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<u>EVENING PAPERS</u>	..	<u>SATURDAY, 3rd SEPTEMBER, 1932.</u>
<u>MORNING PAPERS</u>	..	<u>MONDAY, 5th SEPTEMBER, 1932.</u>

COST OF FOOD AND GROCERIES - JULY, 1932.

The results of the investigations made under the direction of the Honorable the Treasurer by the Acting Commonwealth Statistician (Professor L. F. Giblin), as to the price of food and groceries (44 commodities) have been made available for the month of July, 1932.

It may be noticed that the number of commodities (44) is two less than the number hitherto used. This month has been ^{the} the occasion for making some necessary revisions in the regimen of food to harmonize with present day usage. The old regimen was based on the average consumption during the years 1906-10, and the revised regimen on that of the years 1927-29. The principal alterations were in the relative weights of the commodities used. Relatively to bread, the consumption of sugar, milk, butter and eggs had increased considerably, and that of potatoes, jam, and rice decreased considerably. It has happened, however, that practically no error has been introduced into the index by using weights during the last few years that were out-of-date. The index has been taken out with both the new weights and the old, back to 1911, and it has been found that the index in 1932 is practically the same whether the old or the new weights are taken. Each change of weight would make a small difference to the index, up or down, and these small errors have balanced, leaving no appreciable error in the full index. What is done precisely in accordance with general principles is to take the index based on the old weights up to the point of change in June, 1932, and to vary it thereafter in accordance with the new weights. The effect of the change will be to make the index more accurate from month to month, and year to year, but the long run effect of the change over a term of years will probably be as small in the future as it has been in the period since 1911. The opportunity was taken at the same time to make other slight amendments, in accordance with recommendations made by the Conference of Statisticians at Brisbane in 1930. Canned and dried fruit, canned fish, syrup and sausages were added to the regimen, and insignificant items such as blue and starch were dropped. Some other items, chiefly certain joints of meat were also omitted, because it was impossible to get consistent prices for them. The total effect, in spite of the reduction in the number of items, is to broaden the basis on which the index is based. It is not to be expected, however, that this broadening of the basis will have any other effect than to steady it a little from month to month, leaving the long-term changes practically unaffected.

Full details of the revision of the regimen and of its effect will be given in the forthcoming Labour Report for 1931.

Compared with the previous month, the price level of Food and Groceries for July showed little variation in all States except Western Australia, where a decline was recorded. The price level for the 6 Capitals decreased 0.5%, and for the 30 Towns, 0.4%. Percentage decreases in the figures for the States were - Western Australia, 2.6%; Tasmania 0.8%; Queensland, 0.9%; South Australia, 0.4%; Victoria, 0.3%; while in New South Wales an increase of 0.1% was recorded.

Retail prices in July showed little variation when compared with June. Potato prices were higher in some towns and lower in others, while onions showed a general increase in cost. Butter prices were higher in practically all of the towns; while eggs, on the other hand, showed a general decrease, and milk prices were substantially reduced in Devonport. Meat prices, generally, remained steady, the noticeable variations being slight decreases in the prices of all classes in Brisbane, Adelaide, and Ballarat, a decided decrease in the cost of all cuts in Perth, and a substantial reduction in beef prices in Geraldton.

RETAIL PRICE INDEXES.

Based upon Cost of Good and Groceries only.

JULY, 1932.

Retail Price Index Numbers for each of the 30

Principal Towns in Australia.

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	July, 1931	June, 1932	July, 1932	Percentage increase from July, 1914 to July, 1932.
Sydney	645	1012	863	852	852	32.1
Newcastle.. ..	642	1015	857	835	840	30.8
Broken Hill	821	1155	968	960	969	18.0
Goulburn	661	1018	829	836	840	27.1
Bathurst	613	974	839	823	825	34.6
<u>Ht. Average - New South Wales</u>	652	1016	865	853	854	31.0
Melbourne	619	978	766	761	759	22.6
Ballarat	617	989	800	755	746	20.9
Bendigo	619	993	807	781	778	25.7
Geelong	609	967	756	779	778	27.8
Warrnambool	608	967	787	800	801	31.7
<u>Ht. Average - Victoria</u>	618	978	769	762	760	23.0
Brisbane	591	960	757	739	732	23.9
Toowoomba	582	934	740	733	732	25.8
Rockhampton	646	988	820	802	798	23.5
Charters Towers	696	1074	896	879	866	24.4
Warwick	605	951	783	772	772	27.6
<u>Ht. Average - Queensland</u>	605	965	766	750	743	22.8
Adelaide	699	1025	762	769	766	9.6
Kadina	688	1032	845	853	853	24.0
Port Pirie	722	1060	830	820	819	13.4
Mount Gambier	595	989	764	775	768	29.1
Peterborough	749	1064	835	814	815	8.8
<u>Ht. Average - South Australia</u>	697	1026	768	775	772	10.8
Perth	749	1042	819	826	802	7.1
Kalgoorlie	931	1179	981	971	968	4.0
Northam	-	1104	872	870	859	-
Bunbury	793	1094	882	843	832	4.9
Geraldton	808	1112	910	888	863	6.8
<u>Ht. Average - Western Australia</u>	790	1060	840	844	822	4.1
Hobart	678	1027	789	790	786	15.9
Launceston	640	1013	802	779	771	20.5
Burnie	-	1040	820	827	826	-
Devonport	-	1035	801	829	807	-
Queenstown	735	1127	900	900	899	22.3
<u>Ht. Average - Tasmania</u>	672	1027	798	794	788	17.3
<u>Ht. Average - Australia (30 Towns)</u>	651	1003	811	803	800	22.9
<u>Ht. Average - Australia (6 Caps.)</u>	645	1000 base	806	800	796	23.4
Canberra (a)	(b)	(b)	943	904	901	-
Townsville (a)	(b)	1091	912	842	833	-

(a) Not included in weighted averages.

(b) Not available.