



# FOOD BASKET PRICE MONTHLY



## NAMC FOOD BASKET: 28 SELECTED FOOD ITEMS PRICES Issue 118 – September 2025

# Food Basket Price Monthly September 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 August 2025 official data is used in this report, as the official release of the September 2025 CPI data is scheduled for October 22, 2025 (see link below from the Stats SA website):*  
<https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141August2025.pdf>

## Highlights

During August 2025, the nominal cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket amounted to R1356.25 compared to the R1351.21 reported in July 2025. This represents a monthly increase of 0.4% and a year-on-year increase of 5.9%.

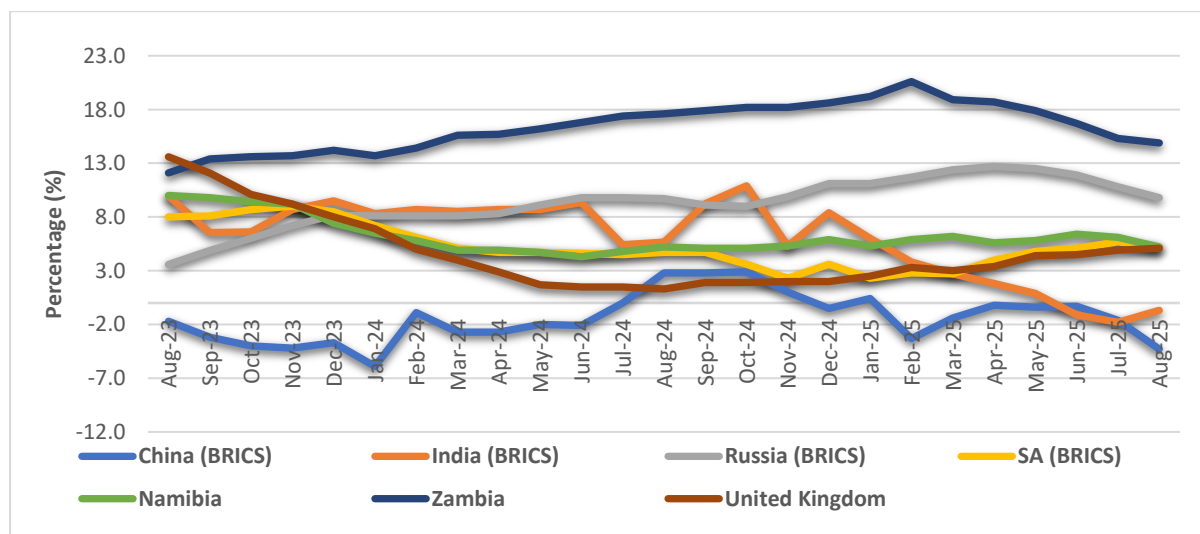
| August 25 vs.<br>August 24                                                                        | Inflation bracket                    |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                   | 12% or more                          | Between 6% and 11.99%                                                                                                                      | Between 3% and 5.99%                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Between 1% and 2.99%                                                                 | Inflation close to zero or deflation                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Stats SA food groups:</b>                                                                      |                                      | Meat (11.3%)<br>Vegetables (9.3%)<br>Fruit & nuts (8.6%)<br>Processed foods (6.5%)                                                         | Oils & fats (4.8%)<br>Sugar, confectionery, and desserts (4.1%)<br>Unprocessed food (3.6%)                                                                                                                                 | Fish & other seafood (2.8%)<br>Other foods (2.3%)<br>Cereal products (1.5%)          | Milk, other dairy products & eggs (-1.1%)                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Individual food items in NAMC food basket (listed in order of decreasing inflation rates):</b> | Beef mince (25.7%)<br>Apples (16.3%) | Instant coffee (11.8%)<br>Ceylon/black tea (9.8%)<br>Polony (9.4%)<br>Brick margarine (8.5%)<br>Beef offal (8.4%)<br>Cheddar cheese (6.7%) | Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) chicken portions (5.4%)<br>Sunflower oil (4.8%)<br>Onions (4.8%)<br>Oranges (4.7%)<br>Peanut butter (4.6%)<br>Cabbage (4.5%)<br>Maize meal (4.1%)<br>White sugar (4.1%)<br>Tomatoes (4.0%) | Tinned fish (2.8%)<br>Chicken giblets (2.8%)<br>Dried beans (2.0%)<br>Bananas (2.0%) | Brown bread (-0.5%)<br>Full cream long life milk (-0.6%)<br>White bread (-0.7%)<br>Baked beans (-2.0%)<br>Potatoes (-4.7%)<br>Eggs (-7.0%)<br>Rice (-10.4%) |

# 1. Overall inflation and food inflation

The global nominal food price index, reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), averaged at 130.1 points in August 2025, which is 6.9 percent higher than the previous year and slightly higher than the revised July average of 130.0 points. The month-to-month increase in global food inflation was mainly driven by rising prices of meat, vegetable oils, and sugar, which outweighed the price decreases in cereals and dairy products. During this period, the price indices for meat, vegetable oils, and sugar increased by 0.6%, 1.4%, and 0.2%, respectively. The increase in meat prices was primarily driven by the rise in global bovine meat prices, which were supported by powerful import demand from China and strong demand in the United States of America (USA). These factors, in turn, increased Australian and Brazilian export quotations. Prices for pig meat stayed mostly unchanged, while prices for poultry meat decreased due to Brazil's large exportable supply. Ovine prices also increased. The observed price increase in vegetable oils was primarily due to the spiking of palm, sunflower, and rapeseed oil quotations, which were partially impacted by Indonesia's plan to increase its biodiesel blending requirement next year. Meanwhile, soy oil prices decreased slightly, due to the possibility of plentiful global soybean supplies in the upcoming marketing year. The price of sugar increased slightly after five months of monthly declines, which were mostly driven by concerns about Brazilian sugarcane crops and output, as well as increased demand for imports worldwide. Larger crop prospects in Thailand and India kept the price increase in check.

In terms of global cereals, their price indices also declined by approximately 0.8%. The global price of wheat decreased because of higher harvests in Russia and the European Union (EU), while global maize prices soared, in part due to the USA's increasing demand for feed and ethanol production. The price index for dairy dropped by 1.3%, due to the reduction in international butter, cheese, and whole milk powder quotations as well as mild import demand from important Asian markets.

**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 July and August 2025, food inflation rates increased in some countries while declining in others. Notably, Russia's food inflation dropped from 10.8% to 9.8%, Namibia's from 6.1% to 5.2%, Zambia's from 15.3% to 14.9%, South Africa's from 5.7% to 5.2%, and China's from -1.6% to -4.3%. On the other hand, food inflation increased from 4.3% to 5.0% in Botswana, from -1.8% to -0.7% in India, and from 4.9% to 5.1% in the United Kingdom. During the same period, food inflation in Brazil remained the same at 7.4% respectively.

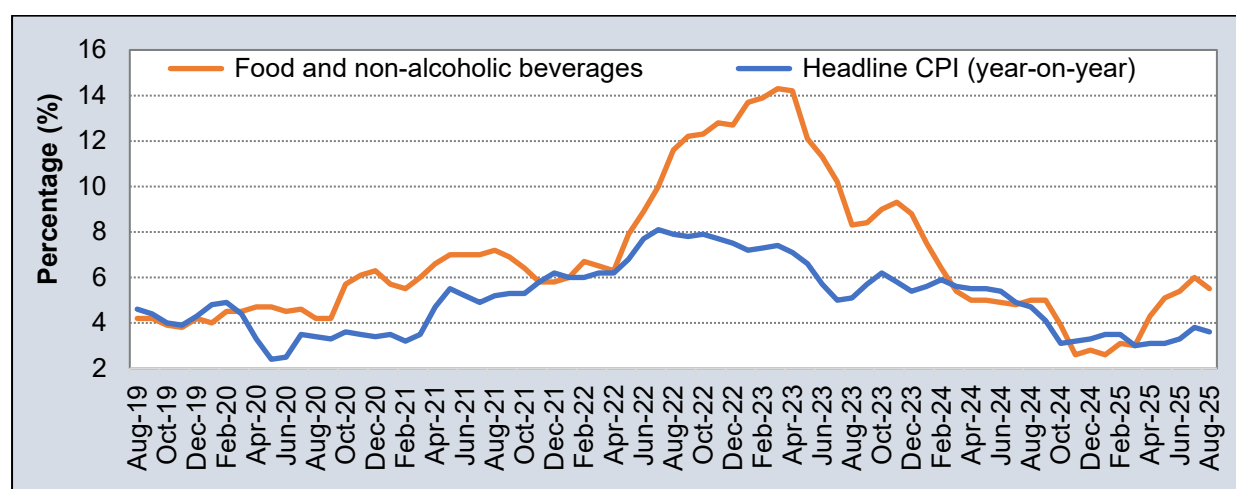


**Figure 1: Global food inflation**

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

**Figure 2** presents trends in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for South Africa from August 2019 to August 2025, along with the inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages (NAB). Recently, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) confirmed the CPI for August 2025. In August 2025, the annual headline CPI was reported at 3.3%, representing a 0.1% decrease from July 2025. The inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages decreased to 5.2% in August 2025, from 5.7% reported in July 2025. Notably, the main drivers of the current inflation on food and NAB were meat, which experienced a substantial increase of 11.3% in July 2025, followed by vegetables (9.3%), fruits & nuts (8.6%), processed foods (6.5%), oils & fats (4.8%), sugar confectionery and desserts (4.1%), unprocessed foods (3.6%), fish & other seafood (2.8%), other foods (2.3%), cereal products (1.5%), and milk, other dairy products & eggs which recorded a decline of 1.1%.

Furthermore, as of August 2025, the local price of white maize averaged at R4250 per ton, marking a 13.3% decrease from July 2025. Similarly, the price of yellow maize averaged at R3846 per ton, reflecting an 8.14% decrease compared to the previous month. On the other hand, sunflower seed prices averaged at R9902 per ton, indicating a 4.08% 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 August 2025

**Table 1** presents a comparative analysis of expenses associated with selected food items in both urban and rural areas during August 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 R9.72, followed by peanut butter (R3.20), white sugar (R1.78), sunflower oil (R1.76), brown bread (0.12), and white bread (R0.05) in comparison to their rural counterparts. On average, urban consumers paid R1.49 more for these nine (9) food items. This information highlights noteworthy variations in food item costs across different geographical areas. Notably, rural prices for maize meal (2.5 kg) and margarine spread (500g) were not available.

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

| Product                        | Urban Food Prices<br>August 2025 (R/unit) | Rural Food Prices<br>August 2025 (R/unit) | The price<br>difference (R/unit) |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Full cream milk - long life 1ℓ | 20.10                                     | 20.73                                     | -0.63                            |
| Brown bread 700g               | 17.43                                     | 17.31                                     | 0.12                             |
| White bread 700g               | 18.83                                     | 18.78                                     | 0.05                             |
| Bananas per kg                 | 16.63                                     | 17.49                                     | -0.86                            |
| Maize meal 2.5kg*              | 42.68                                     | n/a                                       | n/a                              |
| Margarine spread 500g*         | 40.10                                     | n/a                                       | n/a                              |
| Peanut butter 400g             | 49.45                                     | 46.25                                     | 3.20                             |
| Rice 2kg                       | 42.66                                     | 44.39                                     | -1.73                            |
| Sunflower oil 750mℓ            | 36.58                                     | 34.82                                     | 1.76                             |
| Ceylon/black tea 250g          | 63.15                                     | 53.43                                     | 9.72                             |
| White sugar 2.5kg              | 66.69                                     | 64.91                                     | 1.78                             |
|                                |                                           |                                           | <b>1.49</b>                      |

Source: Stats SA. 2025; NAMC calculations, \* Rural prices for maize meal (2.5 kg) and margarine spread (500g) were not available (n/a) in the August 2025 data

### 3. The NAMC food basket: August 2025 vs August 2024

In this section, the cost of NAMC's 28-item urban food basket is explained through a comparison of average food prices in August 2025 and August 2024. The cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket increased by 5.9% in August 2025 when compared to the same period last year, reaching R1356.25. When compared to the cost of R1351.21 recorded in July 2025, the food basket increased by 0.4%. **Table 2** presents nominal prices of the 28 food items that comprise the NAMC's urban food basket. Between August 2025 and August 2024, among these 28 items, only 8 witnessed price increases that exceeded the 6% inflation target set by the South African Reserve Bank (SARB). Notable products in this category include beef mince which experienced a substantial price surge of 25.7%, followed by apples (16.3%), instant coffee tomatoes (11.8%), Ceylon/black tea (9.8%), Polony (9.4%), brick margarine (8.5%), beef offal (8.4%), and cheddar cheese (6.7%).

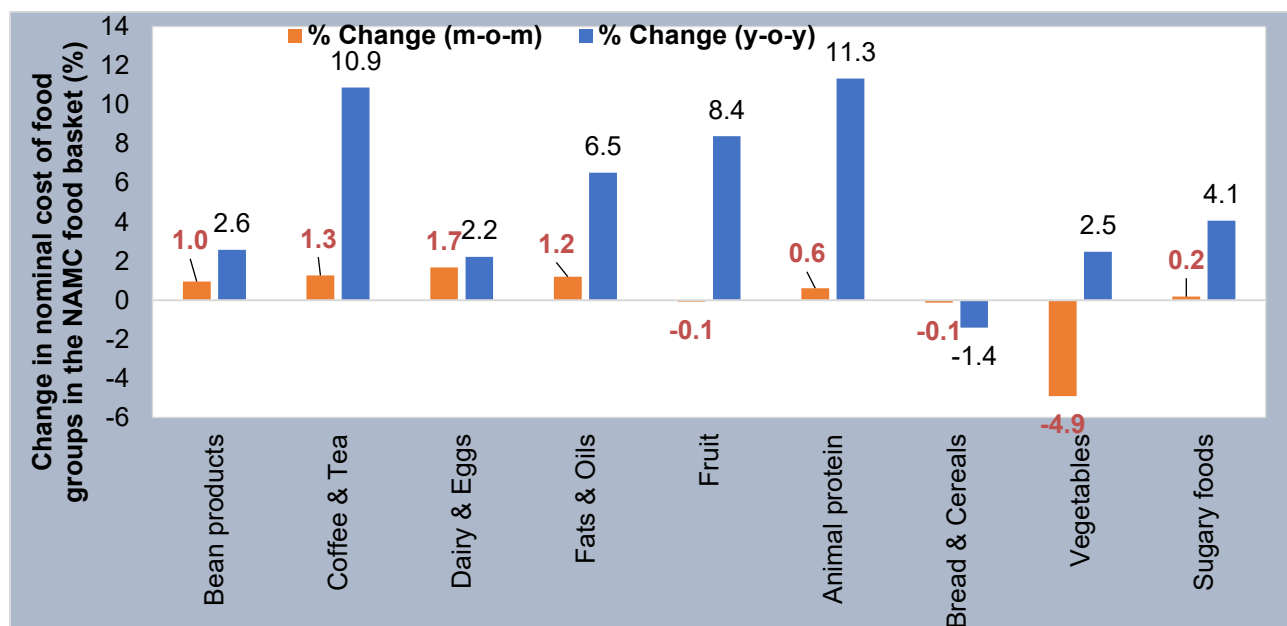
**Table 2: Percentage change in the price of a basic NAMC food basket (28-item)**

| Category       | Product                       | August-24<br>R/unit | July-25<br>R/unit | August-25<br>R/unit | Change<br>year-on-<br>year (%) | Change<br>month-on-<br>month (%) |
|----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Beans          | Baked beans - tinned 410g     | 16.17               | 15.8              | 15.85               | -1.98                          | -0.19                            |
|                | Beans - dried 500g            | 34.05               | 34.74             | 34.72               | 1.97                           | -0.06                            |
|                | Peanut butter 400g            | 47.28               | 48.45             | 49.45               | 4.59                           | 2.06                             |
| Coffee & Tea   | Ceylon/black tea 250g         | 57.52               | 62.33             | 63.15               | 9.79                           | 1.32                             |
|                | Instant coffee 250g           | 67.37               | 74.43             | 75.34               | 11.83                          | 1.22                             |
| Dairy & Eggs   | Cheddar cheese per /kg        | 152.99              | 158.32            | 163.30              | 6.74                           | 3.15                             |
|                | Eggs 1.5 dozen                | 68.75               | 64.85             | 63.91               | -7.04                          | -1.45                            |
|                | Full cream milk -long life 1ℓ | 20.22               | 20.05             | 20.10               | -0.59                          | 0.25                             |
| Fats & Oils    | Brick margarine 500g          | 29.83               | 31.53             | 32.36               | 8.48                           | 2.63                             |
|                | Sunflower oil 750mℓ           | 34.89               | 36.59             | 36.58               | 4.84                           | -0.03                            |
| Fruit          | Apples per kg                 | 23.03               | 27.84             | 26.78               | 16.28                          | -3.81                            |
|                | Bananas per kg                | 16.31               | 16.16             | 16.63               | 1.96                           | 2.91                             |
|                | Oranges per kg                | 20.54               | 20.96             | 21.50               | 4.67                           | 2.58                             |
| Animal Protein | Beef mince per kg             | 101.37              | 126.79            | 127.40              | 25.68                          | 0.48                             |
|                | Beef offal per kg             | 52.26               | 56.82             | 56.67               | 8.44                           | -0.26                            |

| Category                | Product                  | August-24 R/unit | July-25 R/unit  | August-25 R/unit | Change year-on-year (%) | Change month-on-month (%) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|                         | Chicken giblets per kg   | 47.08            | 48.10           | 48.41            | 2.82                    | 0.64                      |
|                         | Fish (excl tuna) 400g    | 27.81            | 28.46           | 28.60            | 2.84                    | 0.49                      |
|                         | IQF chicken portions 2kg | 93.34            | 97.87           | 98.34            | 5.36                    | 0.48                      |
|                         | Polony 1kg               | 54.57            | 58.49           | 59.68            | 9.36                    | 2.03                      |
| Bread & Cereals         | Brown bread 700g         | 17.52            | 17.40           | 17.43            | -0.51                   | 0.17                      |
|                         | White bread 700g         | 18.97            | 18.94           | 18.83            | -0.74                   | -0.58                     |
|                         | Rice 2kg                 | 47.59            | 43.37           | 42.66            | -10.36                  | -1.64                     |
|                         | Maize meal 5kg           | 71.96            | 74.32           | 74.92            | 4.11                    | 0.81                      |
| Vegetables              | Cabbage each             | 22.17            | 23.16           | 23.17            | 4.51                    | 0.04                      |
|                         | Onions per kg            | 24.60            | 27.40           | 25.79            | 4.84                    | -5.88                     |
|                         | Potatoes per kg          | 20.28            | 20.70           | 19.32            | -4.73                   | -6.67                     |
|                         | Tomatoes per kg          | 27.56            | 30.69           | 28.67            | 4.03                    | -6.58                     |
| Sugary foods            | White sugar 2.5kg        | 64.08            | 66.57           | 66.69            | 4.07                    | 0.18                      |
| <b>Total Rand Value</b> |                          | <b>1 280.11</b>  | <b>1 351.21</b> | <b>1 356.25</b>  | <b>5.9%</b>             | <b>0.4%</b>               |

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 August 2025 with August 2024 (year-on-year) and August 2025 with July 2025 (month-on-month). When examining year-on-year price differences, the food group that contributed most significantly to the observed food inflation was animal protein, experiencing a substantial increase of 11.3%. Following this were coffee & tea, which increased by 10.9%, fruits by 8.4%, fats & oils by 6.5%, sugary foods by 4.1%, bean products by 2.6%, vegetables by 2.5%, and dairy & eggs by 2.2%. In contrast, bread & cereals decreased by 1.4%. When reviewing month-on-month changes, dairy & eggs showed a significant increase of 1.7%, followed by coffee & tea, which increased by 1.3%, fats & oils (1.2%), bean products (1.0%), animal protein (0.6%), and sugary foods (0.2%). In contrast, fruits, bread & cereals, and vegetables decreased by 0.1%, 0.1%, and 4.9%, respectively.



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

Source: Stats SA data. 2025; NAMC calculations

In conclusion, during August 2025, overall global food inflation increased and was 6.9% higher than the same period in 2024. The month-to-month increase in global food inflation was mainly driven by rising prices of meat, vegetable oils, and sugar, which outweighed the price decreases in cereals, and dairy products. During this period, the price indices for meat, vegetable oils and sugar increased by 0.6%, 1.4% and 0.2%, respectively. Domestically, South Africa's overall inflation decreased to 3.3%, while food and non-alcoholic beverage inflation decreased to 5.2% in August 2025. The NAMC 28-item urban food basket showed a 5.9% year-on-year increase, with noticeable urban-rural price differences for essential food items such as tea, peanut butter and white sugar. There was also a 0.4% month-on-month increase in the cost of the food basket.

### **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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