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COST OF FOOD AND GROCERIES - JUNE, 1930.

The results of the investigations made under the direction of the Minister for Home Affairs by the Commonwealth Statistician and Actuary (Mr Chas. H. Wickens) as to the price of food and groceries (46 Commodities) have been made available for the month of June, 1930.

Change of Base Period. - Special attention is directed to the base period to which the index numbers in the attached tables are computed. In tabulations of retail prices of food and groceries prior to and including December, 1929, the base (1000) to which the index numbers were computed was the weighted average aggregate cost in the year, 1911, for the six Capital Cities of the commodities included in the investigations. Consideration of the desirability of computing retail price indexes on a post war period base was given by the last Conference of Statisticians and it was resolved that the period of five years - 1923-1927 be adopted as base for retail price indexes.

Other leading countries have adopted a post war base period as it was considered that the ante war period was out of date and that index numbers based thereon did not give as clear an idea of modern variations as could be obtained by means of a more recent basis.

The adoption of a post war base period does not affect the relative positions of index numbers for past periods and localities as compared with the current index numbers, the base to which all indexes in the attached table are computed being the five years period - 1923-1927.

It is intended to continue the computation of the retail price index numbers (food, groceries and rent of all houses) used by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in the determination of rates of wage on the original base, viz., Year 1911 = 1000.

Compared with the preceding month, May, 1930, a decrease of 1.0% was recorded in the case of the 30 Towns considered as a whole and a decrease of 1.1% in the 6 Capital Cities of the Commonwealth.

All of the States registered decreases when compared with the previous month, South Australia with a decrease of 2.5% showing the greatest fall, then Western Australia 1.9%, Tasmania 1.1%, Queensland 0.8% and New South Wales and Victoria, 0.7%.

Compared with the corresponding month, June, of last year, decreases were recorded in all of the States. Western Australia with a decrease of 9.4% registered the largest, followed by South Australia 9.2%, Queensland 8.8%, Victoria 7.2%, New South Wales 6.7% and Tasmania 3.6%.

The weighted average index number for the 30 Towns considered as a whole was 968 in June, 1930, compared with 1045 in June 1929, a decrease of 7.4%.

In the following table particulars are given in the form of index numbers of the price levels of food and groceries in June, 1930, compared with July, 1914, the base period 1923-1927, June, 1929 and May 1930.

In the last column, the percentage increase in June, 1930, compared with July, 1914, is shown.

The base, 1000, to which the index numbers are computed is the weighted average aggregate cost in the recently adopted five-yearly base period, 1923-1927, for the six Capital Cities of the commodities included in the investigations.

The increase in the cost since July, 1914 was greatest in New South Wales, 54.8%, followed in the order named by Victoria 51.6%, Tasmania 44.9%, Queensland 42.8%, South Australia 39.3%, and Western Australia 30.0%.

The increase in the 30 Towns considered as a whole since July, 1914, was 48.7%

The actual cost of the regimen of food and groceries for the month of June, 1930 was highest in Western Australia and lowest in Queensland.

In the case of the individual towns, the cost was greatest in Broken Hill and lowest in Brisbane.

Compared with the previous month (May), retail prices of food and groceries during June showed no outstanding variations, but the general trend was towards a reduction. Flour, milk and meat were retailed at slightly reduced prices in Sydney, while in Melbourne, tea, cheese, eggs and potatoes showed small reductions. Prices of flour, tea, potatoes, cheese, eggs, and bacon were lower in Queensland in June than in the previous month. In Adelaide, flour, tea, potatoes, eggs, bacon and meat were lower in price. Flour, eggs, meat and bacon showed reduced prices in Perth, and in Hobart, tea, potatoes, eggs and meat were slightly lower. The price of butter showed a slight increase in most of the towns included in the investigation.

Flour, potatoes, eggs and meat, on the other hand, showed prices on a slightly lower level in all States.

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS,

CANBERRA, F.C.T. -- 23rd JULY, 1930.

RETAIL PRICE INDEXES

Based upon the cost of Food and Groceries only.

JUNE, 1930.

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 five yearly period - 1923-1927 = 1000.

Town	July 1914	Average- 5 yearly period 1923-1927	June 1929	May 1930	June 1930	Percentage increase from July 1914 to June, 1930.
Sydney	645	1012	1079	1012	1004	55.7
Newcastle	642	1015	1044	1004	999	55.6
Broken Hill	821	1155	1282	1227	1224	49.1
Coulburn	661	1018	1080	999	999	51.1
Bathurst	613	974	1016	995	985	60.7
Wt. Aver. N.S.W. (5 Towns)	652	1016	1081	1016	1009	54.8
Melbourne	619	978	1010	940	932	50.6
Ballarat	617	989	1021	985	979	58.7
Bendigo	619	993	1024	997	996	60.9
Geelong	609	967	994	936	931	52.9
Warrnambool	608	967	967	954	951	56.4
Wt. Aver. Victoria (5 Towns)	618	978	1010	944	937	51.6
Brisbane	591	960	938	857	853	44.3
Toowoomba	582	934	909	868	855	46.9
Rockhampton	646	988	994	927	916	41.8
Charters Towers	696	1074	1096	1010	978	40.5
Warwick	605	951	955	901	893	47.6
Wt. Aver. Queensland (5 Towns)	605	965	947	871	864	42.8
Adelaide	699	1025	1065	989	962	37.6
Kadina	688	1032	1133	1085	1069	55.4
Port Pirie	722	1060	1098	1065	1066	47.6
Mt. Gambier	595	989	1025	938	925	55.5
Peterborough	749	1064	1156	1088	1080	44.2
Wt. Aver. South Aus- tralia (5 Towns)	697	1026	1069	996	971	39.3
Perth	749	1042	1109	1022	998	33.2
Kalgoorlie	931	1179	1314	1205	1208	29.8
Northam	..	1104	1185	1100	1090	..
Bunbury	793	1094	1188	1128	1121	41.4
Geraldton	808	1112	1157	1103	1104	36.6
Wt. Aver. W. Australia (5 Towns)	720	1060	1134	1047	1027	30.0
Hobart	678	1027	1015	989	974	43.7
Launceston	640	1013	974	960	956	49.4
Burnie	..	1040	1055	1045	1031	..
Darwinport	..	1035	1020	962	958	..
Queenstown	735	1127	1141	1095	1090	48.3
Wt. Aver. Tasmania (5 Towns)	672	1027	1010	985	974	44.9
Wt. Aver. Australia (30 Towns)	651	1003	1045	978	969	48.7
Wt. Aver. Australia (5 Caps)	645	Base 1000	1043	972	961	49.0
Canberra (a)	(b)	(b)	1149	1108	1098	..
Townsville (a)	(b)	1091	1109	1035	997	..

(a) Not included in weighted averages

(b) Not available