



FOOD BASKET PRICE MONTHLY



NAMC FOOD BASKET: 28 SELECTED FOOD ITEMS PRICES Issue 115 – June 2025

Food Basket Price Monthly

June 2025

Important note

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) updated the Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket of goods and services and the respective weights in the February 2025 CPI release.

The May 2025 official data is used in this report, as the official release of the June 2025 CPI data is scheduled for July 23, 2025 (see link below from the Stats SA website):

<https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141May2025.pdf>

Highlights

During May 2025, the nominal cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket amounted to R1330.33 compared to the R1336.51 reported in April 2025. This represents a monthly decrease of 0.5% and a year-on-year increase of 4.5%.

May 25 vs. May 24	Inflation bracket				
	12% or more	Between 6% and 11.99%	Between 3% and 5.99%	Between 1% and 2.99%	Inflation close to zero or deflation
Stats SA food groups:	Fruit & nuts (13.5%)	Vegetables (10.3%) Processed food (6.80%)	Oils & fats (5.6%) Fish & other seafood (4.9%) Sugar, confectionery, and desserts (4.5%) Cereal products (4.5%) Meat (4.4%)	Other foods (1.3%) Unprocessed food (1.7%)	Milk, other dairy products & eggs (0.3%)
Individual food items in NAMC food basket (listed in order of decreasing inflation rates):	Bananas (21.4%) Apples (17.4%) Instant coffee (16.4%) Maize meal (14.6%) Ceylon/black tea (10.3%)	Brick margarine (8.4%) Dried beans (7.6%) Beef mince (7.4%) Beef offal (7.1%) Cabbage (6.5%)	Peanut butter (5.8%) Potatoes (5.4%) Onions (4.8%) Sunflower oil (4.0%) Tinned fish (4.4%) White sugar (3.4%)	Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) chicken portions (2.5%) White bread (2.1%) Brown bread (1.9%) Full cream long life milk (2.1%) Polony (1.4%)	Oranges (-0.5%) Baked beans (-2.4%) Eggs (-1.8%) Rice (-4.9%) Cheddar cheese (-0.1%) Chicken giblets (-1.7%) Tomatoes (-8.2%)

1. Overall inflation and food inflation

The global nominal food price index, reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), averaged 127.7 points in May 2025, decreasing by 0.8% from April 2025. Despite the decline in May in overall global food inflation, it was still 6% higher than the same period in 2024. In May, the month-to-month decline in global food inflation was mainly driven by the reduction in prices of cereals, sugar, and vegetable oils which offset increased price indices for dairy and meat products. During this period, dairy and meat price indices increased by 0.8% and 1.3%, respectively. The observed high dairy prices are mainly attributed to the historically high international butter prices due to the strong demand in regions such as Asia and the Middle East following the constrained milk supply in Australia. On the other hand, high meat prices were mainly driven by strong demand for bovine, sheep and pig meat due to strong global demand and constrained supply in major producing regions.

In terms of global cereals, their price indices also declined by approximately 1.8% following a drop in global prices of maize, wheat, sorghum, and barley during this period. The decline in maize prices was mainly driven by the increased seasonal availability due to early harvests in major producing regions such as Argentina and Brazil, coupled with a record harvest forecast for the United States of America. Similarly, the sugar and vegetable oil price indices dropped by 2.6% and 3.7%, respectively. The decline in global sugar prices is attributed to weaker global demand, coupled with forecasted recovery in the overall global sugar production in the 2025/26 season. The drop in the vegetable price index is underpinned by high seasonal output and export availabilities in key regions such as Southeast Asia. In addition, global soy oil and rapeseed oil prices remained suppressed due to higher supplies in South America and the European Union (EU), respectively.

Figure 1 illustrates fluctuations in global food inflation across several countries that maintain significant trade connections with South Africa. These countries include the BRICS member nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), as well as Zambia, Botswana, Namibia and the United Kingdom. Between April and May 2025, food inflation rates increased in some countries while declining in others. Notably, Russia's food inflation dropped from 12.7% to 12.5%, Brazil's from 7.8% to 7.3%, Botswana's from 5.9% to 5.8%, India's from 1.8% to 0.9%, and Zambia's from 18.7% to 17.9%. On the other hand, food inflation increased from 3.4% to 3.5% in the United Kingdom and from 5.6% to 5.8% in Namibia. China's food inflation remained in deflation from -0.2% to -0.4% while South Africa's food inflation remained stable at 2.8%.

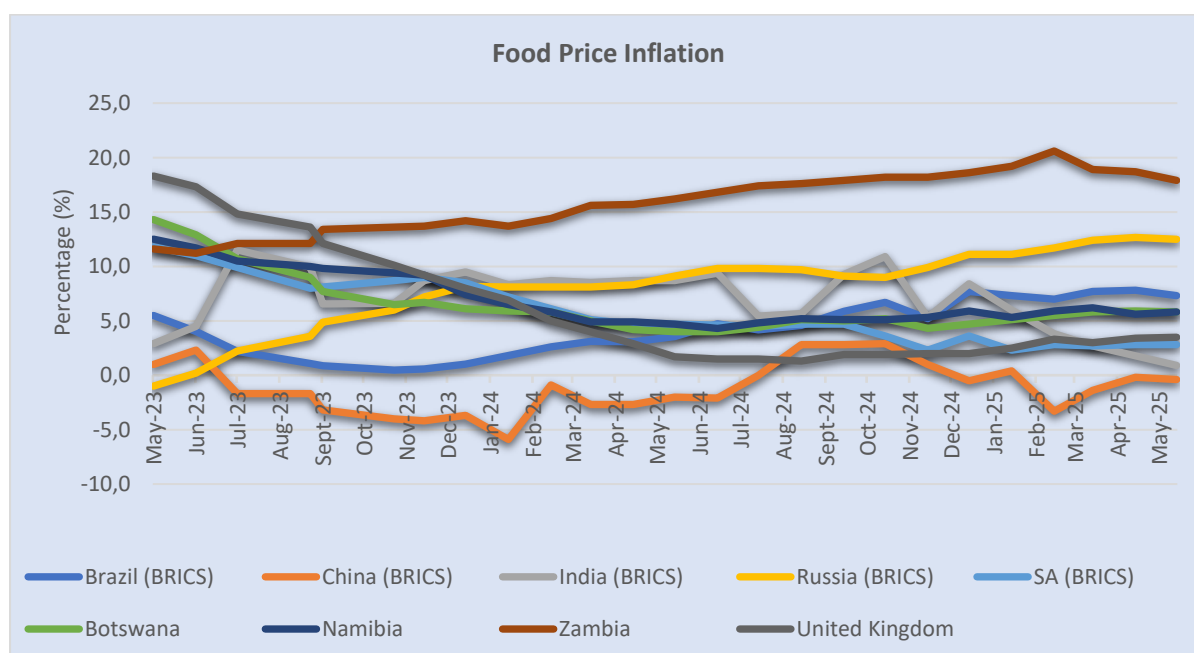


Figure 1: Global food inflation

Source: Trading Economics, 2025; Stats SA, 2025 & NAMC calculations

Figure 2 presents trends in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for South Africa from May 2019 to May 2025, along with the inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages (NAB). Recently, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) confirmed the CPI for May 2025. In May 2025, the annual headline CPI was reported at 2.8%, which is the same as what was reported in April 2025. The inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages rose to 4.8% in May 2025, from the 4.0% reported in April 2025. Notably, the main drivers of the current inflation on food and NAB were fruits & nuts, which experienced a substantial increase of 13.5% in May 2025, followed by vegetables (10.3%), processed food (6.8%), oil & fats (5.6%), fish & other seafood (4.9%), sugar confectionery and desserts (4.5%), cereal products (4.5%), meat (4.4%), other foods (1.3%), unprocessed foods (1.7%) and milk, other dairy products & eggs (0.3%). Notably, all food groups increased on an annual basis.

Furthermore, as of May 2025, the local price of white maize averaged at R4768 per ton, marking a 5.84% decrease from April 2025. Similarly, the price of yellow maize averaged at R4199 per ton, reflecting a 10.46% decrease compared to the previous month. On the other hand, sunflower seed prices averaged at R8918 per ton, indicating a 0.97% increase from the preceding month's price.

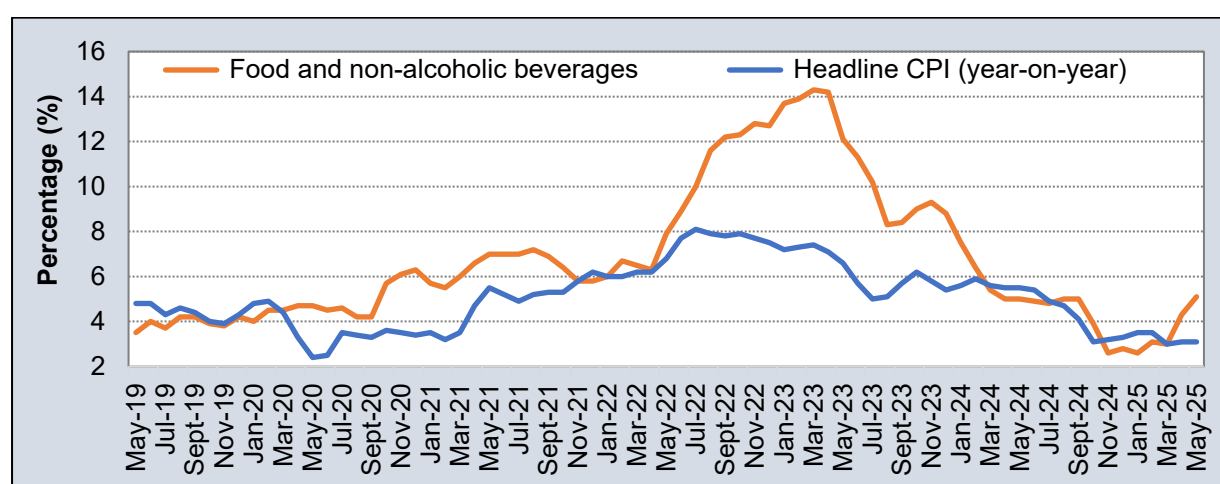


Figure 2: South Africa's headline CPI and Food & non-alcoholic beverages' CPI

Source: Stats SA, 2025; NAMC calculations

2. Monthly comparison of prices between urban and rural areas for May 2025

Table 1 presents a comparative analysis of expenses associated with selected food items in both urban and rural areas during May 2025. Recent data released by Statistics South Africa reveals variations in prices for certain products when purchased in urban versus rural regions. Urban consumers allocated more of their budget towards Ceylon/black tea, which exhibited the most substantial price difference of R9.16, followed by peanut butter (R2.71), sunflower oil (R1.64), bananas (R0.60), margarine spread (0.29), white bread (R0.20) and brown bread (R0.18) in comparison to their rural counterparts. On average, urban consumers paid R1.20 more for these 10 food items. This information highlights noteworthy variations in food item costs across different geographical areas. Notably, rural prices for maize meal (2.5 kg) were not available.

Table 1: Comparison between urban and rural food prices (selected food items)

Product	Urban Food Prices May 2025 (R/unit)	Rural Food Prices May 2025 (R/unit)	The price difference (R/unit)
Full cream milk - long life 1ℓ	20.03	20.45	0.42
Brown bread 700g	17.54	17.36	0.18
White bread 700g	18.93	18.73	0.20
Bananas per kg	21.88	21.28	0.60
Maize meal 2.5kg*	43.04	-	-
Margarine spread 500g	40.28	39.99	0,29
Peanut butter 400g	48.46	45.75	2.71
Rice 2kg	44.27	46.83	-2.56
Sunflower oil 750mℓ	36.51	34.87	1.64
Ceylon/black tea 250g	60.75	51.59	9.16
White sugar 2.5kg	66.14	65.97	0.17
			1,20

Source: Stats SA. 2025; NAMC calculations, * Rural prices for maize meal (2.5 kg) were unavailable for May 2025 data.

3. The NAMC food basket: May 2025 vs May 2024

In this section, the cost of NAMC's 28-item urban food basket is explained through a comparison of average food prices in May 2025 and May 2024. The cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket increased by 4.5% in May 2025 when compared to the same period last year, reaching R1330.33. When compared to the cost of R1336.51 recorded in April 2025, the food basket decreased by 0.5%. **Table 2** presents nominal prices of the 28 food items that comprise the NAMC's urban food basket. Between May 2025 and May 2024, among these 28 items, only 10 witnessed price increases that exceeded the 6% inflation target set by the South African Reserve Bank (SARB). Notable products in this category include bananas which experienced a substantial price surge of 21.4%, followed by apples (17.4%), instant coffee (16.4%), maize meal (14.6%), Ceylon/black tea (10.3%), brick margarine (8.4%), dried beans (7.6%), beef mince (7.4%), beef offal (7.1%), and cabbage (6.5%).

Table 2: Percentage change in the price of a basic NAMC food basket (28-item)

Category	Product	May-24 R/unit	April-25 R/unit	May-25 R/unit	Change year-on-year (%)	Change month-on-month (%)
Beans	Baked beans - tinned 410g	16.24	15.98	15.92	-2.0%	-0.4%
	Beans - dried 500g	32.4	34.47	34.86	7.6%	1.1%
	Peanut butter 400g	45.82	48.04	48.46	5.8%	0.9%
Coffee & Tea	Ceylon/black tea 250g	55.1	61.44	60.75	10.3%	-1.1%
	Instant coffee 250g	63.28	73.09	73.66	16.4%	0.8%
Dairy & Eggs	Cheddar cheese per /kg	150.99	157.48	150.81	-0.1%	-4.2%
	Eggs 1.5 dozen	66.59	66.1	65.39	-1.8%	-1.1%
	Full cream milk - long life 1ℓ	19.62	19.75	20.03	2.1%	1.4%
Fats & Oils	Brick margarine 500g	29.96	31.56	32.47	8.4%	2.9%
	Sunflower oil 750ml	35.12	36.18	36.51	4.0%	0.9%
Fruit	Apples per kg	22.98	27.48	26.98	17.4%	-1.8%
	Bananas per kg	18.03	21.89	21.88	21.4%	0.0%
	Oranges per kg	24.36	31.17	24.25	-0.5%	-22.2%
Animal Protein	Beef mince per kg	103.29	111.14	110.93	7.4%	-0.2%
	Beef offal per kg	49.71	51.67	53.23	7.1%	3.0%
	Chicken giblets / per kg	46.91	47.12	46.11	-1.7%	-2.1%
	Fish (excl tuna) - tinned 400g	26.96	27.85	28.14	4.4%	1.0%
	IQF chicken portions 2kg	94.04	95.81	96.37	2.5%	0.6%
	Polony 1kg	55.37	55.32	56.16	1.4%	1.5%
Bread & Cereals	Brown bread 700g	17.21	17.48	17.54	1.9%	0.3%
	White bread 700g	18.54	18.86	18.93	2.1%	0.4%
	Rice 2kg	46.54	44.39	44.27	-4.9%	-0.3%
	Maize meal 5kg	66.53	77.55	76.27	14.6%	-1.7%
Vegetables	Cabbage each	22.33	23.5	23.78	6.5%	1.2%
	Onions per kg	24.36	21.7	25.54	4.8%	17.7%
	Potatoes per kg	21.01	20.19	22.14	5.4%	9.7%
	Tomatoes per kg	35.75	33.57	32.81	-8.2%	-2.3%
Sugary foods	White sugar 2.5kg	63.98	65.73	66.14	3.4%	0.6%
Total Rand Value		1273.02	1336.51	1330.33	4.5%	-0.5%

Source: Stats SA & BFAP. 2025; NAMC calculations

Figure 3 provides an overview of changes in the average nominal cost of the different food groups within the NAMC's 28-item food basket, offering a comparative analysis of May 2025 with May 2024 (year-on-year) and May 2025 with April 2025 (month-on-month). When examining year-on-year price differences, the food group that contributed most significantly to observed food inflation was coffee & tea, experiencing a substantial increase of 13.5%. Following this were fruits, which increased by 11.8%, fats & oils by 6.0%, bread & cereals by 5.5%, bean products by 5.1%, animal proteins by 3.9%, sugary foods by 3.4%, and vegetables by 0.8%. In contrast, dairy & eggs decreased by 0.4%. When reviewing month-on-month changes, vegetables showed the most significant increase of 5.4%, followed by fats & oils which increased by 1.8%, bean products (0.8%), sugary foods (0.6%), and animal protein (0.5%), coffee & tea (0.6%) and sugary foods (0.3%). In contrast, coffee & tea, bread & cereals, dairy & eggs, and fruits decreased by 0.1%, 0.8%, 2.9%, and 9.2%, respectively.

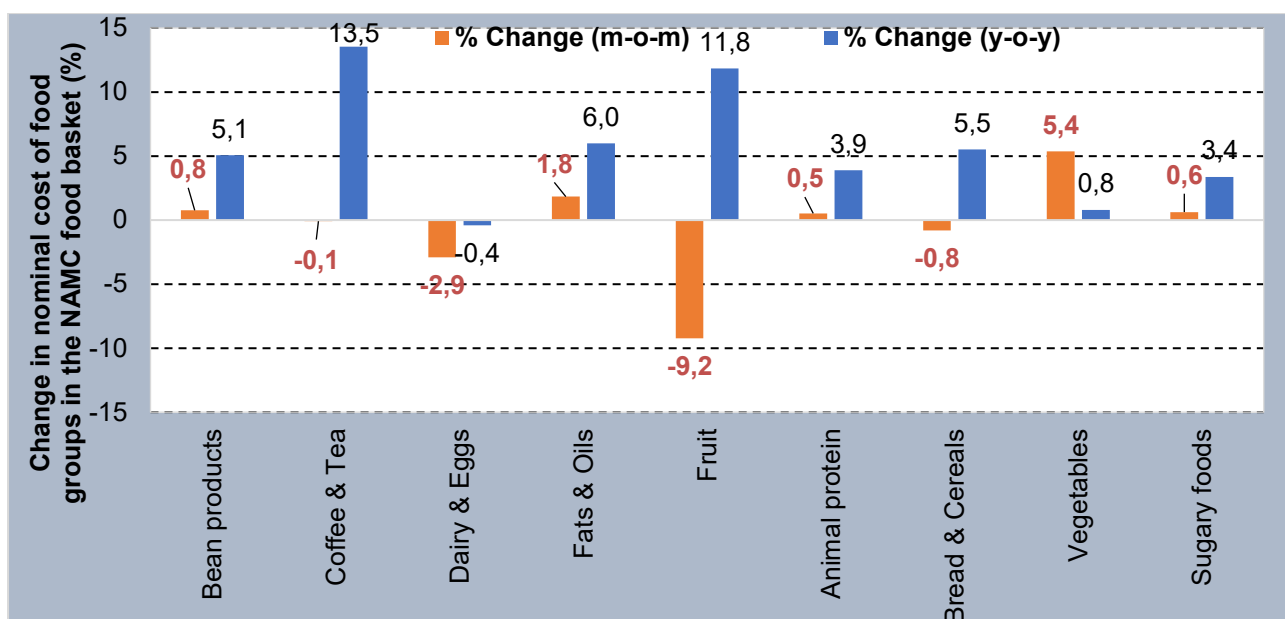


Figure 3: Nominal change in the cost of specific food groups within the NAMC's 28-item food basket, comparing May 2025 vs. May 2024 and May 2025 vs. April 2025

Source: Stats SA data. 2025; NAMC calculations

In conclusion, during the month of May 2025, global food inflation showed signs of easing mainly due to decreasing prices of cereals, sugar, and vegetable oils, supported by strong harvests and improved export availabilities in regions like South America and Southeast Asia. However, global food prices remained 6% higher than the same period in 2024, reflecting continued pressures from rising dairy and meat prices due to strong international demand and limited supply in key producing countries. The global outlook remains cautiously optimistic, though certain commodity markets remain vulnerable to supply disruptions and climatic conditions. Domestically, South Africa's overall inflation remained stable at 2.8%, although food and non-alcoholic beverage inflation increased to 4.8% in May 2025. Fruits, vegetables, processed foods, and cereals were key contributors to the observed increase. The NAMC 28-item urban food basket showed a 4.5% year-on-year increase, with noticeable urban-rural price differences for essential food items such as tea, and peanut butter. Despite a slight monthly decrease in the food basket's cost, food inflation remains a concern for household food security, disproportionately affecting rural areas due to higher price disparities for many staples like tea and peanut butter.

Background Information:

The NAMC monitors food prices at the retail level and releases regular authoritative reports. The Department of Agriculture, then known as the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) established the Food Price Monitoring Committee (FPMC) at the NAMC to track and report food price trends in South Africa; to provide explanations of the observed trends and to then advise the Department on any possible action that could be taken should national and household food security be threatened. The FPMC was established after the high food price episode of the 2000/01 season. The NAMC continued the functions of the FPMC after the FPMC completed its work in September 2004. The NAMC issues four quarterly Food Price Monitoring reports annually and, since 2005, also publishes an annual Food Cost Review report, which documents the margins between farm and retail prices of the major food products, amongst other topics. In 2015, the NAMC began releasing a quarterly Farm-to-Retail-Price-Spread (FTRPS) publication, which seeks to provide more insight into the factors driving commodity and food price margins. This publication, the Food Basket Price Monthly Report, was initiated following discussions with the industry to maintain a more frequent monitoring of food prices.

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