



**Johannesburg | Durban | Cape Town | Springbok |
Pietermaritzburg**

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Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group [PMBEJD]

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About the Household Affordability Index

The Household Food Basket has been designed together with women living on low incomes in Johannesburg (Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow), Cape Town (Gugulethu, Philippi, Khayelitsha, Langa, Delft, Dunoon), Durban (KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, Hammarsdale, Pinetown), Pietermaritzburg, Mtubatuba (in Northern KwaZulu-Natal), and Springbok (in the Northern Cape). It includes the foods and the volumes of these foods which women living in a family of seven members (an average low-income household size) tell us they typically try and secure each month. The basket was designed through a pilot project which ran from April 2020 to August 2020. ***It cannot however be considered the basket for every family living on a low income in each area and for all areas covered. It is however considered a reasonable proxy for a food basket which women identified as including the most important typical foods which most households try and buy each month, given affordability constraints.*** The Household Food Basket is not nutritionally complete.

Food prices are tracked directly by women data collectors off the shelves of **47 supermarkets and 32 butcheries** that target the low-income market and which women identified as those they shop at in the areas where they live. Food selection at the supermarket shelves mirrors how women themselves make decisions at the supermarket shelves given affordability constraints viz. that the foods are chosen on relative affordability and reasonable quality, and supermarkets and food brands are switched to seek out the cheapest prices and special deals. The selection of supermarkets and food brands is dynamic and subjective. Women are smart and savvy shoppers, and shop around for bargains: this specific methodology used provides an accurate cost of a monthly household food basket, as purchased by women living on low incomes.

There are 44 foods in the Household Food Basket. The date for data collection is the first week of each month. Data is collected and released in the same month. Data is presented for each area, and it is also weighted and averaged for all 6 areas. *For more on methodology, see page 16-17.*

About the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group

The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group is a Civil Society initiative founded in July 2018. This initiative focusses on issues of economic justice, the low-wage regime and on the increasing household affordability and food price crisis, with its attendant nutritional deficiencies, health and developmental consequences, and the lack of imaginative policy and systemic responses to deal with this crisis.

The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice & Dignity Group envisions and work towards a society of solidarity, based on a politics of love and universality, and an economy which provides justice, equity, and dignity for all.

1. FEBRUARY 2024 Summary Data Reference Sheet

Summary of Household Affordability Data

National Minimum Wage Feb 2024 (21 working days)	
General workers at R25,42/hr	R4 270,56
General workers at 10% exemption at R22,88/hr	R3 843,50
Minimum underspend on food in Feb 2024	-54,3%

Cost of Household Food Basket in February 2024	
Cost of Joburg Household Food Basket	R5 357,53
Cost of Durban Household Food Basket	R5 262,95
Cost of Cape Town Household Food Basket	R5 111,05
Cost of Springbok Household Food Basket	R5 573,89
Cost of Maritzburg Household Food Basket	R5 124,04
Cost of Mtubatuba Household Food Basket	R5 388,22
Average cost of Household Food Basket (all areas).	R5 277,30
Month-on-month change	-R47,56 -0,9%
Year-on-year change	R348,96 7,1%

Cost of foods prioritised & bought first in Household Food Basket: year-on-year Feb 2023 to Feb 2024

Core foods	Feb 2023	Feb 2024
	cost	cost
Maize meal (30kg)	R 309,43	R 289,17
Rice (10kg)	R 134,06	R 170,01
Cake Flour (10kg)	R 122,42	R 129,25
White sugar (10kg)	R 179,75	R 208,13
Sugar beans (5kg)	R 171,53	R 204,13
Samp (5kg)	R 66,64	R 62,97
Cooking oil (5L)	R 178,88	R 155,52
Salt (1kg)	R 14,38	R 15,75
Potatoes (10kg)	R 89,56	R 112,61
Onions (10kg)	R 125,69	R 89,85
Frozen chicken pieces (10kg)	R 390,68	R 410,12
Curry powder (200g)	R 33,09	R 37,69
Stock cubes (24 cubes x2)	R 43,65	R 47,55
Soup (400g x2)	R 43,08	R 48,39
Tea (250g)	R 25,41	R 29,52
White bread (25 loaves)	R 408,73	R 422,11
Brown bread (25 loaves)	R 368,54	R 377,47
Subtotal of core foods	R2 705,53	R 2 810,24

Cost of Household Domestic and Personal Hygiene Products Basket in Feb 2024	R1 022,71
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Cost of a basic nutritious diet for a family per month	
Household size with 4 members	R3 680,83
Household size with 5 members	R4 652,14
Household size with 7 members	R6 430,76

Average cost of a basic nutritious diet for a child per month in February 2024

Small child aged 3-9 years	R826,99
Small child aged 10-13 years	R899,15
Girl child aged 14-18 years	R951,62
Boy child aged 14-18 years	R1 075,22
Average for all children	R938,25

In Feb 2024, the Child Support Grant (R510) is **33%** below the food poverty line (R760) & **46%** below the average cost to secure a basic nutritious diet for a child (R938,25).

Summary of Statistics South Africa's (and other) Economic and Social Data

All South Africans	
Population size	60,6 million
Unemployment rate	31,9%
Expanded unemployment rate	41,2%
Numbers of people unemployed	11,73 million
Numbers of people employed	16,75 million
Number of people one wage supports	3,6
Maximum NMW February 2024	R4 270,56
NMW shared in a family, per person	R1 186,27

Black South Africans	
Population size	49,1 million
Unemployment rate	36,0%
Expanded unemployment rate	45,7%
Numbers of people unemployed	10,68 million
Numbers of people employed	12,70 million
Number of people one wage supports	3,9
Maximum NMW February 2024	R4 270,56
NMW shared in a family, per person	R1 095,02

White South Africans	
Population size	4,6 million
Unemployment rate	7,6%
Expanded unemployment rate	9,6%
Numbers of people unemployed	186 000
Numbers of people employed	1,76 million
Number of people one wage supports	2,6
Maximum NMW February 2024	R4 270,56
NMW shared in a family, per person	R1 642,52

The maximum value of the National Minimum Wage [NMW]	R25,42/hour
Level of NMW at 10% exemption	R22,88/hour
The value of the Child Support Grant [CSG]	R510,00
The value of the Old-age Grant [OAG]	R2 090,00
The number of children receiving a CSG	13,07 million
The number of pensioners receiving an OAG	4 million
The upper-bound poverty line [UBPL]	R1 558,00
The lower-bound poverty line [LBPL]	R1 058,00
The food poverty line [FPL]	R760,00

% of people living below the UBPL (30,4m)	55,5%
% of people living below the FPL (13,8m)	25,2%
% of Black South Africans living below the UBPL (±29,9m)	64,2%

Stunting levels in boy children under 5 years	30%
Stunting levels in girl children under 5 years	25%

Estimated overall HIV prevalence rate among population in 2022 (8,45 million)	13,9%
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Any errors in data entry or calculations are our own. See reference page 18 for data references.
All efforts are made to source the latest available data.

2. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: All areas

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R309,43	R294,10	R289,17	-R 4,93	-R 20,26	-2%	-7%
Rice	10kg	R134,06	R172,64	R170,01	-R 2,63	R 35,95	-2%	27%
Cake Flour	10kg	R122,42	R127,41	R129,25	R 1,83	R 6,83	1%	6%
White sugar	10kg	R179,75	R207,68	R208,13	R 0,45	R 28,39	0%	16%
Sugar beans	5kg	R171,53	R196,43	R204,13	R 7,70	R 32,60	4%	19%
Samp	5kg	R66,64	R63,14	R62,97	-R 0,18	-R 3,67	0%	-6%
Cooking oil	5L	R178,88	R157,93	R155,52	-R 2,42	-R 23,36	-2%	-13%
Salt	1kg	R14,38	R16,29	R15,75	-R 0,53	R 1,37	-3%	10%
Potatoes	10kg	R89,56	R118,59	R112,61	-R 5,98	R 23,05	-5%	26%
Onions	10kg	R125,69	R90,91	R89,85	-R 1,07	-R 35,85	-1%	-29%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R390,68	R417,51	R410,12	-R 7,39	R 19,44	-2%	5%
Curry powder	200g	R33,09	R38,61	R37,69	-R 0,91	R 4,60	-2%	14%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R43,65	R51,00	R47,55	-R 3,45	R 3,90	-7%	9%
Soup	400g x2	R43,08	R50,90	R48,39	-R 2,51	R 5,31	-5%	12%
Tea	250g	R25,41	R30,12	R29,52	-R 0,60	R 4,11	-2%	16%
Full cream milk	6L	R86,11	R97,32	R98,58	R 1,25	R 12,47	1%	14%
Maas	4L	R52,96	R59,37	R59,36	R 0,00	R 6,40	0%	12%
Eggs	60 eggs	R118,52	R177,81	R164,14	-R 13,67	R 45,62	-8%	38%
Chicken feet	2kg	R78,53	R84,66	R79,49	-R 5,18	R 0,95	-6%	1%
Gizzards	2kg	R87,40	R91,57	R90,74	-R 0,83	R 3,34	-1%	4%
Chicken livers	2kg	R71,22	R83,51	R77,57	-R 5,94	R 6,35	-7%	9%
Beef liver	2kg	R100,33	R100,90	R103,38	R 2,48	R 3,05	2%	3%
Beef	2kg	R178,37	R193,09	R182,96	-R 10,12	R 4,59	-5%	3%
Wors	2kg	R135,49	R144,71	R147,09	R 2,38	R 11,60	2%	9%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R91,12	R92,03	R89,47	-R 2,56	-R 1,65	-3%	-2%
Fish	2kg	R111,03	R120,10	R115,96	-R 4,13	R 4,93	-3%	4%
Tomatoes	6kg	R121,93	R138,45	R126,28	-R 12,17	R 4,35	-9%	4%
Carrots	5kg	R36,67	R43,62	R44,52	R 0,91	R 7,86	2%	21%
Butternut	10kg	R86,86	R118,88	R104,12	-R 14,77	R 17,26	-12%	20%
Spinach	8 bunches	R111,93	R103,92	R115,06	R 11,13	R 3,13	11%	3%
Cabbage	2 heads	R40,62	R37,93	R36,83	-R 1,11	-R 3,79	-3%	-9%
Green pepper	2kg	R56,42	R68,30	R54,43	-R 13,87	-R 1,99	-20%	-4%
Cremora	800g	R43,02	R49,92	R50,93	R 1,00	R 7,90	2%	18%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R136,67	R145,41	R145,46	R 0,05	R 8,78	0%	6%
Canned beans	410g x6	R77,83	R88,94	R90,02	R 1,08	R 12,19	1%	16%
Bananas	4kg	R65,59	R79,94	R68,70	-R 11,25	R 3,10	-14%	5%
Apples	3kg	R46,83	R57,98	R52,74	-R 5,24	R 5,91	-9%	13%
Oranges	7kg	R83,14	R82,03	R145,58	R 63,55	R 62,44	77%	75%
Margarine	1kg	R40,17	R42,22	R41,91	-R 0,30	R 1,75	-1%	4%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R65,31	R77,38	R76,36	-R 1,02	R 11,05	-1%	17%
Polony	2.5kg	R65,46	R69,02	R66,89	-R 2,13	R 1,42	-3%	2%
Apricot jam	900g	R33,26	R38,29	R38,50	R 0,21	R 5,24	1%	16%
White bread	25 loaves	R408,73	R420,50	R422,11	R 1,61	R 13,39	0%	3%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R368,54	R383,80	R377,47	-R 6,34	R 8,93	-2%	2%
Total household food basket		R 4 928,34	R5 324,86	R5 277,30	-R 47,56	R 348,96	-0,9%	7,1%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **average household food basket decreased** by **R47,56 (-0,9%)** from R5 324,86 in January 2024 to R5 277,30 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **average household food basket increased** by **R348,96 (7,1%)** from R4 928,34 in February 2023 to R5 277,30 in February 2024.

3. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: All areas, by foods prioritised & bought first

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R309,43	R294,10	R289,17	-R 4,93	-R 20,26	-2%	-7%
Rice	10kg	R134,06	R172,64	R170,01	-R 2,63	R 35,95	-2%	27%
Cake Flour	10kg	R122,42	R127,41	R129,25	R 1,83	R 6,83	1%	6%
White sugar	10kg	R179,75	R207,68	R208,13	R 0,45	R 28,39	0%	16%
Sugar beans	5kg	R171,53	R196,43	R204,13	R 7,70	R 32,60	4%	19%
Samp	5kg	R66,64	R63,14	R62,97	-R 0,18	-R 3,67	0%	-6%
Cooking oil	5L	R178,88	R157,93	R155,52	-R 2,42	-R 23,36	-2%	-13%
Salt	1kg	R14,38	R16,29	R15,75	-R 0,53	R 1,37	-3%	10%
Potatoes	10kg	R89,56	R118,59	R112,61	-R 5,98	R 23,05	-5%	26%
Onions	10kg	R125,69	R90,91	R89,85	-R 1,07	-R 35,85	-1%	-29%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R390,68	R417,51	R410,12	-R 7,39	R 19,44	-2%	5%
Curry powder	200g	R33,09	R38,61	R37,69	-R 0,91	R 4,60	-2%	14%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R43,65	R51,00	R47,55	-R 3,45	R 3,90	-7%	9%
Soup	400g x2	R43,08	R50,90	R48,39	-R 2,51	R 5,31	-5%	12%
Tea	250g	R25,41	R30,12	R29,52	-R 0,60	R 4,11	-2%	16%
White bread	25 loaves	R408,73	R420,50	R422,11	R 1,61	R 13,39	0%	3%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R368,54	R383,80	R377,47	-R 6,34	R 8,93	-2%	2%
Total household food basket		R 2 705,53	R2 837,56	R2 810,24	-R 27,32	R 104,71	-1,0%	3,9%

Month-on-month: The **average cost of the foods prioritised and bought first** in the household food basket **decreased** by **R27,32 (-1,0%)** from R2 837,56 in January 2024 to R2 810,24 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The **average cost of the foods prioritised and bought first** in the household food basket **increased** by **R104,71 (3,9%)** from R2 705,53 in February 2023 to R2 810,24 in February 2024.

The cost of the foods prioritised and bought first in the Household Food Basket is important. The core foods are bought first and these foods ensure that families do not go hungry whilst ensuring that meals can be cooked. When the prices of core foods increase, there is less money to secure other important mostly nutritionally-rich foods, which are essential for health and well-being and strong immune systems (viz. meat, eggs and dairy which are critical for protein, iron and calcium; vegetables and fruit which are critical for vitamins, minerals and fibre; and Maas, peanut butter and pilchards, good fats, protein and calcium essential for children. The data shows that the core foods contribute **53%** of the total cost of the Household Food Basket. At an average cost of **R2 810,24 in February 2024**, these foods are relatively very expensive in relation to the total money available in the household purse to secure food. These foods must be bought regardless of price escalations. The high cost of core staple foods result in a lot of proper nutritious food being removed off the family plates. The consequences of high costs on the core foods has a negative impact on overall household health and well-being, and child development.

4. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: Zero-rated vs. VAT

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Zero-rated foods								
Maize meal	30kg	R309,43	R294,10	R289,17	-R 4,93	-R 20,26	-2%	-7%
Rice	10kg	R134,06	R172,64	R170,01	-R 2,63	R 35,95	-2%	27%
Samp	5kg	R66,64	R63,14	R62,97	-R 0,18	-R 3,67	0%	-6%
Sugar beans	5kg	R171,53	R196,43	R204,13	R 7,70	R 32,60	4%	19%
Cooking oil	5L	R178,88	R157,93	R155,52	-R 2,42	-R 23,36	-2%	-13%
Full cream milk	6L	R86,11	R97,32	R98,58	R 1,25	R 12,47	1%	14%
Maas	4L	R52,96	R59,37	R59,36	R 0,00	R 6,40	0%	12%
Eggs	60 eggs	R118,52	R177,81	R164,14	-R 13,67	R 45,62	-8%	38%
Potatoes	10kg	R89,56	R118,59	R112,61	-R 5,98	R 23,05	-5%	26%
Onions	10kg	R125,69	R90,91	R89,85	-R 1,07	-R 35,85	-1%	-29%
Tomatoes	6kg	R121,93	R138,45	R126,28	-R 12,17	R 4,35	-9%	4%
Carrots	5kg	R36,67	R43,62	R44,52	R 0,91	R 7,86	2%	21%
Butternut	10kg	R86,86	R118,88	R104,12	-R 14,77	R 17,26	-12%	20%
Spinach	8 bunches	R111,93	R103,92	R115,06	R 11,13	R 3,13	11%	3%
Cabbage	2 heads	R40,62	R37,93	R36,83	-R 1,11	-R 3,79	-3%	-9%
Green Pepper	2kg	R56,42	R68,30	R54,43	-R 13,87	-R 1,99	-20%	-4%
Tinned pilchards	6 tins	R136,67	R145,41	R145,46	R 0,05	R 8,78	0%	6%
Bananas	4kg	R65,59	R79,94	R68,70	-R 11,25	R 3,10	-14%	5%
Apples	3kg	R46,83	R57,98	R52,74	-R 5,24	R 5,91	-9%	13%
Oranges	7kg	R83,14	R82,03	R145,58	R 63,55	R 62,44	77%	75%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R368,54	R383,80	R377,47	-R 6,34	R 8,93	-2%	2%
Cake flour	10kg	R122,42	R127,41	R129,25	R 1,83	R 6,83	1%	6%
Subtotal of zero-rated foods		R 2 611,02	R 2 815,93	R 2 806,75	-R 9,18	R 195,74	-0,3%	7,5%
Foods subject to VAT								
White sugar	10kg	R179,75	R207,68	R208,13	R 0,45	R 28,39	0%	16%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R390,68	R417,51	R410,12	-R 7,39	R 19,44	-2%	5%
Chicken feet	2kg	R78,53	R84,66	R79,49	-R 5,18	R 0,95	-6%	1%
Gizzards	2kg	R87,40	R91,57	R90,74	-R 0,83	R 3,34	-1%	4%
Chicken livers	2kg	R71,22	R83,51	R77,57	-R 5,94	R 6,35	-7%	9%
Beef liver	2kg	R100,33	R100,90	R103,38	R 2,48	R 3,05	2%	3%
Beef	2kg	R178,37	R193,09	R182,96	-R 10,12	R 4,59	-5%	3%
Wors	2kg	R135,49	R144,71	R147,09	R 2,38	R 11,60	2%	9%
Inyama yangapakhathi	2kg	R91,12	R92,03	R89,47	-R 2,56	-R 1,65	-3%	-2%
Fish	2kg	R111,03	R120,10	R115,96	-R 4,13	R 4,93	-3%	4%
Salt	1kg	R14,38	R16,29	R15,75	-R 0,53	R 1,37	-3%	10%
Stock	48 cubes	R43,65	R51,00	R47,55	-R 3,45	R 3,90	-7%	9%
Soup	800g	R43,08	R50,90	R48,39	-R 2,51	R 5,31	-5%	12%
Curry powder	400g	R33,09	R38,61	R37,69	-R 0,91	R 4,60	-2%	14%
Tea	200g	R25,41	R30,12	R29,52	-R 0,60	R 4,11	-2%	16%
Cremera	1kg	R43,02	R49,92	R50,93	R 1,00	R 7,90	2%	18%
Canned beans	6 cans	R77,83	R88,94	R90,02	R 1,08	R 12,19	1%	16%
Margarine	1kg	R40,17	R42,22	R41,91	-R 0,30	R 1,75	-1%	4%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R65,31	R77,38	R76,36	-R 1,02	R 11,05	-1%	17%
Polony	2.5kg	R65,46	R69,02	R66,89	-R 2,13	R 1,42	-3%	2%
Apricot jam	900g	R33,26	R38,29	R38,50	R 0,21	R 5,24	1%	16%
White bread	25 loaves	R408,73	R420,50	R422,11	R 1,61	R 13,39	0%	3%
Subtotal of VATable foods		R2 317,32	R 2 508,93	R 2 470,54	-R 38,38	R 153,23	-1,5%	6,6%
Vatable foods (excl. VAT)		R2 015,06	R2 181,68	R2 148,30	-R 33,38	R133,24	-1,5%	6,6%
VAT total		R302,26	R327,25	R322,24	-R5,01	R19,99	-1,5%	6,6%
Total household food basket		R4 928,34	R5 324,86	R5 277,30	-R47,56	R348,96	-0,9%	7,1%

Month-on-month: The **zero-rated foods** in the household food basket **decreased** by **R9,18 (-0,3%)** from R2 815,93 in January 2024 to R2 806,75 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The **zero-rated foods** in the household food basket **increased** by **R195,74 (7,5%)** from R2 611,02 in February 2023 to R2 806,75 in February 2024.

Month-on-month: The **foods subject to VAT** in the household food basket **decreased** by **R38,38 (-1,5%)** from R2 508,93 in January 2024 to R2 470,54 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The **foods subject to VAT** in the household food basket **increased** by **R153,23 (6,6%)** from R2 317,32 in February 2023 to R2 470,54 in February 2024.

22/44 foods in the total household food basket are subject to VAT. Foods subject to VAT make up **47%** of the total cost of the household food basket. VAT on the total household food basket came to **R322,24 in February 2024**. This means **6,1%** of the household food basket is made up of VAT. **A tax of R322,24** is nearly the same cost of a large household's requirement of 30kg maize meal per month (**in February 2024, 30kg maize meal cost R289,17**). VAT on basic food stuffs is still very high and removes food off the plate.

5. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Domestic & Personal Hygiene Index: All areas

Products tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Green bar soap	500g x8	R116,51	R114,19	R114,94	R 0,75	-R 1,57	1%	-1%
Washing powder	3kg	R89,22	R96,57	R94,15	-R 2,42	R 4,94	-3%	6%
Dishwashing liquid	750ml	R31,08	R33,61	R33,96	R 0,36	R 2,88	1%	9%
Handy Andy	750ml	R29,09	R31,58	R30,31	-R 1,27	R 1,21	-4%	4%
Jik	1,5L	R40,97	R40,37	R41,31	R 0,94	R 0,34	2%	1%
Toilet paper	24 rolls	R110,19	R122,59	R130,12	R 7,53	R 19,93	6%	18%
Bath soap	500g x4	R80,75	R88,96	R88,39	-R 0,57	R 7,63	-1%	9%
Toothpaste	100ml x3	R57,63	R62,77	R69,70	R 6,94	R 12,07	11%	21%
Vaseline	500g	R45,77	R55,79	R55,76	-R 0,04	R 9,98	0%	22%
Cream	big bottle x2	R53,22	R63,26	R64,66	R 1,40	R 11,44	2%	21%
Roll-on deodorant	x4	R76,65	R81,49	R82,84	R 1,35	R 6,19	2%	8%
Spray-on deodorant	big spray x3	R93,74	R101,25	R104,20	R 2,95	R 10,46	3%	11%
Sanitary pads	2 big packs	R71,92	R78,18	R76,65	-R 1,53	R 4,73	-2%	7%
Shoe Polish	100ml	R29,76	R35,22	R35,72	R 0,50	R 5,96	1%	20%
Total household domestic and hygiene products		R 926,51	R 1 005,81	R 1 022,71	R 16,90	R 96,19	1,7%	10,4%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **household domestic and personal hygiene products basket increased** by **R16,90 (1,7%)** from R1 005,81 in January 2024 to R1 022,71 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **household domestic and personal hygiene products basket increased** by **R96,19 (10,4%)** from R926,51 in February 2023 to R1 022,71 in February 2024.

Domestic and personal hygiene products are critical expenses for safe hygiene and overall health and well being. The money needed to secure domestic and personal hygiene products are sourced from within the food budget. These products compete viciously in the food budget.

6. FEBRUARY 2024 Basic Nutritional Food Index: families

By number of family members	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
	Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Four (4)	R3 388,00	R3 741,46	R3 680,83	-R 60,63	R 292,83	-1,6%	8,6%
Five (5)	R4 283,87	R4 730,08	R4 652,14	-R 77,94	R 368,27	-1,6%	8,6%
Seven (7)	R5 922,97	R6 539,94	R6 430,76	-R 109,18	R 507,79	-1,7%	8,6%

Month-on-month: The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members decreased** by **R109,18 (-1,7%)** from R6 539,94 in January 2024 to R6 430,76 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members increased** by **R507,79 (8,6%)** from R5 922,97 in February 2023 to R6 430,76 in February 2024.

In **February 2024** the difference in cost between the foods which families living on low incomes try and buy each month (the household food basket) and the foods which families would like to buy and should buy to meet basic nutrition (a basic nutritional food basket) was **R1 153,46 (R5 277,30 vs. R6 430,76)**.

It means that in **February 2024**, families with seven members underspent on basic nutritional food by a **minimum of 18% (R1 153,46)**.

7. FEBRUARY 2024 Basic Nutritional Food Index: children

By age of child	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
	Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Small child aged 3-9 years	R 759,39	R841,51	R826,99	-R 14,52	R 67,60	-1,7%	8,9%
Small child aged 10-13 years	R 827,63	R915,07	R899,15	-R 15,92	R 71,52	-1,7%	8,6%
Girl child aged 14-18 years	R 879,71	R968,35	R951,62	-R 16,73	R 71,91	-1,7%	8,2%
Boy child aged 14-18 years	R 989,50	R1 090,08	R1 075,22	-R 14,86	R 85,72	-1,4%	8,7%
Average for all children	R864,06	R953,75	R938,25	-R 15,51	R 74,19	-1,6%	8,6%

Month-on-month: The **average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet decreased** by **R15,51 (-1,6%)** from R953,75 in January 2024 to R938,25 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The **average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet increased** by **R74,19 (8,6%)** from R864,06 in February 2023 to R938,25 in February 2024.

As children grow older, their nutritional requirements increase. It means that the cost of feeding a child increases in price as a child grows older and is also different for teenage girls and boys. The Child Support Grant is a fixed amount: it does not account for age.

The Child Support Grant is **R510**. The CSG was increased by R20 in April 2023 and R10 with effect from October 2023.

The food poverty line calculated by Statistics South Africa is **R760** per capita per month (latest May 2023).

In **February 2024** the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet per month cost **R938,25**.

The Child Support Grant of **R510** is set below the food poverty line of **R760**, and further below the average cost of **R938,25** to secure a basic nutritious diet for a child in **February 2024**.

In **February 2024** the Child Support Grant is **33% below** the food poverty line and **46% below** the average cost to secure a basic nutritious diet for a child.

About the Basic Nutritional Food Index

Households living on low incomes change their purchasing patterns in response to changes in affordability conditions. On low incomes, women buy the core staple foods first so that their families do not go hungry and for basic meals to be prepared. Where the money remaining is short, women have no choice but to drop foods from their trolleys or reduce the volumes of nutritionally rich foods in their trolleys. This has negative consequences for health, well-being, and nutrition. As financial and economic circumstances worsen, so too does household health and nutrition. The gap between what women are able to buy and what they need to buy for proper nutrition widens. The Basic Nutritional Food Basket is an attempt to track the cost of foods required for balanced nutrition, viz. the foods and the cost of these foods for families to ensure their health and nutrition and for children to grow and develop properly. The basket was designed in consultation with a Registered Dietician Philippa Barnard.

The Basic Nutritional Food Basket is an index on which we can start talking realistically about the cost of nutritious food, and the inadequacies of low wages and social grants. Importantly it ensures that current food expenditure (severely limited by affordability constraints) are not conflated with the food expenditure required to secure proper nutrition.

8. FEBRUARY 2024 National Minimum Wage Scenarios

Number of working days in February 2024 = 21 days

Affordability, in its simplest form, is relative to income levels and the cost of goods and services (expenses). Workers work to support their families. Workers, reasonably expect to cover the costs of goods and services needed for dignity and household functionality off their wages. In most Black South African households, only one family member works. This one wage must support, a reductive average of **3,9 persons in February 2024**.

The Minister of Employment and Labour gazetted a **9,6%** annual increase on the National Minimum Wage, which took effect on the 1st of March 2023. For a worker, the 9,6% increment works out to be an extra R2,23 an hour, R17,84 for an 8-hour day, and if the full working-day month is worked (average 22 days), a R392,48 monthly increase. **The NMW increased by R2,23 from R23,19 per hour to R25,42 per hour.**

The National Minimum Wage is R25,42 per hour.

The tables over the page provide income scenarios for households with workers remunerated at the National Minimum Wage level, as well as for different number of days and hours worked. Households do not prioritise paying for food first out of the wage. Instead households paid low incomes are forced to secure non-negotiable expenses like transport and electricity before food. Other important expenses like debt servicing, scholar transport, education and burial insurances, including household domestic and personal hygiene products also compete viciously in the purse.

A reasonable indicator of whether the NMW is improving the lives of workers is whether workers earning the NMW are able to secure the basic household expenses needed to live at a basic level of dignity and household functionality.

In the scenarios we pull out just 3 core worker expenses: transport to get to work and back; prepaid electricity and the cost of a basic basket of nutritional food for a family of 4 persons. We take the NMW in its various scenarios and subtract the cost of transport and electricity. We then look at the money remaining to buy food.

The last row in the tables highlights the minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs. If the NMW value is set at a reasonable level than we should see a surplus on the food costs, because households have a myriad of other expenses which also need to be secured. If however we see a shortfall on just the food costs, then we must conclude that the level at which the NMW has been set is inadequate because this scenario means that a worker cannot secure even the basic cost of food let alone the other essential goods and services families require.

A note on the data in the scenarios: The NMW and social grant data is national data. The food data is based on the average cost of the PMBEJD Basic Nutritional Food Basket for a family of 4 persons for Joburg, Durban, Cape Town, Springbok and Pietermaritzburg. We use Pietermaritzburg-based costs as a proxy for the transport and electricity figures. **In July 2023, the electricity tariffs in Msunduzi Municipality increased by 15,1%, with prepaid electricity costing R2,5912/kWh (incl. VAT) for the 2023/24 period (up from R2,2512/kWh, incl. VAT from 2022/2023).** The electricity expense on 350kWh went up by R119.00 (from R787,92 to R906,92). **The new taxi fare increases for Pietermaritzburg came into effect on the 1st of November 2023. Local fares went up by R2, from R18 to R20 (an increase of 11,1%).**

The data in the tables are relevant as at February 2024.

The tables below calculates transport to work on 2 taxi fare, return (R20x4 = R80), multiplied by number of working days. The electricity charge is based on Msunduzi Municipality's prepaid tariffs (R2,5912 per kWh = R906,92 for 350kWh). The table below provides scenarios for the NMW for General Workers at R25,42 an hour. The scenario provides for the maximum NMW for the maximum number of working days and hours; and for a 15 day working month and full 8-hours; and for a 15 day working month for 5 hours.

General Workers: at NMW

R25,42 an hour

Income	Wage scenario 1	Wage scenario 2	Wage scenario 3
Number of days worked	21	15	15
Number of hours worked	8	8	5
Remuneration rate	R25,42	R25,42	R25,42
Wage income	R4 270,56	R3 050,40	R1 906,50

	Wage scenario 1		Wage scenario 2		Wage scenario 3	
Wage income	R4 270,56		R3 050,40		R1 906,50	
Household expenses		% of wage		% of wage		% of wage
Transport to work (2 taxi, return)	R1 680,00	39,3%	R1 200,00	39,3%	R1 200,00	62,9%
Prepaid electricity (350kWh)	R906,92	21,2%	R906,92	29,7%	R906,92	47,6%
Total for transport + electricity	R2 586,92	60,6%	R2 106,92	69,1%	R2 106,92	110,5%
Money remaining to secure all other expenses	R1 683,64		R943,48		-R200,42	
Subtract: food (4 persons)	R3 680,83		R3 680,83		R3 680,83	
Minimum surplus/shortfall on food costs	-R1 997,19	-54,3%	-R2 737,35	-74,4%	-R3 881,25	-105,4%

All the scenarios above show that workers paid at the level of the NMW cannot meet even the 3 core household expenses on the NMW. This provides a stark indication of the deficiencies in low baseline wages. The NMW set at such a low level does not allow workers and their families the possibility to secure even their most basic expenses. Instead it appears from the data above that the NMW has worked to lock workers and their families into even deeper levels of poverty. Workers will have to cut back further on food and go into deeper levels of debt to cover wage shortfalls.

The National Minimum Wage is a poverty wage - it hurts workers, it reduces productivity in the workplace, and slows down economic growth. The maximum wage of **R4 270,56 in February 2024** when disbursed in a family of **4 persons is R1 067,64**. This is **below the upper-bound poverty line of R1 558 per capita** per month. Set at such a low level, the NMW works to institutionalise the low-baseline wage regime and lock millions of workers into poverty. Small annual increments off such a low base, and which do not reflect inflation levels as experienced by workers (including not projecting inflation forward for workers in the entire 2023/24 term), means that workers on the NMW are getting poorer and poorer each year. **The minimum shortfall on food for a family is 54,3% in February 2024**. After securing transport and electricity workers are left with **R1 683,64**. **If all of this money went to food, then for a family of 4, it would provide R420,91 per person per month. The Food Poverty Line is R760.**

9. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Basket: Per area, compared.

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Joburg	Durban	Cape Town	Springbok	Maritzburg	Mtubatuba	Average
Maize meal	30kg	R310,23	R261,97	R278,15	R369,97	R277,47	R288,97	R289,17
Rice	10kg	R171,63	R145,82	R191,32	R206,32	R150,59	R171,66	R170,01
Cake Flour	10kg	R136,66	R121,16	R134,82	R129,99	R122,59	R119,99	R129,25
White sugar	10kg	R212,91	R189,99	R224,31	R229,99	R200,99	R192,32	R208,13
Sugar beans	5kg	R180,03	R198,97	R215,78	R229,90	R210,32	R251,23	R204,13
Samp	5kg	R61,82	R66,99	R62,81	R69,49	R52,19	R65,66	R62,97
Cooking oil	5L	R166,91	R142,24	R156,70	R170,39	R150,79	R151,32	R155,52
Salt	1kg	R17,91	R17,49	R10,39	R20,32	R18,60	R12,32	R15,75
Potatoes	10kg	R104,45	R118,20	R114,15	R116,65	R107,13	R121,89	R112,61
Onions	10kg	R80,92	R94,51	R88,27	R134,08	R75,98	R88,08	R89,85
Chicken portions	10kg	R406,98	R400,44	R408,10	R389,98	R439,94	R429,98	R410,12
Curry powder	200g	R39,16	R35,66	R39,15	R38,32	R35,19	R37,66	R37,69
Stock cubes	24 x2	R52,31	R51,48	R41,81	R41,98	R42,38	R49,98	R47,55
Soup	400g x2	R54,63	R43,81	R52,23	R43,98	R33,18	R61,31	R48,39
Tea	250g	R35,07	R27,66	R27,99	R26,32	R27,19	R27,99	R29,52
Full cream milk	6L	R102,15	R104,91	R87,31	R89,99	R105,59	R100,99	R98,58
Maas	4L	R58,47	R56,32	R62,15	R65,65	R54,39	R65,99	R59,36
Eggs	60 eggs	R160,23	R163,18	R171,14	R152,65	R165,98	R163,98	R164,14
Chicken feet	2kg	R99,98	R81,95	R42,55	R99,98	R96,44	R73,98	R79,49
Gizzards	2kg	R94,23	R89,44	R82,23	R99,98	R96,44	R99,98	R90,74
Chicken livers	2kg	R74,53	R76,44	R70,48	R105,96	R83,94	R79,98	R77,57
Beef liver	2kg	R105,98	R109,94	R94,84	R114,98	R98,44	R94,98	R103,38
Beef	2kg	R186,23	R199,44	R156,73	R189,98	R193,94	R179,98	R182,96
Wors	2kg	R166,98	R156,17	R90,27	R164,98	R165,25	R184,98	R147,09
Beef tripe	2kg	R99,48	R91,69	R72,65	R99,98	R90,89	R82,98	R89,47
Fish	2kg	R98,48	R131,19	R89,41	R154,98	R133,94	R142,98	R115,96
Tomatoes	6kg	R125,78	R122,95	R124,66	R125,94	R124,75	R149,95	R126,28
Carrots	5kg	R51,57	R42,54	R40,48	R59,96	R31,99	R43,21	R44,52
Butternut	10kg	R111,66	R102,58	R110,69	R124,97	R70,10	R89,66	R104,12
Spinach	8 bunches	R99,14	R159,92	R103,92	R122,59	R100,00	R119,92	R115,06
Cabbage	2 heads	R35,49	R39,98	R38,15	R33,98	R31,48	R35,31	R36,83
Green pepper	2kg	R50,99	R55,76	R55,47	R69,98	R39,98	R69,97	R54,43
Cremora	800g	R53,99	R48,32	R49,32	R47,99	R54,39	R52,66	R50,93
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R156,40	R146,44	R138,42	R127,94	R137,94	R155,94	R145,46
Canned beans	410g x6	R100,26	R86,45	R82,44	R95,94	R88,74	R89,94	R90,02
Bananas	4kg	R79,57	R69,16	R69,05	R74,61	R46,36	R57,29	R68,70
Apples	3kg	R55,82	R53,15	R51,48	R50,65	R47,79	R53,32	R52,74
Orange	7kg	R77,76	R147,88	R153,94	R123,60	R139,93	R174,93	R145,58
Margarine	1kg	R46,28	R39,57	R40,40	R39,32	R45,59	R36,32	R41,91
Peanut butter	400g x2	R82,47	R77,98	R68,48	R84,65	R73,58	R73,31	R76,36
Polony	2.5kg	R74,48	R64,77	R57,99	R62,49	R75,99	R63,32	R66,89
Apricot jam	900g	R40,49	R36,23	R37,91	R39,66	R35,99	R44,99	R38,50
White bread	25 loaves	R439,38	R423,67	R435,23	R374,75	R389,80	R395,58	R422,11
Brown bread	25 loaves	R397,69	R368,58	R387,31	R358,08	R359,90	R341,42	R377,47
Total household food basket		R 5 357,53	R 5 262,95	R 5 111,05	R 5 573,89	R 5 124,04	R 5 388,22	R 5 277,30

The average cost (weighted) of the total Household Food Basket in February 2024 is R5 277,30.

10. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: Johannesburg

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R294,87	R312,22	R310,23	-R 2,00	R 15,36	-1%	5%
Rice	10kg	R142,07	R183,48	R171,63	-R 11,86	R 29,55	-6%	21%
Cake Flour	10kg	R120,91	R135,23	R136,66	R 1,43	R 15,75	1%	13%
White sugar	10kg	R174,19	R210,32	R212,91	R 2,58	R 38,72	1%	22%
Sugar beans	5kg	R168,53	R175,73	R180,03	R 4,30	R 11,50	2%	7%
Samp	5kg	R74,12	R61,90	R61,82	-R 0,08	-R 12,31	0%	-17%
Cooking oil	5L	R175,91	R161,05	R166,91	R 5,85	-R 9,00	4%	-5%
Salt	1kg	R15,44	R18,15	R17,91	-R 0,24	R 2,47	-1%	16%
Potatoes	10kg	R82,97	R116,61	R104,45	-R 12,16	R 21,48	-10%	26%
Onions	10kg	R93,85	R76,04	R80,92	R 4,88	-R 12,93	6%	-14%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R373,48	R403,49	R406,98	R 3,50	R 33,50	1%	9%
Curry powder	200g	R31,37	R39,99	R39,16	-R 0,83	R 7,79	-2%	25%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R41,98	R53,48	R52,31	-R 1,17	R 10,33	-2%	25%
Soup	400g x2	R45,40	R52,48	R54,63	R 2,15	R 9,24	4%	20%
Tea	250g	R27,99	R33,82	R35,07	R 1,25	R 7,08	4%	25%
Full cream milk	6L	R93,19	R94,48	R102,15	R 7,67	R 8,95	8%	10%
Maas	4L	R51,98	R57,23	R58,47	R 1,24	R 6,48	2%	12%
Eggs	60 eggs	R114,15	R177,40	R160,23	-R 17,17	R 46,09	-10%	40%
Chicken feet	2kg	R94,23	R101,98	R99,98	-R 2,00	R 5,75	-2%	6%
Gizzards	2kg	R93,71	R96,96	R94,23	-R 2,73	R 0,52	-3%	1%
Chicken livers	2kg	R70,23	R74,84	R74,53	-R 0,31	R 4,29	0%	6%
Beef liver	2kg	R108,23	R103,48	R105,98	R 2,50	-R 2,25	2%	-2%
Beef	2kg	R188,48	R198,73	R186,23	-R 12,50	-R 2,25	-6%	-1%
Wors	2kg	R158,48	R166,23	R166,98	R 0,75	R 8,50	0%	5%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R90,98	R93,23	R99,48	R 6,25	R 8,50	7%	9%
Fish	2kg	R98,98	R94,23	R98,48	R 4,25	-R 0,50	5%	-1%
Tomatoes	6kg	R101,87	R111,03	R125,78	R 14,74	R 23,91	13%	23%
Carrots	5kg	R37,91	R45,90	R51,57	R 5,67	R 13,66	12%	36%
Butternut	10kg	R88,20	R137,79	R111,66	-R 26,13	R 23,46	-19%	27%
Spinach	8 bunches	R118,93	R87,20	R99,14	R 11,94	-R 19,79	14%	-17%
Cabbage	2 heads	R32,07	R33,98	R35,49	R 1,50	R 3,41	4%	11%
Green pepper	2kg	R49,37	R54,45	R50,99	-R 3,47	R 1,62	-6%	3%
Cremora	800g	R44,15	R49,48	R53,99	R 4,51	R 9,84	9%	22%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R140,90	R152,44	R156,40	R 3,96	R 15,51	3%	11%
Canned beans	410g x6	R81,76	R99,69	R100,26	R 0,56	R 18,49	1%	23%
Bananas	4kg	R82,63	R86,90	R79,57	-R 7,34	-R 3,06	-8%	-4%
Apples	3kg	R47,78	R58,15	R55,82	-R 2,33	R 8,04	-4%	17%
Oranges	7kg	R76,96	R77,76	R77,76	R 0,00	R 0,80	0%	1%
Margarine	1kg	R44,19	R45,28	R46,28	R 1,00	R 2,09	2%	5%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R68,15	R80,95	R82,47	R 1,52	R 14,32	2%	21%
Polony	2.5kg	R72,57	R75,32	R74,48	-R 0,84	R 1,91	-1%	3%
Apricot jam	900g	R32,28	R40,15	R40,49	R 0,34	R 8,21	1%	25%
White bread	25 loaves	R403,18	R432,92	R439,38	R 6,46	R 36,19	1%	9%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R374,77	R399,58	R397,69	-R 1,90	R 22,91	0%	6%
Total household food basket		R 4 923,41	R 5 361,77	R 5 357,53	-R 4,24	R 434,12	-0,1%	8,8%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Joburg household food basket decreased** by **R4,24 (-0,1%)** from R5 361,77 in January 2024 to R5 357,53 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Joburg household food basket increased** by **R434,12 (8,8%)** from R4 923,41 in February 2023 to R5 357,53 in February 2024.

11. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: Durban

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R283,33	R261,97	R261,97	R 0,00	-R 21,36	0%	-8%
Rice	10kg	R117,26	R148,54	R145,82	-R 2,71	R 28,56	-2%	24%
Cake Flour	10kg	R119,09	R121,24	R121,16	-R 0,08	R 2,07	0%	2%
White sugar	10kg	R176,90	R195,41	R189,99	-R 5,42	R 13,09	-3%	7%
Sugar beans	5kg	R152,92	R194,78	R198,97	R 4,18	R 46,05	2%	30%
Samp	5kg	R62,44	R64,16	R66,99	R 2,83	R 4,55	4%	7%
Cooking oil	5L	R168,99	R143,24	R142,24	-R 1,00	-R 26,75	-1%	-16%
Salt	1kg	R14,08	R17,91	R17,49	-R 0,42	R 3,41	-2%	24%
Potatoes	10kg	R96,14	R124,39	R118,20	-R 6,19	R 22,05	-5%	23%
Onions	10kg	R141,02	R95,35	R94,51	-R 0,85	-R 46,51	-1%	-33%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R392,68	R430,49	R400,44	-R 30,06	R 7,76	-7%	2%
Curry powder	200g	R30,17	R38,24	R35,66	-R 2,58	R 5,48	-7%	18%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R50,35	R51,98	R51,48	-R 0,50	R 1,13	-1%	2%
Soup	400g x2	R38,98	R43,15	R43,81	R 0,67	R 4,83	2%	12%
Tea	250g	R25,90	R27,57	R27,66	R 0,08	R 1,76	0%	7%
Full cream milk	6L	R86,26	R107,99	R104,91	-R 3,08	R 18,64	-3%	22%
Maas	4L	R50,99	R56,49	R56,32	-R 0,17	R 5,33	0%	10%
Eggs	60 eggs	R120,16	R189,31	R163,18	-R 26,13	R 43,02	-14%	36%
Chicken feet	2kg	R86,69	R85,67	R81,95	-R 3,71	-R 4,73	-4%	-5%
Gizzards	2kg	R91,10	R90,44	R89,44	-R 1,00	-R 1,67	-1%	-2%
Chicken livers	2kg	R73,91	R77,69	R76,44	-R 1,25	R 2,53	-2%	3%
Beef liver	2kg	R99,36	R103,44	R109,94	R 6,50	R 10,58	6%	11%
Beef	2kg	R181,94	R218,19	R199,44	-R 18,75	R 17,50	-9%	10%
Wors	2kg	R140,19	R142,44	R156,17	R 13,73	R 15,98	10%	11%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R98,44	R92,44	R91,69	-R 0,75	-R 6,75	-1%	-7%
Fish	2kg	R117,19	R138,69	R131,19	-R 7,50	R 14,00	-5%	12%
Tomatoes	6kg	R147,66	R154,85	R122,95	-R 31,90	-R 24,71	-21%	-17%
Carrots	5kg	R45,20	R45,79	R42,54	-R 3,25	-R 2,66	-7%	-6%
Butternut	10kg	R81,17	R104,27	R102,58	-R 1,69	R 21,41	-2%	26%
Spinach	8 bunches	R140,75	R133,25	R159,92	R 26,67	R 19,17	20%	14%
Cabbage	2 heads	R38,17	R41,31	R39,98	-R 1,33	R 1,81	-3%	5%
Green pepper	2kg	R57,18	R64,98	R55,76	-R 9,22	-R 1,42	-14%	-2%
Cremora	800g	R42,95	R50,07	R48,32	-R 1,75	R 5,38	-3%	13%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R145,04	R150,20	R146,44	-R 3,76	R 1,40	-3%	1%
Canned beans	410g x6	R73,87	R84,93	R86,45	R 1,52	R 12,58	2%	17%
Bananas	4kg	R64,15	R75,96	R69,16	-R 6,80	R 5,01	-9%	8%
Apples	3kg	R46,62	R65,98	R53,15	-R 12,83	R 6,53	-19%	14%
Oranges	7kg	R104,95	R124,40	R147,88	R 23,49	R 42,93	19%	41%
Margarine	1kg	R40,90	R39,74	R39,57	-R 0,17	-R 1,33	0%	-3%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R67,98	R80,31	R77,98	-R 2,33	R 10,00	-3%	15%
Polony	2.5kg	R65,71	R67,87	R64,77	-R 3,10	-R 0,94	-5%	-1%
Apricot jam	900g	R35,72	R36,41	R36,23	-R 0,17	R 0,52	0%	1%
White bread	25 loaves	R399,80	R411,29	R423,67	R 12,38	R 23,87	3%	6%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R354,32	R369,60	R368,58	-R 1,02	R 14,27	0%	4%
Total household food basket		R 4 968,59	R5 362,38	R5 262,95	-R 99,43	R 294,35	-1,9%	5,9%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Durban household food basket decreased** by **R99,43 (-1,9%)** from R5 362,38 in January 2024 to R5 262,95 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Durban household food basket increased** by **R294,35 (5,9%)** from R4 968,59 in February 2023 to R5 262,95 in February 2024.

12. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: Cape Town

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R346,97	R288,97	R278,15	-R 10,82	-R 68,82	-4%	-20%
Rice	10kg	R145,82	R187,66	R191,32	R 3,67	R 45,50	2%	31%
Cake Flour	10kg	R127,32	R131,24	R134,82	R 3,58	R 7,50	3%	6%
White sugar	10kg	R184,57	R220,61	R224,31	R 3,69	R 39,73	2%	22%
Sugar beans	5kg	R203,29	R211,40	R215,78	R 4,37	R 12,48	2%	6%
Samp	5kg	R68,64	R65,44	R62,81	-R 2,64	-R 5,83	-4%	-8%
Cooking oil	5L	R184,25	R165,29	R156,70	-R 8,59	-R 27,55	-5%	-15%
Salt	1kg	R10,37	R11,47	R10,39	-R 1,08	R 0,02	-9%	0%
Potatoes	10kg	R91,02	R113,85	R114,15	R 0,30	R 23,12	0%	25%
Onions	10kg	R134,73	R90,71	R88,27	-R 2,45	-R 46,47	-3%	-34%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R382,16	R401,85	R408,10	R 6,25	R 25,94	2%	7%
Curry powder	200g	R36,74	R38,99	R39,15	R 0,17	R 2,42	0%	7%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R39,98	R49,14	R41,81	-R 7,33	R 1,83	-15%	5%
Soup	400g x2	R56,55	R66,38	R52,23	-R 14,15	-R 4,32	-21%	-8%
Tea	250g	R24,41	R30,07	R27,99	-R 2,08	R 3,58	-7%	15%
Full cream milk	6L	R77,14	R87,98	R87,31	-R 0,67	R 10,17	-1%	13%
Maas	4L	R54,82	R63,74	R62,15	-R 1,59	R 7,33	-2%	13%
Eggs	60 eggs	R124,78	R169,51	R171,14	R 1,63	R 46,36	1%	37%
Chicken feet	2kg	R43,69	R51,98	R42,55	-R 9,43	-R 1,14	-18%	-3%
Gizzards	2kg	R75,23	R83,22	R82,23	-R 0,99	R 7,00	-1%	9%
Chicken livers	2kg	R58,48	R76,23	R70,48	-R 5,75	R 12,00	-8%	21%
Beef liver	2kg	R88,98	R95,73	R94,84	-R 0,89	R 5,86	-1%	7%
Beef	2kg	R161,48	R161,47	R156,73	-R 4,74	-R 4,75	-3%	-3%
Wors	2kg	R102,98	R101,73	R90,27	-R 11,46	-R 12,71	-11%	-12%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R72,38	R85,96	R72,65	-R 13,32	R 0,26	-15%	0%
Fish	2kg	R98,98	R97,98	R89,41	-R 8,57	-R 9,57	-9%	-10%
Tomatoes	6kg	R129,05	R143,06	R124,66	-R 18,40	-R 4,39	-13%	-3%
Carrots	5kg	R29,90	R33,88	R40,48	R 6,60	R 10,58	19%	35%
Butternut	10kg	R98,37	R130,19	R110,69	-R 19,50	R 12,32	-15%	13%
Spinach	8 bunches	R103,12	R99,12	R103,92	R 4,80	R 0,80	5%	1%
Cabbage	2 heads	R53,80	R41,81	R38,15	-R 3,67	-R 15,65	-9%	-29%
Green pepper	2kg	R58,20	R70,71	R55,47	-R 15,24	-R 2,73	-22%	-5%
Cremora	800g	R42,41	R48,39	R49,32	R 0,93	R 6,91	2%	16%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R131,94	R138,44	R138,42	-R 0,02	R 6,48	0%	5%
Canned beans	410g x6	R72,30	R80,29	R82,44	R 2,15	R 10,15	3%	14%
Bananas	4kg	R59,23	R81,29	R69,05	-R 12,24	R 9,82	-15%	17%
Apples	3kg	R53,98	R54,16	R51,48	-R 2,68	-R 2,50	-5%	-5%
Oranges	7kg	R91,74	R91,24	R153,94	R 62,70	R 62,20	69%	68%
Margarine	1kg	R33,81	R41,62	R40,40	-R 1,22	R 6,60	-3%	20%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R62,31	R67,98	R68,48	R 0,50	R 6,17	1%	10%
Polony	2.5kg	R58,29	R62,19	R57,99	-R 4,20	-R 0,30	-7%	-1%
Apricot jam	900g	R34,24	R37,74	R37,91	R 0,17	R 3,67	0%	11%
White bread	25 loaves	R442,52	R444,60	R435,23	-R 9,38	-R 7,29	-2%	-2%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R391,48	R401,90	R387,31	-R 14,58	-R 4,17	-4%	-1%
Total household food basket		R 4 942,45	R5 217,22	R5 111,05	-R 106,17	R 168,60	-2,0%	3,4%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Cape Town household food basket** *decreased* by **R106,17 (-2,0%)** from R5 217,22 in January 2024 to R5 111,05 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Cape Town household food basket** *increased* by **R168,60 (3,4%)** from R4 942,45 in February 2023 to R5 111,05 in February 2024.

13. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: Springbok

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R310,97	R364,97	R369,97	R 5,00	R 59,00	1%	19%
Rice	10kg	R152,99	R192,99	R206,32	R 13,33	R 53,33	7%	35%
Cake Flour	10kg	R119,99	R129,99	R129,99	R 0,00	R 10,00	0%	8%
White sugar	10kg	R200,66	R219,99	R229,99	R 10,00	R 29,33	5%	15%
Sugar beans	5kg	R204,90	R219,90	R229,90	R 10,00	R 25,00	5%	12%
Samp	5kg	R68,97	R66,98	R69,49	R 2,50	R 0,51	4%	1%
Cooking oil	5L	R210,40	R171,64	R170,39	-R 1,25	-R 40,00	-1%	-19%
Salt	1kg	R19,99	R20,32	R20,32	R 0,00	R 0,33	0%	2%
Potatoes	10kg	R99,03	R119,03	R116,65	-R 2,38	R 17,62	-2%	18%
Onions	10kg	R134,26	R159,16	R134,08	-R 25,08	-R 0,18	-16%	0%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R443,30	R410,98	R389,98	-R 21,00	-R 53,32	-5%	-12%
Curry powder	200g	R40,98	R38,32	R38,32	R 0,00	-R 2,66	0%	-6%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R40,65	R45,31	R41,98	-R 3,33	R 1,33	-7%	3%
Soup	400g x2	R39,98	R43,98	R43,98	R 0,00	R 4,00	0%	10%
Tea	250g	R23,99	R30,32	R26,32	-R 4,00	R 2,33	-13%	10%
Full cream milk	6L	R83,32	R89,99	R89,99	R 0,00	R 6,67	0%	8%
Maas	4L	R58,32	R64,32	R65,65	R 1,33	R 7,33	2%	13%
Eggs	60 eggs	R115,98	R149,31	R152,65	R 3,33	R 36,67	2%	32%
Chicken feet	2kg	R91,98	R99,98	R99,98	R 0,00	R 8,00	0%	9%
Gizzards	2kg	R79,98	R89,98	R99,98	R 10,00	R 20,00	11%	25%
Chicken livers	2kg	R123,94	R161,94	R105,96	-R 55,98	-R 17,98	-35%	-15%
Beef liver	2kg	R112,98	R119,98	R114,98	-R 5,00	R 2,00	-4%	2%
Beef	2kg	R179,98	R179,98	R189,98	R 10,00	R 10,00	6%	6%
Wors	2kg	R149,98	R149,98	R164,98	R 15,00	R 15,00	10%	10%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R87,98	R109,98	R99,98	-R 10,00	R 12,00	-9%	14%
Fish	2kg	R159,98	R173,98	R154,98	-R 19,00	-R 5,00	-11%	-3%
Tomatoes	6kg	R109,94	R149,94	R125,94	-R 24,00	R 16,00	-16%	15%
Carrots	5kg	R51,63	R58,29	R59,96	R 1,67	R 8,33	3%	16%
Butternut	10kg	R106,33	R179,97	R124,97	-R 55,00	R 18,64	-31%	18%
Spinach	8 bunches	R74,59	R111,92	R122,59	R 10,67	R 48,00	10%	64%
Cabbage	2 heads	R41,98	R35,31	R33,98	-R 1,33	-R 8,00	-4%	-19%
Green pepper	2kg	R69,98	R76,65	R69,98	-R 6,67	R 0,00	-9%	0%
Cremora	800g	R41,32	R47,66	R47,99	R 0,33	R 6,67	1%	16%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R119,94	R143,94	R127,94	-R 16,00	R 8,00	-11%	7%
Canned beans	410g x6	R91,94	R85,94	R95,94	R 10,00	R 4,00	12%	4%
Bananas	4kg	R70,61	R74,61	R74,61	R 0,00	R 4,00	0%	6%
Apples	3kg	R33,99	R43,65	R50,65	R 7,00	R 16,66	16%	49%
Oranges	7kg	R64,11	R53,40	R123,60	R 70,20	R 59,49	131%	93%
Margarine	1kg	R33,66	R37,66	R39,32	R 1,67	R 5,67	4%	17%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R59,98	R75,31	R84,65	R 9,33	R 24,67	12%	41%
Polony	2.5kg	R54,99	R64,99	R62,49	-R 2,50	R 7,50	-4%	14%
Apricot jam	900g	R33,99	R37,66	R39,66	R 2,00	R 5,67	5%	17%
White bread	25 loaves	R328,92	R366,42	R374,75	R 8,33	R 45,83	2%	14%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R312,25	R353,92	R358,08	R 4,17	R 45,83	1%	15%
Total household food basket		R 5 055,61	R 5 620,55	R 5 573,89	-R 46,66	R 518,28	-0,8%	10,3%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Springbok household food basket decreased** by **R46,66 (-0,8%)** from R5 620,55 in January 2024 to R5 573,89 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Springbok household food basket increased** by **R518,28 (10,3%)** from R5 055,61 in February 2023 to R5 573,89 in February 2024.

14. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: Pietermaritzburg

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R310,77	R284,97	R277,47	-R 7,50	-R 33,30	-3%	-11%
Rice	10kg	R112,19	R149,59	R150,59	R 1,00	R 38,40	1%	34%
Cake Flour	10kg	R122,39	R120,19	R122,59	R 2,40	R 0,20	2%	0%
White sugar	10kg	R172,99	R199,99	R200,99	R 1,00	R 28,00	1%	16%
Sugar beans	5kg	R149,19	R176,99	R210,32	R 33,33	R 61,13	19%	41%
Samp	5kg	R48,99	R52,74	R52,19	-R 0,55	R 3,20	-1%	7%
Cooking oil	5L	R175,99	R158,79	R150,79	-R 8,00	-R 25,20	-5%	-14%
Salt	1kg	R18,79	R19,24	R18,60	-R 0,64	-R 0,20	-3%	-1%
Potatoes	10kg	R80,67	R109,99	R107,13	-R 2,86	R 26,45	-3%	33%
Onions	10kg	R124,27	R79,98	R75,98	-R 4,00	-R 48,28	-5%	-39%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R411,79	R457,94	R439,94	-R 18,00	R 28,15	-4%	7%
Curry powder	200g	R30,19	R35,79	R35,19	-R 0,60	R 5,00	-2%	17%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R43,58	R47,98	R42,38	-R 5,60	-R 1,20	-12%	-3%
Soup	400g x2	R29,58	R36,58	R33,18	-R 3,40	R 3,60	-9%	12%
Tea	250g	R21,39	R27,99	R27,19	-R 0,80	R 5,80	-3%	27%
Full cream milk	6L	R91,99	R102,19	R105,59	R 3,40	R 13,60	3%	15%
Maas	4L	R51,74	R55,99	R54,39	-R 1,60	R 2,65	-3%	5%
Eggs	60 eggs	R114,38	R177,98	R165,98	-R 12,00	R 51,60	-7%	45%
Chicken feet	2kg	R88,44	R98,48	R96,44	-R 2,05	R 8,00	-2%	9%
Gizzards	2kg	R94,48	R95,44	R96,44	R 1,00	R 1,96	1%	2%
Chicken livers	2kg	R68,94	R84,44	R83,94	-R 0,50	R 15,00	-1%	22%
Beef liver	2kg	R96,94	R94,44	R98,44	R 4,00	R 1,50	4%	2%
Beef	2kg	R183,98	R217,94	R193,94	-R 24,00	R 9,96	-11%	5%
Wors	2kg	R138,65	R171,94	R165,25	-R 6,68	R 26,61	-4%	19%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R100,98	R92,94	R90,89	-R 2,05	-R 10,09	-2%	-10%
Fish	2kg	R116,44	R136,94	R133,94	-R 3,00	R 17,50	-2%	15%
Tomatoes	6kg	R107,57	R109,98	R124,75	R 14,77	R 17,18	13%	16%
Carrots	5kg	R21,59	R38,32	R31,99	-R 6,33	R 10,40	-17%	48%
Butternut	10kg	R58,84	R75,98	R70,10	-R 5,88	R 11,26	-8%	19%
Spinach	8 bunches	R127,92	R79,92	R100,00	R 20,08	-R 27,92	25%	-22%
Cabbage	2 heads	R32,98	R27,99	R31,48	R 3,49	-R 1,50	12%	-5%
Green pepper	2kg	R57,98	R89,18	R39,98	-R 49,20	-R 18,00	-55%	-31%
Cremora	800g	R42,99	R52,39	R54,39	R 2,00	R 11,40	4%	27%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R129,54	R133,14	R137,94	R 4,80	R 8,40	4%	6%
Canned beans	410g x6	R82,74	R89,94	R88,74	-R 1,20	R 6,00	-1%	7%
Bananas	4kg	R44,96	R76,96	R46,36	-R 30,60	R 1,40	-40%	3%
Apples	3kg	R37,39	R52,49	R47,79	-R 4,70	R 10,40	-9%	28%
Oranges	7kg	R31,00	R139,93	R139,93	R 0,00	R 108,93	0%	351%
Margarine	1kg	R46,79	R47,19	R45,59	-R 1,60	-R 1,20	-3%	-3%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R63,58	R75,58	R73,58	-R 2,00	R 10,00	-3%	16%
Polony	2.5kg	R66,59	R75,74	R75,99	R 0,25	R 9,40	0%	14%
Apricot jam	900g	R27,39	R36,79	R35,99	-R 0,80	R 8,60	-2%	31%
White bread	25 loaves	R407,35	R389,85	R389,80	-R 0,05	-R 17,55	0%	-4%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R364,85	R359,95	R359,90	-R 0,05	-R 4,95	0%	-1%
Total household food basket		R 4 751,76	R5 238,76	R5 124,04	-R 114,73	R 372,28	-2,2%	7,8%

Month-on-month: The cost of the Pietermaritzburg household food basket *decreased* by **R114,73 (-2,2%)** from R5 238,76 in January 2024 to R5 124,04 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the Pietermaritzburg household food basket *increased* by **R372,28 (7,8%)** from R4 751,76 in February 2023 to R5 124,04 in February 2024.

15. FEBRUARY 2024 Household Food Index: Mtubatuba

Foods tracked	Quantity tracked	Index 2023/24			change in Rands		change in %	
		Feb_2023	Jan_2024	Feb_2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024	Jan 2024 vs. Feb 2024	Feb 2023 vs. Feb 2024
Maize meal	30kg	R341,97	R314,97	R288,97	-R 26,00	-R 53,00	-8%	-15%
Rice	10kg	R123,32	R175,66	R171,66	-R 4,00	R 48,33	-2%	39%
Cake Flour	10kg	R118,99	R114,99	R119,99	R 5,00	R 1,00	4%	1%
White sugar	10kg	R164,99	R194,99	R192,32	-R 2,67	R 27,33	-1%	17%
Sugar beans	5kg	R167,32	R242,07	R251,23	R 9,17	R 83,91	4%	50%
Samp	5kg	R63,66	R65,66	R65,66	R 0,00	R 2,00	0%	3%
Cooking oil	5L	R169,99	R159,66	R151,32	-R 8,33	-R 18,67	-5%	-11%
Salt	1kg	R12,49	R13,66	R12,32	-R 1,33	-R 0,17	-10%	-1%
Potatoes	10kg	R107,13	R136,17	R121,89	-R 14,29	R 14,76	-10%	14%
Onions	10kg	R145,22	R83,32	R88,08	R 4,76	-R 57,14	6%	-39%
Frozen chicken portions	10kg	R429,98	R409,98	R429,98	R 20,00	R 0,00	5%	0%
Curry powder	200g	R33,32	R37,99	R37,66	-R 0,33	R 4,33	-1%	13%
Stock cubes	24 cubes x2	R48,65	R55,31	R49,98	-R 5,33	R 1,33	-10%	3%
Soup	400g x2	R56,65	R59,98	R61,31	R 1,33	R 4,67	2%	8%
Tea	250g	R25,66	R28,99	R27,99	-R 1,00	R 2,33	-3%	9%
Full cream milk	6L	R89,99	R102,66	R100,99	-R 1,67	R 11,00	-2%	12%
Maas	4L	R56,32	R62,66	R65,99	R 3,33	R 9,67	5%	17%
Eggs	60 eggs	R126,65	R189,31	R163,98	-R 25,33	R 37,33	-13%	29%
Chicken feet	2kg	R82,98	R90,98	R73,98	-R 17,00	-R 9,00	-19%	-11%
Gizzards	2kg	R99,98	R100,98	R99,98	-R 1,00	R 0,00	-1%	0%
Chicken livers	2kg	R77,98	R85,98	R79,98	-R 6,00	R 2,00	-7%	3%
Beef liver	2kg	R94,98	R94,98	R94,98	R 0,00	R 0,00	0%	0%
Beef	2kg	R179,98	R159,98	R179,98	R 20,00	R 0,00	13%	0%
Wors	2kg	R168,98	R179,98	R184,98	R 5,00	R 16,00	3%	9%
Inyama yangaphakathi	2kg	R79,98	R89,98	R82,98	-R 7,00	R 3,00	-8%	4%
Fish	2kg	R111,98	R127,98	R142,98	R 15,00	R 31,00	12%	28%
Tomatoes	6kg	R143,94	R189,94	R149,95	-R 39,99	R 6,01	-21%	4%
Carrots	5kg	R40,99	R48,88	R43,21	-R 5,67	R 2,22	-12%	5%
Butternut	10kg	R83,55	R91,05	R89,66	-R 1,39	R 6,11	-2%	7%
Spinach	8 bunches	R87,92	R119,92	R119,92	R 0,00	R 32,00	0%	36%
Cabbage	2 heads	R34,65	R32,65	R35,31	R 2,67	R 0,67	8%	2%
Green pepper	2kg	R87,30	R89,96	R69,97	-R 19,99	-R 17,33	-22%	-20%
Cremora	800g	R46,66	R54,32	R52,66	-R 1,67	R 6,00	-3%	13%
Tinned pilchards	400g x6	R135,94	R147,94	R155,94	R 8,00	R 20,00	5%	15%
Canned beans	410g x6	R77,94	R97,94	R89,94	-R 8,00	R 12,00	-8%	15%
Bananas	4kg	R42,63	R69,29	R57,29	-R 12,00	R 14,67	-17%	34%
Apples	3kg	R47,66	R62,65	R53,32	-R 9,33	R 5,67	-15%	12%
Oranges	7kg	R122,43	R53,64	R174,93	R 121,29	R 52,50	226%	43%
Margarine	1kg	R41,32	R38,32	R36,32	-R 2,00	-R 5,00	-5%	-12%
Peanut butter	400g x2	R68,65	R93,98	R73,31	-R 20,67	R 4,67	-22%	7%
Polony	2.5kg	R69,32	R63,32	R63,32	R 0,00	-R 6,00	0%	-9%
Apricot jam	900g	R33,99	R43,66	R44,99	R 1,33	R 11,00	3%	32%
White bread	25 loaves	R408,08	R416,42	R395,58	-R 20,83	-R 12,50	-5%	-3%
Brown bread	25 loaves	R383,08	R374,75	R341,42	-R 33,33	-R 41,67	-9%	-11%
Total household food basket		R 5 135,18	R 5 467,49	R 5 388,22	-R 79,27	R 253,04	-1,4%	4,9%

Month-on-month: The cost of the **Mtubatuba household food basket** *decreased* by **R79,27 (-1,4%)** from R5 467,49 in January 2024 to R5 388,22 in February 2024.

Year-on-year: The cost of the **Mtubatuba household food basket** *increased* by **R253,04 (4,9%)** from R5 135,18 in February 2023 to R5 388,22 in February 2024.

16. Food Price Methodology

In 2019 we began a process of thinking through how to expand the scope of the Pietermaritzburg-based Household Affordability Index. The reason to expand the scope of the Pietermaritzburg data was to seek greater empirical evidence of the national picture of household affordability constraints and how families, living on low incomes, were responding to a deepening financial and economic crisis, given rising expenditure costs, job losses, stagnant employment, a deepening food crisis, deepening poverty and entrenched inequality.

The Pietermaritzburg Household Affordability Index is a realistic and accurate tool to measure inflation on basic expenditure items for households living on low incomes, whilst able to provide a picture of how families living on low incomes are responding to a deepening household affordability crisis. The data that we release monthly is important and provides a reflection of what is playing out in Pietermaritzburg but it is also able to provide a reasonable reflection of what might be playing out nationally. Expanding the scope of our data beyond Pietermaritzburg is an attempt to better track and analyse the national picture of household affordability.

In April 2020, PMBEJD started a process of expanding the scope of food price data collection and having conversations with women in four new areas: Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, and Springbok. Women living in low-income households within these areas were approached to work with us, talk with us, think with us, and track food prices and other expenditures in the areas in which they lived. The areas include Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow; Gugulethu, Philippi, Khayelitsha, Langa, Delft, Dunoon; KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, and Mtubatuba; and Springbok, and includes Pietermaritzburg.

Between April and August 2020 we ran a pilot, based on the Pietermaritzburg methodology, to (1) test which foods constitute the core foods and the volumes of these foods in the trollies of low income households in the new areas; (2) identify, test and verify supermarkets and butcheries which target the low-income market and where women living on low incomes do their shopping; and (3) collect food prices from the supermarkets and butcheries every two weeks (for 5 months), whilst improving the practice of selection of foods for greater accuracy of data (this included buying and cooking selected cheaper food brands to check quality), as well as to continually track and reflect how women themselves make decisions at the supermarket shelves.

The pilot was successful.

The outcomes of which were that the core foods identified by women as constituting those in the area-based household food baskets were very closely reflective of the foods and volumes of foods in the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket. Women agreed that the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket was a good proxy for the baskets in new areas, but that a few modifications should be made to improve its accuracy of area-based food purchasing dynamics to better reflect the core foods in the basket. In this regard several new foods were added to the new Food Basket, and some foods originally in the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket were increased/decreased in volume or dropped from the trolley.

The new Food Basket retains the core of the Pietermaritzburg Household Food Basket with the following modifications: **new foods** added are 6L Full cream milk, 2kg chicken livers, 2kg beef livers, 2kg fish (seasonal), 2kg green pepper and 7kg oranges. **Increased volumes** are 3kg apples (up from 1,5kg), 4 bars of 500g green bar bath soap (up from 2 bars of 500g), and 1,5L of *jik* (up from 750ml). **Reduced volumes** are 30kg maize meal (down from 35kg), 2kg chicken feet (down from 5kg), 1kg margarine (down from 2 x 1kg), and 1 x 900g apricot jam (down from 2 x 900g). **Removed item** is *jeyes fluid*. **The new Food Basket includes 44 foods & the Domestic & Hygiene Products Basket includes 14 products.**

The new basket reflects the most important foods in the trollies of families living on low incomes in the new areas. Because we have universalised the new basket (the basket is the same for all 6 areas: Joburg, Durban, Cape Town, Pietermaritzburg, Springbok and Mtubatuba), it is important to note that whilst the new basket reflects the core foods in the trollies across the six areas; there will be nuances within households and areas. For example, there will be differences in the volumes of starches (viz. maize meal and rice); types of meats (viz. chicken feet, fish, offal, and red meats); and purchasing of types of fruits and vegetables (seasonality). This is expected. The new basket therefore is a proxy of the foods, the volumes of foods and the cost of foods which form a household basket in each area and averaged for all areas. ***It cannot however be considered the basket for every family living on a low income in each area and for all areas covered. It is however considered a reasonable proxy for a food basket which***

women identified as including the most important typical foods which most households try and buy each month.

The supermarkets and butcheries selected by women are those which most households, in the areas in which they live, do their shopping in, and which offer the cheapest/or most affordable prices. These are all supermarkets which target the low-income market. In total, prices are tracked in 47 supermarkets and 32 butcheries.

The methodology used to collect food prices is unique and has some significant implications: (1) food price inflation is tempered by switching to cheaper brands if monthly prices increase beyond what women consider affordable or reasonable; and (2) [linked to 1] the cost of the household food basket month-to-month is relatively stable, and therefore provides an accurate measure of inflation, whilst also better able to show spikes (because women absorb price shocks by switching to cheaper brands – if there is a spike, then there really is a spike because the shock was not absorbed by switching as most brands of that food would have increased); and (3) the household food basket is accurately able to capture the real costs of food and other basic expenditures for households living on low incomes.

Implications of expanding the scope of the Household Affordability Index

Expanding the scope of the food price work provides a better lens into the national picture of food price inflation, the cost of a food basket, household affordability, low wages, and low social grants. Conversing with women in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, and Springbok further provides a deeper level of understanding on inflation on different foods, the vagaries of local contexts, the different ways women respond to food price and other expenditure fluctuations and how women cope on low incomes; and what different local situations look like and what women think about what is happening, and what should be done about it. Through dialogue and confirming stories and insights with all women data collectors we are also able to provide a joint narrative of what is happening (what the situation is like), whilst pulling out the nuances. The Household Affordability Index is better able to reflect the national picture of the deepening household affordability crisis.

Whilst we intend to continue broadening the scope of the Household Affordability Index, to include more areas in South Africa as well as including more expense and income data; and therefore improving data capacity to better reflect a wider national picture, whilst continually improving the accuracy of data collected and analysis, we are confident that the data and analysis which we now release to the public from September 2020 is sound, grounded, verifiable and accurate in capturing the real cost of foods as purchased by women living on low incomes, and the decisions taken by women at the supermarket shelves in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, Springbok and Pietermaritzburg.

Summary of the Household Food Basket

The Household Food Basket has been designed together with women living on low incomes in Johannesburg (Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow), Cape Town (Gugulethu, Philippi, Khayelitsha, Langa, Delft, Dunoon), Durban (KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, Hammarsdale, Pinetown), Pietermaritzburg, Mtubatuba (in Northern KwaZulu-Natal), and Springbok (in the Northern Cape). It includes the foods and the volumes of these foods which women living in a family of seven members (an average low-income household size) tell us they typically try and secure each month. **The Household Food Basket is not nutritionally complete. It is a basket of food which women try and secure each month for their families given affordability constraints.**

Food prices are tracked directly by women data collectors off the shelves of 47 supermarkets and 32 butcheries that target the low-income market and which women identified as those they shop at. Food selection at the supermarket shelves mirrors how women themselves make decisions at the supermarket shelves given affordability constraints viz. that the foods are chosen on relative affordability and reasonable quality, and food brands are switched to seek out the cheapest prices and special deals. The selection of food brands is dynamic and subjective. Women are smart and savvy, and shop around for bargains: this specific methodology used provides an accurate cost of a monthly household food basket, as purchased by women living on low incomes.

There are 44 foods in the Household Food Basket. The date for data collection is the first week of each month. Data is collected and released in the same month. Data is presented for each area, and it is also weighted and averaged for all 6 areas. Weighting is as follows: 25,5% for Joburg, Durban & Cape Town; 10,6% Pietermaritzburg, and 6,4% for Springbok, and Mtubatuba.

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