

CONFIDENTIAL. To be treated as strictly confidential until released for publication as follows -

EVENING PAPERS - FRIDAY, 26th FEBRUARY, 1932.

MORNING PAPERS - SATURDAY, 27th FEBRUARY, 1932.

COST OF FOOD AND GROCERIES - JANUARY, 1932.

The results of the investigations made under the direction of the Minister for Home Affairs by the Acting Commonwealth Statistician (Professor L.F. Giblin), as to the price of food and groceries (46 commodities) have been made available for the month of January, 1932.

BASE PERIOD. The index numbers in the attached table are computed to the base, 1923-27 = 1000, which has replaced the 1911 base since January, 1930.

Food prices in January, 1932, showed little change on the whole when compared with the previous month. Increases in some towns were practically counterbalanced by decreases in other towns, resulting in the price levels for the 6 Capitals, and also for the 30 Towns, showing slight upward movements. In five States increases were recorded - Western Australia, 3.1%; Tasmania, 1.3%; Victoria, 0.8%; New South Wales, 0.5%; and South Australia, 0.1%, while in Queensland a decrease of 0.8% was registered.

Compared with January of last year, prices were lower in all States - South Australia, 9.1%; Victoria 8.5%; Tasmania 7.8%; New South Wales, 6.3%; Western Australia, 5.4%; and Queensland 3.6%. The index number for the 30 towns considered as a whole was 814 in January, 1932, compared with 876 in January, 1931, a decrease of 7.1%.

The increase in cost since July, 1914, was greatest in New South Wales, 31.7%; followed by Queensland 28.1%; Victoria 26.2%; Tasmania, 20.5%; South Australia, 11.5%; and Western Australia, 6.2%. The increase in the 30 towns considered as a whole since July, 1914, was 25.0%; and in the 6 Capitals, 25.7%. The actual cost of the regimen of food and groceries for January, 1932, was highest in New South Wales and lowest in Queensland. In the case of the individual towns the cost was highest in Kalgoorlie and lowest in Toowoomba.

Compared with December, 1931, there was a slight upward movement in the January price level. The most noticeable changes were increases in the price of potatoes in most of the towns, and a fairly general decrease in egg and butter prices. Meat prices generally were steady, the only outstanding variations being increases in all classes of meat in Perth, decreases in prices of mutton in Launceston and Warrnambool, and increases in mutton prices in Adelaide.

RETAIL PRICE INDEXES.

Based upon Cost of Food and Groceries only.

JANUARY, 1932.

Retail price Index Numbers for each of the 30

Principal Towns in Australia for the periods specified.

Weighted average cost in the Six Capital Cities during the five-yearly
base period, 1923-27 = 1000.

TOWN.	July, 1914	Average 5-yearly period 1923-27.	January, 1931.	December, 1931.	January, 1932.	Percentage Increase from July, 1914 to Janu- ary, 1932.
Sydney	645	1012	915	855	860	33.3
Newcastle	642	1015	903	837	835	30.1
Broken Hill	821	1155	1094	958	970	18.1
Woolburn	661	1018	880	818	813	23.0
Melhurst	613	974	896	844	834	36.1
<u>Wt. Aver. - N.S. Wales</u> <u>(5 Towns)</u>	652	1016	918	856	860	31.9
Melbourne	619	978	852	771	778	25.7
Ballarat	617	989	869	787	790	28.0
Geelong	619	993	871	804	796	28.6
Shepparton	609	967	822	791	790	29.7
Warrnambool	608	967	854	808	804	32.2
<u>Wt. Aver. - Victoria</u> <u>(5 Towns)</u>	618	978	852	774	780	26.2
Brisbane	591	960	795	770	765	29.4
Bowen Hills	582	934	794	751	739	27.0
Rockhampton	646	988	858	847	847	31.1
Charter Towers	696	1074	903	903	900	29.3
Warwick	605	951	796	801	787	30.1
<u>Wt. Aver. - Q'land.</u> <u>(5 Towns)</u>	605	965	804	781	775	28.1
Adelaide	699	1025	846	769	769	10.0
Perth	688	1032	949	855	854	24.1
Port Pirie	722	1060	932	830	845	17.0
Mount Gambier	595	989	829	761	781	31.3
Westborough	749	1064	917	858	841	12.3
<u>Wt. Aver. - S. Australia</u> <u>(5 Towns)</u>	697	1026	854	775	776	11.3
Perth	749	1042	870	792	820	9.5
Algoonlie	931	1179	998	972	982	5.5
Northam	-	1104	937	863	870	-
Merbury	793	1094	922	822	810	2.1
Wardellton	808	1112	926	892	889	10.0
<u>Wt. Aver. - W. Australia</u> <u>(5 Towns)</u>	790	1060	887	814	839	6.2
Adelaide	678	1027	875	795	804	18.6
Muncheon	640	1013	867	786	796	24.4
Warrnambool	-	1040	896	835	852	-
Wynonport	-	1035	864	830	852	-
Warrnambool	735	1127	1027	916	910	23.8
<u>Wt. Aver. - Tasmania</u> <u>(5 Towns)</u>	672	1027	879	800	810	20.5
<u>Wt. Aver. - Australia (30 Towns)</u>	651	1003	876	809	814	25.0
<u>Wt. Aver. - Australia (6 Caps.)</u>	645	1000 (base)	872	805	811	25.7
Canberra (a)	(b)	(b)	993	919	919	-
Warrnambool (a)	(b)	1091	904	934	946	-

(a) Not included in weighted averages.

(b) Not available.