightly by 1%. Apr VDS usage at 3,242 was 6% lower than in Mar, +7% y-o-y, +9% y-t-d and +20% against Apr average since 2020.
- Effort concentration was highest in KI at 37% (25% of total in Mar) and PG, 24% (29%). Effort shares increased in KI, HS 11% (10%), TK 0.16% (0.06%), and PW 0.11% (0.07%). Effort shares declined for PG, FM 8% (11%), NR 7% (9%), SB 6% (8%) and TV 2% (4%), while MH stayed steady at 5%. In the first half of May, effort concentrated in PG (30%), KI (28%), HS (17%), and FM (12%).



Catch (mt)

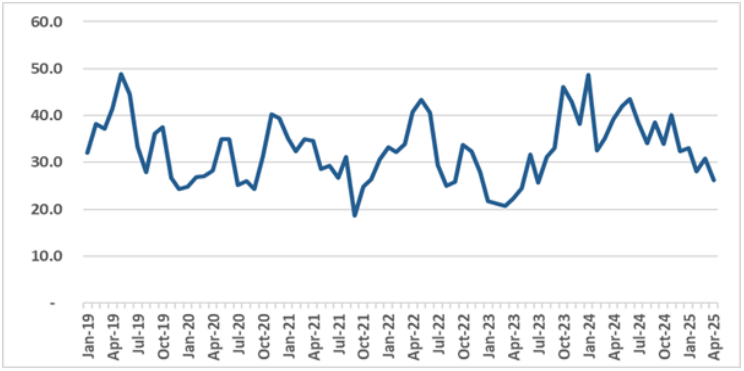
Total catch (By Species) & Distribution of catch (PNA EEZs+HS)



- Total catch (EEZ+HS) in Apr dropped by 20% (118,171t in Mar) to 95,055t. SKJ declined by 15% (26%) to 71,777t. Large BET increased 10% to 5,127t. Large YFT, small YFT and small BET dropped, -42% to 12,569t, -35% to 3,353t, and -11% to 2,212t, respectively. The Apr '25 total catch was -26% y-o-y, -18% y-t-d and -19% against Apr average since 2020.
- Catches were highest in KI, 31% of total (26% in Mar), PG 24% (25%), and HS 15% (8%). Catch shares increased for KI and HS. Catch shares dropped for PG, FM 7% (9%), NR 10% (13%), SB 7% (9%), MH 5% (7%), TV 0.76% (2%), and TK 0.03% (0.05%). There were no reported catches for PW.

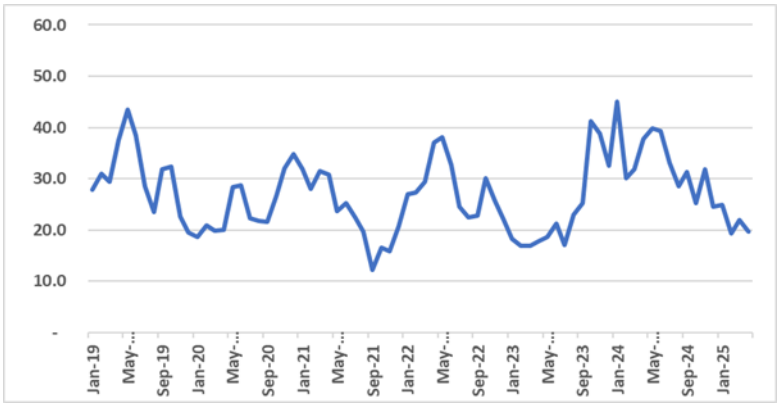
Catch rates (mt per day)

Overall Catch Rates & Catch Rates by Zone (PNA EEZs+HS)



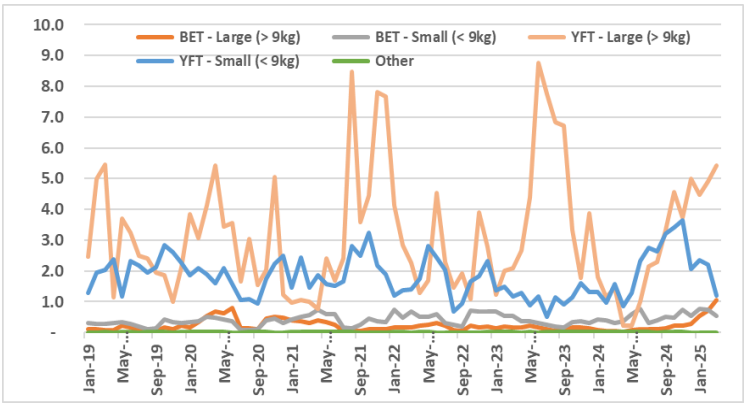
- Overall catch rate in Apr decreased to 26t from Mar when it dropped by 15%. The Apr catch rate comparisons were -33% y-o-y, -24% y-t-d and -21% on Apr average in the last 5 years. In the first half of May, total daily catch averaged 26t or 2% below the Apr catch rate.
- The catch rates were highest in NR at 36t (-18% on Mar) and HS at 36t (48%). All EEZs registered significant decreases especially that of NR, SB to 30t (-19%), PG to 27t (-2%) MH to 24t (-43%), FM to 25t (-7%), KI to 22t (-31%), TV to 10t (-45%) and TK to 4t (-83%). The only increase seen was that of the HS.

Skipjack



- SKJ catch rate in Apr was 20t, -10% compared to Mar, -48% compared to the same month last year, -41% comparing the year to date and -31% against the Apr average over the 2020-2025 period. SKJ catch rate for the first half of May at 21t is an increase of 9% on Apr.

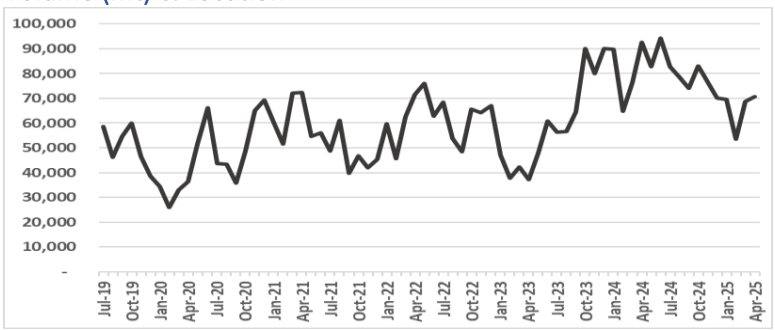
Other species



- The Apr catch rate for large BET was 1.4t, an increase of 16%. The catch rates for large YFT, small BET and small YFT were 3.5t, 0.6 and 1t, a decrease of 39%, 6% and 31%, respectively. Early data for May showed decreases of 32% for large BET, 45% for small BET, 38% for large YFT, and 19% for small YFT.

Reported Transhipment

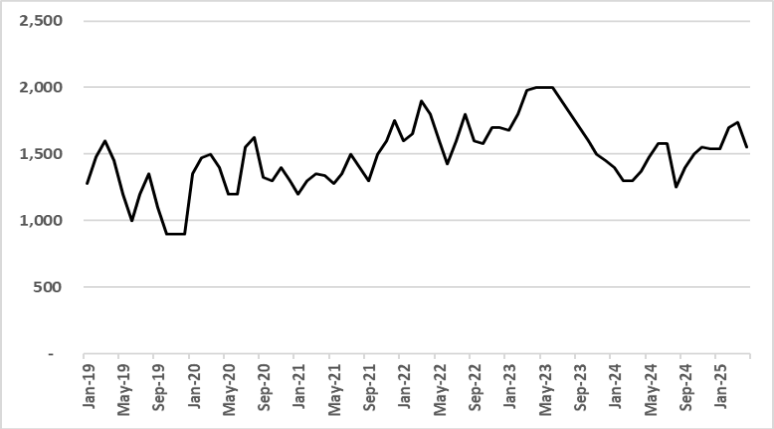
Volume (mt) & Location



- Reported transhipped volumes in PNA ports in Apr was 70,701t, an increase of 3% (68,666t) against Mar. A total of 107 transfers to carriers were reported, as against 102 in Mar, up 5%. Note that transhipment volumes for some vessels are not available.
- Transhipped volumes were highest in PG accounting for 40% (48% of total in Mar), MH 29% (13%), and KI 22% (22%). FM accounted for 8% (16%), SB 1% (1%), and TV 1% (0%).

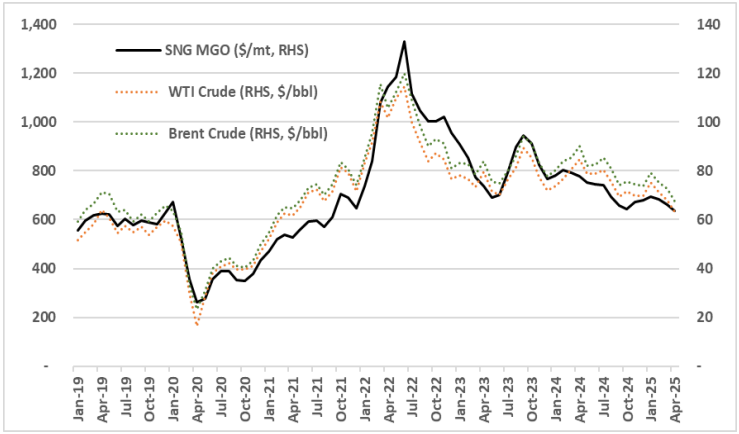
Prices

SKJ Price (US$/mt)



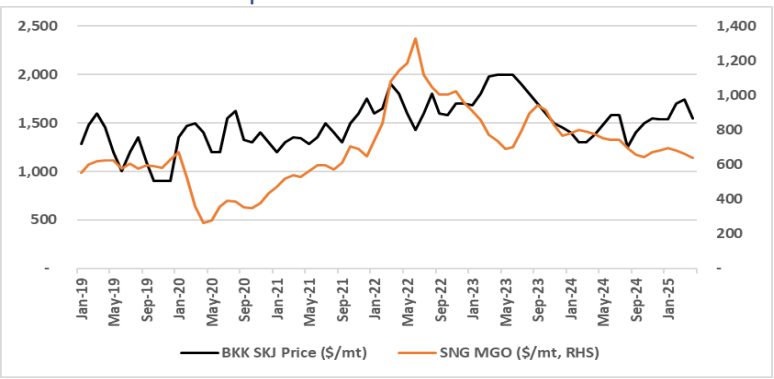
- Bangkok SKJ prices as reported by Thai Union dropped by 11% to $1,550/mt during Apr[i]. Reportedly, many factors are putting pressure on the skipjack price, one being the US tariff causing a low demand from Thai canners given end buyers are holding back on their orders, especially in the US market[ii].

Fuel price



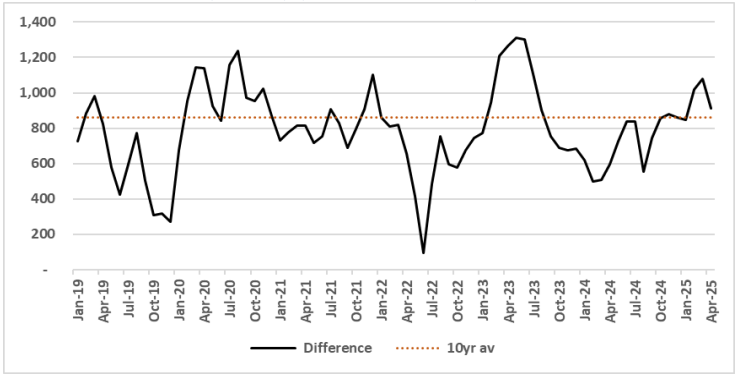
- SGP MGO[iii] average price slid slightly, dropping 4% to $637/mt. As of 23 May '25, SGP MGO stood at US$603/mt, a 5% decrease on Apr average. The WTI benchmark and Brent benchmark[iv] both decreased by 7%. Reportedly this drop in prices from the previous month is due to demand for oil being expected to stagnate in the coming months[v].

BKK SKJ Price vs Fuel price



- In Apr the SGP MGO price decreased marginally, while the BKK SKJ price dropped. As a result, the price differential decreased, with the decline in SKJ price outpacing the change in SGP MGO price.

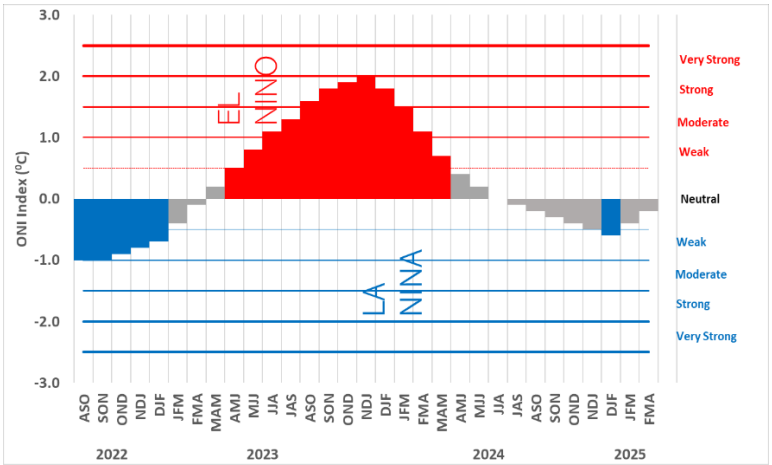
Price differential (US$/t) (BKK SKJ – Fuel)



- The Apr differential between BKK SKJ price and SGP MGO decreased to $913 from $1,079 in Mar, and surpassed the long-term average of $862/t.

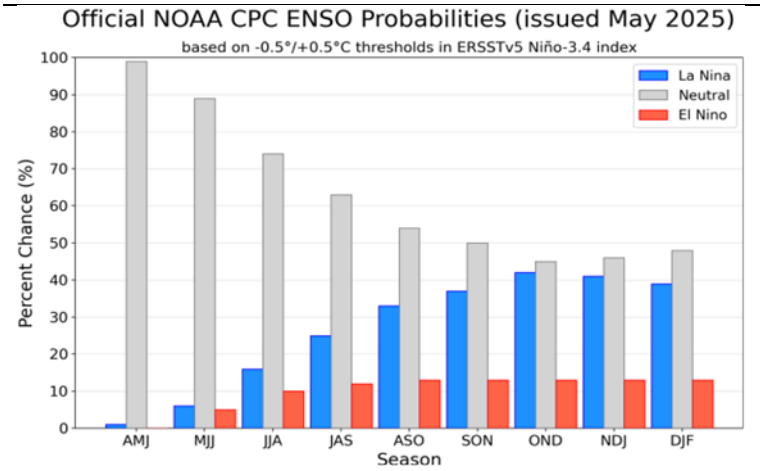
ENSO Data[vi]

NOAA ENSO Oceanic Nino Index (ONI)



- ENSO-neutral continued, with near-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) covering most of the equatorial Pacific Ocean. All the latest weekly Niño index values were near zero, ranging from -0.2°C to +0.1°C.

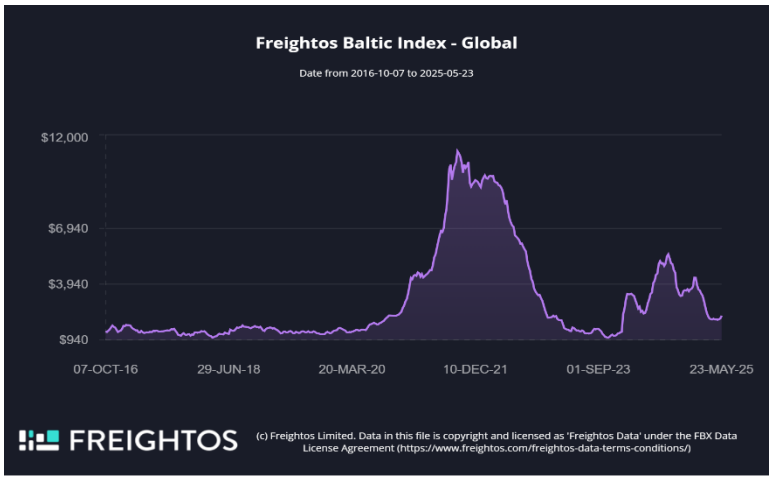
NOAA ENSO ONI Probabilities

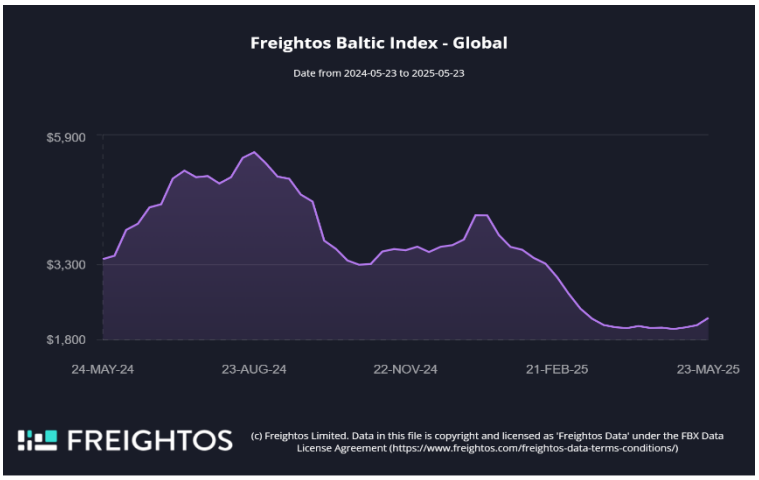


- ENSO-neutral is favored through the Northern Hemisphere summer 2025 (74% chance during June-August), with chances exceeding 50% through August-October 2025.

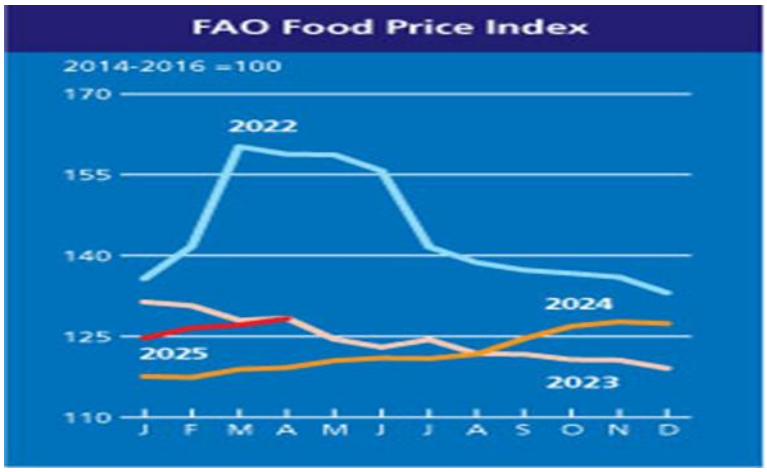
Other issues:

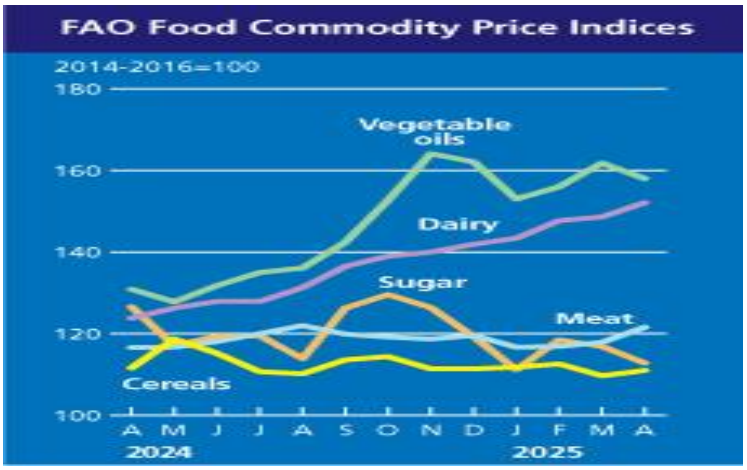
The FBX global container freight index for a 40ft container decreased 0.38% to $2,042 at the end of Apr from $2,050 at the end of Mar when it dropped from $2,718 at end of Feb. As of 23rd May, this has increased by 10% to $2,237 . The current FBX freight rate is 35% lower compared to a year ago.





The FAO Food Price Index* (FFPI) averaged 128.3 points in April 2025, up 1.2 points (1.0 percent) from March. Increases in the cereal, dairy and meat price indices outweighed decreases in those of sugar and vegetable oils. Overall, the FFPI was 9.0 points (7.6 percent) higher than its level a year ago but remained 31.9 points (19.9 percent) below its peak reached in March 2022[vii].





Notes:

- Data on catch, effort, catch rates and transhipment is based on electronic reporting through iFIMS as at 23rd May, 2025. Updates to previous monthly catch and effort data were made and some data therefore would have changed due to more information having been changed over time. Figures for April 2025 should be considered preliminary.
- The EEZs+HS effort figures in the fishing effort graph do not include a VDS vessel size adjustment factor. The actual VDS usage figures are adjusted for vessel size. HS days may include some non-fishing time. HS effort figures are those for the eastern high seas and HSPs 4 and 5.
- The Oceanic Nino Index (ONI) measures sea surface temperature (SST) departures from average with thresholds of +/- 0.5ºC and El Nino is characterised by a positive ONI >= +0.5ºC and La Nina by a negative ONI <= -0.5ºC. A full-fledged El Niño or La Niña episode must exceed these thresholds for a period of at least 5 consecutive overlapping 3-month seasons (NOAA).

[i] https://investor.thaiunion.com/raw_material.html
[ii] https://www.atuna.com/news/bangkok-price-softens-amid-global-trade-situation/
[iii] https://shipandbunker.com/prices/apac/sea/sg-sin-singapore#MGO
[iv] https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/commodity-markets
[v] https://www.statista.com/statistics/262861/uk-brent-crude-oil-monthly-price-development/#:~:text=In%20November%202024%2C%20the%20average,to%20this%20fall%20in%20prices
[vi] https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/ensodisc.pdf
[vii] https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/