

FOOD BASKET PRICE WEEKLY COMMENT

30 April 2020

Since the start of the lockdown, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) has measured price changes for “essential” goods that appear in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket. Stats SA is temporarily publishing this inflation data on a weekly basis, albeit for a smaller range of goods than usual. It is based on product prices from retail stores that were available online.

Food and non-alcoholic beverage inflation remained at 4.2% during March 2020 year-on-year (y-o-y), with Headline inflation decreasing to 4.1%. Considering a more frequent monitoring of the changes in prices, **Figure 1** presents an illustration of the average weekly nominal cost growth of essential food groups within the CPI basket, comparing the periods 2-9 April 2020 vs. 9-16 April 2020 vs. 16-23 April 2020 (week-on-week).

“Essential” food categories in the CPI food basket experiencing the highest weekly inflation during the week of 16-23 April 2020 include: fruit, sugary food products and oils & fats. This is contrary to the week of 9-16 April where hot beverages, bread & cereals and oils & fats were the largest contributors. When considering the monthly contributors of March 2020, fruit was the highest monthly contributor with 3.9%.

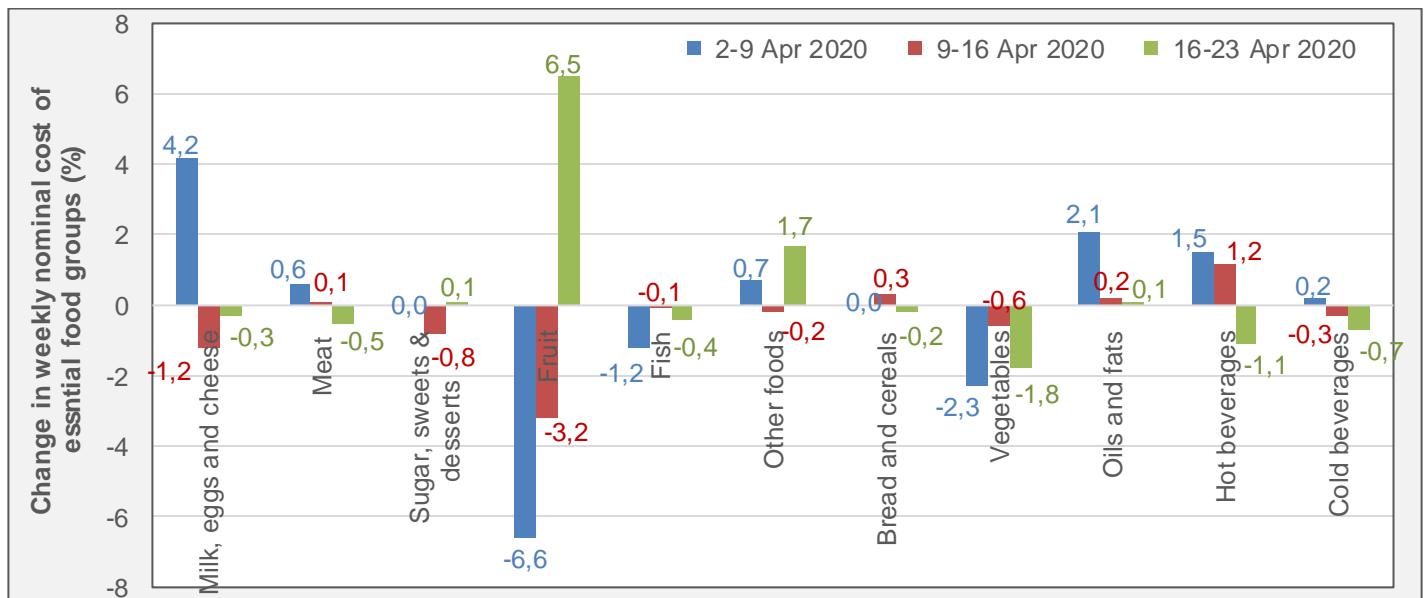


Figure 1: Nominal cost growth of specific food groups within the CPI food basket, comparing 2-9 April 2020 vs. 9-16 April 2020 vs. 16-23 April 2020

Source: Stats SA data, 2020