Key Data from May 2024
Household Affordability Index
29 May 2024
For immediate release

Key data from the May 2024 Household Affordability Index

The May 2024 Household Affordability Index, which tracks the prices of 44 basic foods from 47 supermarkets and 32 butcheries, in Johannesburg (Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow), Durban (KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, Hambarsdale and Pinetown), Cape Town (Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Philippi, Langa, Delft and Dunoon), Pietermaritzburg, Mtubatuba (in Northern KwaZulu-Natal), and Springbok (in the Northern Cape), shows that:

- **In May 2024**: The average cost of the Household Food Basket is R5 330,30.
- **Month-on-month**: The average cost of the Household Food Basket decreased by R6,01 (-0,1%), from R5 336,31 in April 2024 to R5 330,30 in May 2024.
- **Year-on-year**: The average cost of the Household Food Basket increased by R258,70 (5,1%), from R5 071,59 in May 2023 to R5 330,30 in May 2024.

Food pricing trends in May 2024.

Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked. Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked. For media enquiries, contact: Mervyn Abrahams on 079 398 9384 and mervyn@pmbejd.org.za

Website: www.pmbejd.org.za. Facebook: www.Facebook.com/pmbejd

Food pricing trends in May 2024. Food pricing trends in May 2024. Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked. Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked.

- **Foods in the basket which increased in price in May 2024 by 5% or more**, include: tea (5%), fish (6%), and butternut (9%).

- **Foods in the basket which increased in price in May 2024 by 2% or more**, include: maize meal (3%), white sugar (2%), salt (4%), maize (2%), chicken gizzards (3%), beef liver (2%), tomatoes (2%), cabbage (2%), cremora (4%), canned beans (3%), apples (2%), and peanut butter (2%).

- **Foods in the basket which decreased in price in May 2024, by 5% or more**, include: green peppers (-12%), bananas (-7%), and oranges (-14%).

- **Foods in the basket which decreased in price in May 2024, by 2% or more**, include: onions (-3%), soup (-2%), chicken feet (-2%), wors (-3%), beef tripe (-2%), margarine (-2%), apricot jam (-3%), and brown bread (-3%).

See page 2 of May 2024, Household Affordability Index.

Statistics South Africa’s latest Consumer Price Index. Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked. Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked.

Statistics South Africa’s latest Consumer Price Index for April 2024 shows that **Headline inflation was 5,2%**, and for the **lowest expenditure quintiles 1-3 it is 6,1%, 5,6%, and 5,2%** respectively. CPI Food inflation was 4,4% (for CPI Food & NAB it was 4,7%, we use the figure excluding non-alcoholic beverages). STATS SA’s **Producer Price Index** for March 2024 shows **agriculture was 8,5%**.

Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked.
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In May 2024, food baskets increased in Durban and Mtubatuba. Food baskets decreased in Joburg, Cape Town, Springbok and Pietermaritzburg.
The Joburg basket decreased by R18,90 (-0.3%) month-on-month, and increased by R528,42 (10.4%) year-on-year, to R5 593.29 in May 2024. The Durban basket increased by R83.79 (1.6%) month-on-month, and increased by R300.20 (6.0%) year-on-year, to R5 340.79 in May 2024. The Cape Town basket decreased by R56.76 (-1.1%) month-on-month, and increased by R105.00 (2.1%) year-on-year, to R5 129.99 in May 2024. The Springbok basket decreased by R144.68 (-2.5%) month-on-month, and increased by R86.02 (1.6%) year-on-year, to R5 577.48 in May 2024. The Maritzburg basket decreased by R66.53 (-1.3%) month-on-month, and increased by R51.80 (1.0%) year-on-year, to R4 993.78 in May 2024. The Mtubatuba basket increased by R39.96 (0.8%) month-on-month, and increased by R86.35 (1.6%) year-on-year, to R5 324.08 in May 2024.

(See pages 10-15 for area specific data, in the May 2024, Household Affordability Index).

Women and children
In May 2024, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet was R954.58. Over the past month, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet decreased by R4,80 or -0.5%. Year-on-year, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet increased by R53.39 or 5.9% (See page 6 of May 2024, Household Affordability Index).

In May 2024, the Child Support Grant of R530 is 30% below the Food Poverty Line of R760, and 45% below the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet (R954.58).

Workers
The National Minimum Wage is R27,58 an hour and R220,64 for an 8-hour day. In May 2024, with 21 working days, the maximum National Minimum Wage for a General Worker is R4 633.44. Workers work to support their families. The wage workers earn is not just to sustain themselves alone, it is used to support the entire family. For Black South African workers, one wage typically must support 4 people. Dispersed in a worker’s family of 4 persons, the NMW, is R1 158.36 per person – this is below the upper-bound poverty line of R1 558 per person per month.

The May 2024 average cost of a basic nutritional food basket for a family of four persons is R3 745.15 (See page 6 of May 2024, Household Affordability Index).

On our calculations, using Pietermaritzburg-based figures for electricity and transport, and the average figure for a minimum nutritional basket of food for a family of four, puts electricity, and transport, taking up 55.8% of a worker’s wage (R2 586.92/R4 633.44). Food is bought after monies for transport and electricity have been paid for or set aside (leaving R2 046.52 – for food and everything else), and so in May 2024, PMBEJD calculates that workers’ families will underspend on food by a minimum of 45.4% (having R2 046.52 left over after transport and electricity, and with food costing R3 745.15). In this scenario there is no possibility of a worker being able to afford enough nutritious food for her family. If the entire R2 046.52 all went to buy food, then for a family of 4 persons, we are looking at R511.63 per person per month. This is below the food poverty line of R760 (See page 8 of May 2024, Household Affordability Index).

Household domestic and personal hygiene products
The May 2024 Household Domestic & Personal Hygiene Index shows an increase of R16.71 (1.7%) month-on-month. Year-on-year the household domestic and personal hygiene products index increased by R78.29 (8.3%) bringing the total average cost of basic household domestic and personal hygiene products to R1 023.63 in May 2024 (See page 5 of May 2024, Household Affordability Index).

The cost of basic hygiene products is high. These products compete in the household purse with food. These products are essential for good health and hygiene.

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