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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX MONTHLY FOOD GROUP INDEX, DARWIN, OCTOBER 1978

INQUIRIES

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MAIN FEATURES

The Darwin Food Group Index for the month of October 1978 (base : June quarter 1978 = 100.0) was 102.3 which represents an increase of 2.6% from the index for September 1978.

Main price changes between September 1978 and October 1978.

- Increased prices for fresh fruit and vegetables and beef accounted for approximately one-half of the increase.
- There were also price increases for poultry, lamb and eggs.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This bulletin contains monthly index numbers of retail prices of food in Darwin. Index numbers are shown for the Food Group and component subgroups of the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Food Group is the only group of the CPI for which price indexes are compiled for Darwin.

- This bulletin also contains quarterly average retail prices for the June and September quarters of 1978 for selected items of food included in the Food Group index (see Table 3).

Collection of prices

- Prices are collected at about the middle of each month, from a sample of Darwin retailers.

Weighting pattern

- The Food Group consists of 34 expenditure classes which are combined into seven subgroups : dairy produce; cereal products; meat and seafoods; fruit and vegetables; soft drinks, ice cream and confectionery; meals out and take-away food; and other food. Each expenditure class has its own weight, or measure of relative importance within the Food Group. In calculating the index, price changes for the various expenditure classes are combined using these weights.

- The weighting pattern of the Darwin Food Group Index is based on expenditures on food reported

by Darwin households included in the 1975-76 Household Expenditure Survey. These weights are fixed but from time to time the index will be reviewed and new fixed weights will be introduced to reflect up-to-date expenditure patterns. The relative importance of each expenditure class, expressed in terms of percentage contributions to the total Food Group in June quarter 1978, was shown in Table 5 of the first issue of this bulletin which was released on 12 October 1978.

Index points and percentage changes

6. Movements in indexes from one period to another can be expressed either as percentage changes or as changes in 'index points'. The difference between these two methods of describing movements in indexes is shown by the following example :

Food Group : Fruit and vegetables
(Base : June quarter 1978 = 100.0)

Index numbers :

October 1978	102.1
Less : September 1978	96.2
Change in index points	+5.9

$$\text{Percentage change} = \frac{+5.9}{96.2} \times 100 = +6.1\%$$

Interpretation of results

- The index numbers measure changes in retail food prices in Darwin over time. They do not provide a basis for comparing price levels in Darwin with those in other capital cities.

- When comparing price movements in Darwin with those published for the other capital cities (see 6402.0), it should be noted that fluctuations in fresh food prices are frequently the main cause of disparate movements in the indexes for various cities. When comparing the Darwin indexes with those for other cities, it should also be noted especially that the Darwin indexes have a different reference base: for Darwin the base period is June quarter 1978 = 100.0 whereas the indexes for the other capital cities have a base period of 1966-67 = 100.0. Thus comparisons of movements for Darwin with movements for other cities are best made in terms of percentage changes. Because prices of fresh food items are subject to large short term fluctuations, month-to-month price changes should not be interpreted

in isolation and without reference to changes over longer periods.

9. Table 2 provides a detailed analysis of recent price movements in the Food Group Index for Darwin. It shows index numbers and percentage changes for subgroups and other groupings within the Food Group. Table 2 also shows the *contribution* which each subgroup makes to the total Food Group. These are expressed in terms of 'Food Group index points'. For instance, in October 1978 the Dairy produce subgroup contributed 7.78 index points out of the total Food Group Index of 102.3. The final column indicates the contribution to the change in Food Group Index points by each of the subgroups and groupings. It should be noted that this is a different presentation from that used to show index points contributions for other capital cities (published in 6402.0). For the other cities these contributions relate to *All Groups index points* (that is, contributions made by each subgroup to the *total CPI*).

10. Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in Table 2 are due to rounding. For similar reasons, monthly movements shown by subgroup index numbers do not necessarily correspond exactly with the changes shown in index points.

Historical series

11. Indexes for periods extending back to February 1975 were published in the first issue of this bulletin which was released on 12 October 1978.

Average retail prices

12. Table 3 contains average retail prices for selected items in the Food Group for June and

September quarters 1978. The items and varieties shown do not comprise *all* of the items and varieties which are incorporated in the Food Group. The average prices shown in Table 3 are quarterly averages of the monthly average prices.

13. Prices shown are the averages of prices for specified grades, qualities, brands, etc. charged by a number of selected retailers. The specified grades, etc. and the retailers have been selected as representative for the purpose of measuring price changes over time. Thus the prices do not purport to be the actual average prices for all retail sales of these items. They should be regarded as no more than approximate indicators of price levels and price changes for the items concerned.

Related publications

14. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications which are available on request:

Consumer Price Index (6401.0)

Consumer Price Index, Monthly Food Group Index, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6402.0)

Average Retail Prices of Selected Items, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6403.0)

A Guide to the Consumer Price Index

15. All publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0) which is available free of charge from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- nil, or less than half the final digit shown
- n.a. not available
- .. not applicable

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TABLE 1. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX : FOOD GROUP : DARWIN
(Base of index : June quarter 1978 = 100.0)

	Index numbers	Percentage change from previous month	Percentage change from corresponding month of previous year	Percentage change from previous year
1975-76	77.9	..	..	n.a.
1976-77	87.3	..	..	+12.1
1977-78	96.7	..	..	+10.8
1977-78				
September	94.7	+0.7	+12.7	..
October	95.1	+0.4	+11.4	..
November	95.8	+0.7	+10.5	..
December	96.1	+0.3	+10.8	..
January	97.1	+1.0	+10.5	..
February	97.6	+0.5	+10.0	..
March	97.5	-0.1	+9.7	..
April	99.2	+1.7	+9.9	..
May	100.1	+0.9	+9.9	..
June	100.6	+0.5	+9.2	..
1978-79				
July	99.1	-1.5	+6.4	..
August	99.1	-	+5.4	..
September	99.7	+0.6	+5.3	..
October	102.3	+2.6	+7.6	..

TABLE 2. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX : FOOD GROUP AND COMPONENT SUBGROUPS : DARWIN
(Base of each index : June quarter 1978 = 100.0)

	Index numbers		Change between Sept. 1978 and Oct. 1978 %	Contribution to total Food Group (expressed as Food Group index points)		Change between Sept. 1978 and Oct. 1978
	September 1978	October 1978		September 1978	October 1978	
Dairy produce	98.9	100.3	+1.4	7.66	7.78	+0.12
Cereal products	95.8	97.1	+1.4	7.33	7.42	+0.09
Meat and seafoods	103.6	108.2	+4.4	22.66	23.65	+0.99
Beef and veal	106.1	110.8	+4.4	9.19	9.60	+0.41
Lamb and mutton	97.1	103.3	+6.4	3.08	3.27	+0.19
Pork	103.2	103.8	+0.6	1.50	1.51	+0.01
Poultry	98.5	107.2	+8.8	2.38	2.59	+0.21
Other meat	104.0	107.3	+3.2	3.73	3.85	+0.12
Fish	107.8	109.8	+1.9	2.78	2.83	+0.05
Fruit and vegetables	96.2	102.1	+6.1	16.89	17.93	+1.04
Fresh fruit and vegetables	95.6	104.1	+8.9	11.03	12.01	+0.98
Processed fruit and vegetables	97.3	98.2	+0.9	5.86	5.91	+0.05
Soft drinks, ice cream and confectionery	99.8	99.9	+0.1	12.46	12.48	+0.02
Meals out and take-away food	101.9	102.5	+0.6	24.26	24.40	+0.14
Other food	94.7	97.2	+2.6	8.40	8.63	+0.23
Food Group	99.7	102.3	+2.6	99.7	102.3	+2.6

TABLE 3. AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF SELECTED ITEMS, DARWIN
(Cents)

Item	Unit	June quarter 1978	September quarter 1978
Dairy produce			
Milk, cartoned	600 ml	26	26
Milk, evaporated	410g can	32	30
Cheese, processed	250g	58	59
Butter	500g	110	98
Cereal products			
Bread, milk loaf, sliced	750g	64	59
Biscuits, dry	225g	45	43
Breakfast cereal, corn based	500g	75	75
Flour, self-raising	1kg	53	54
Rice	500g	42	43
Meat and seafoods			
Beef			
Rib, without bone	1kg	210	214
Rump steak	1kg	374	386
T-bone steak, with fillet	1kg	338	353
Chuck steak	1kg	190	194
Silverside, corned	1kg	220	236
Sausages	1kg	153	167
Lamb			
Leg	1kg	303	308
Loin chops	1kg	319	312
Forequarter chops	1kg	298	306
Pork			
Leg	1kg	367	377
Chops	1kg	370	374
Chicken, frozen	1kg	209	212
Bacon	250g pkt	138	145
Beef, corned	340g can	104	95
Salmon, pink	220g can	107	102
Fruit and vegetables			
Oranges	1kg	80	80
Bananas	1kg	104	124
Potatoes	1kg	50	52
Tomatoes	1kg	188	117
Carrots	1kg	91	97
Onions	1kg	84	84
Peaches	825g can	76	72
Pineapple, pieces	450g can	47	44
Peas, frozen	500g pkt	76	74
Confectionery			
Chocolate, block	200g	92	92
Other food			
Eggs	55g, 1 dozen	127	124
Sugar	2kg	78	75
Jam, strawberry	500g jar	90	93
Tea	250g	92	75
Coffee, instant	100g jar	223	206
Tomato sauce	600ml	80	72
Margarine, table, poly-unsaturated	500g	93	88
Baked beans, in tomato sauce	450g	40	37
Baby food	125g can	20	18