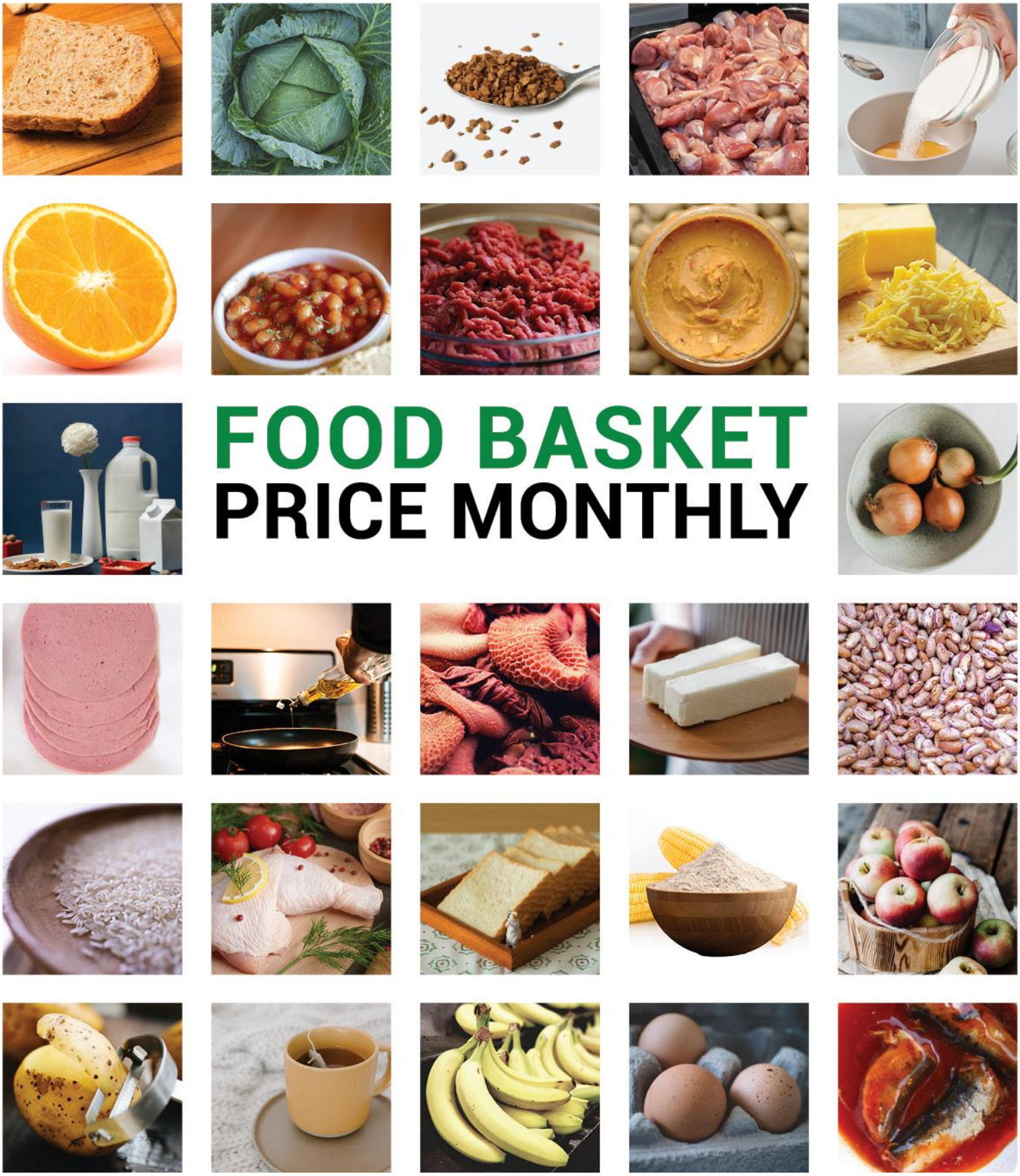

FOOD BASKET PRICE MONTHLY

NAMC FOOD BASKET: 28 SELECTED FOOD ITEMS PRICES

Issue 128 – July 2026

NAMC
Promoting market access for South African agriculture

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Food Basket
Price Monthly
July 2026

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 June 2026 official data is used in this report, as the official release of the July 2026 CPI data is scheduled for August 19, 2026 (see link below from the Stats SA website):

https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141June2026.pdf

Highlights

During June 2026, the nominal cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket amounted to R1 362.14 compared to the R1 363.35 reported in May 2026. This represents a monthly decrease of 0.1% and a year-on-year increase of 1.5%.

June 26 vs. June 25	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:			Meat (5.1%) Fish & other seafood (4.8%) Other foods (4.4%) Unprocessed food (4.0%)	Sugar, confectionery, and desserts (2.5%) Oil & fats (2.3%) Milk, other dairy products & eggs (1.6%)	Processed (-0.8%) Cereal products (-1.5%) Vegetable (-3.5%) Fruit & nuts (-10.0%)
Individual food items in NAMC food basket (listed in order of decreasing inflation rates):	Tomatoes (13.8%) Beef offal (12.7%)	Ceylon/black tea (8.4%) Polony (7.4%) Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) chicken portions (6.2%)	Cheddar cheese (5.9%) Beef mince (4.4%) White bread (4.3%) Peanut butter (4.3%) Instant coffee (3.9%) Full cream long life milk (3.6%) Onions (3.3%) Sunflower oil (3.0%)	Tinned fish (2.5%) Brown bread (1.8%) White sugar (1.6%) Brick margarine (1.2%)	Chicken giblets (0.6%) Oranges (-1.8%) Baked beans (-3.3%) Cabbage (-4.8%) Bananas (-5.3%) Eggs (-6.4%) Dried beans (-8.3%) Apples (-8.7%) Maize meal (-12.7%) Rice (-14.5%) Potatoes (-15.7%)

1. Overall inflation and food inflation

Figure 1 presents trends in the global real food price index reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). In June 2026, the FAO real food price index averaged 112.3 points, a slight decrease of 0.3% from 112.7 points in May, marking its second consecutive monthly decline. Despite this decline in overall global food inflation, it was still 1.93% higher than the same period in 2025. In June, the month-to-month decline was mainly due to decreases in the prices of sugar, cereals, and dairy products, which outweighed higher prices for vegetable oils and meat. During this period, vegetable oils and meat price indices increased by 4% and 0.4%, respectively. The observed high vegetable oil prices were mainly attributed to higher international palm and rapeseed oil prices, driven by expectations of tighter export availability from Indonesia, strong biofuel demand, and adverse weather conditions affecting rapeseed production in key producing countries. These factors more than offset lower soy oil prices resulting from increased South American supplies and declining crude oil prices, while sunflower oil prices remained relatively stable. On the other hand, the observed high meat prices were mainly driven by higher international poultry and ovine meat prices, supported by strong global import demand, coupled with temporary tight domestic availability in key exporting countries and limited exportable supplies.

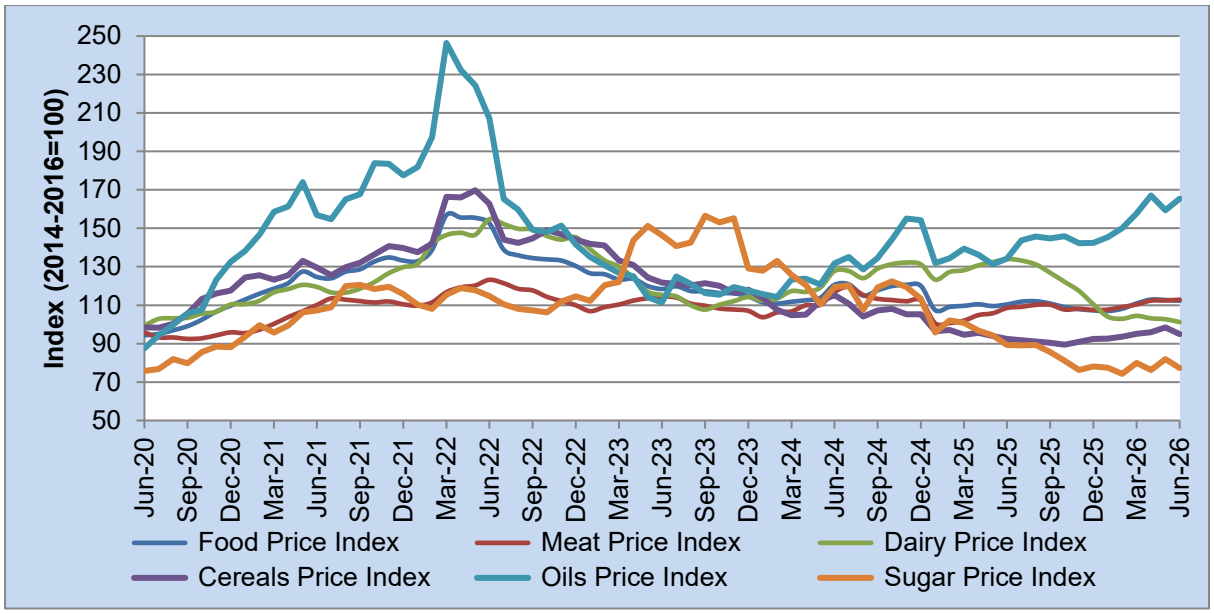

Figure 1: The FAO global real food price indices
Source: FAO, 2026

In terms of global sugar, its price index recorded a 6% decline during this period. The decline was mainly driven by increased sugar production in Brazil following lower domestic ethanol prices, which encouraged a greater allocation of sugarcane to sugar production. The decline was further supported by strong export volumes from Brazil, amid the depreciation of the Brazilian real against the United States (US) dollar. Similarly, cereals and dairy price indices dropped by 3% and 1%, respectively. The decline in cereal prices in June was mainly driven by lower wheat and maize prices, reflecting favourable supply prospects and rapid harvest progress in major producing regions, particularly in the Black Sea region, the US, and Australia. Among the other grains, improved production outlooks for barley and sorghum also contributed to the downward trend in cereal prices. For dairy, its price index decline was underpinned by improved milk availability and increased dairy production in key exporting regions such as the European Union (EU) and the US, coupled with weaker import demand for certain dairy products, particularly whole milk powder.

Figure 2 illustrates fluctuations in global inflation across selected countries with significant trade relations with South Africa. These countries include the BRICS member countries (namely, Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), and other countries such as Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, and

the United Kingdom (UK). Between May and June 2026, food inflation rates increased in most countries, while a few recorded a decline, with only Botswana, whose food inflation rate remained relatively constant at 5.7%. For instance, India's food inflation recorded its fifth monthly increase, rising from 4.78% in May to 5.3% in June, followed by Russia from 2.9% to 3.4%, China from -1.7% to -1.6%, and Namibia from 2% to 2.5%. On the other hand, food inflation continued to decline in South Africa, marking its fifth monthly decline, from 1.9% to 1.6%, followed by Zambia from 6.9% to 6.7%, Brazil from 3.9% to 3.8%, and the UK from 2.2% to 1.7%.

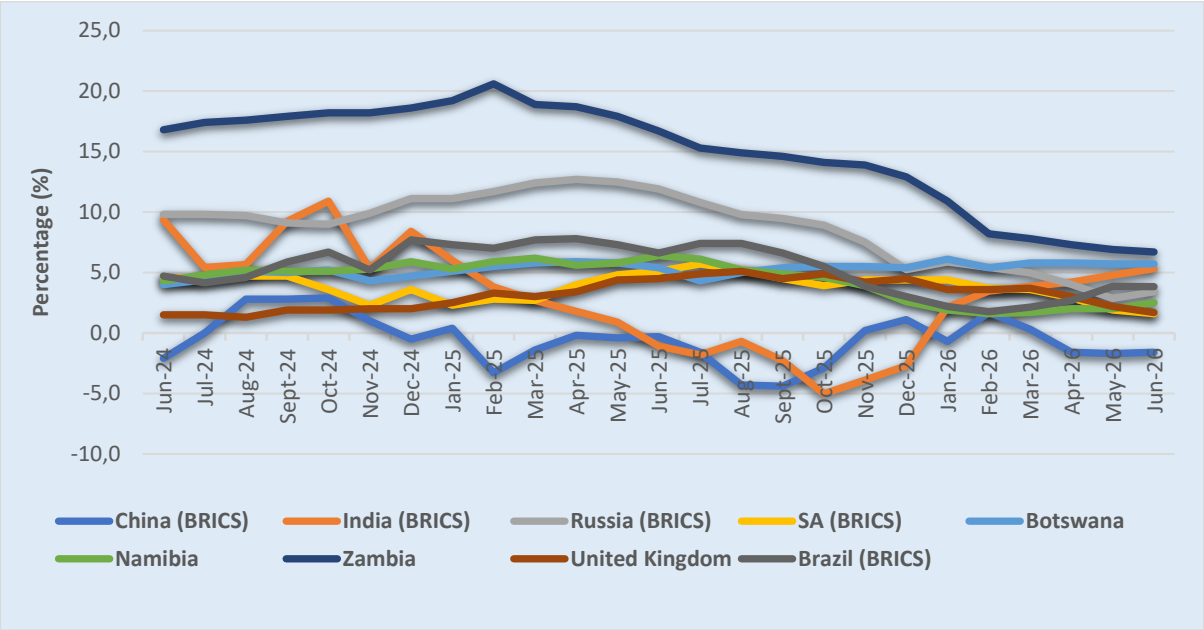

Figure 2: Food inflation in selected countries
Source: Trading Economics, 2026; Stats SA, 2026 & NAMC calculations

Figure 3 presents trends in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for South Africa from June 2020 to June 2026, along with the inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages (NAB). In June 2026, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) reported the highest annual headline CPI of 5.0% since June 2024, marking the fourth monthly increase since March 2026. On the other hand, the inflation rate for food and NAB continued to decline in June 2026, marking the fifth monthly decline, falling to 1.6% from 1.9% recorded in May 2026. Notably, the main drivers of the current inflation in food and NAB were vegetables, which recorded an increase of 2.7%, followed by fish & other seafood (1.8%), Milk, other dairy products & eggs (1%), oils & fats (0.6%), unprocessed foods and sugar, confectionery & desserts (both up by 0.5%), processed foods (0.4%), other foods (0.3%), and meat (0.1%). In contrast, cereal products remained relatively stable compared with the last month while fruits & nuts declined considerably by 4%.

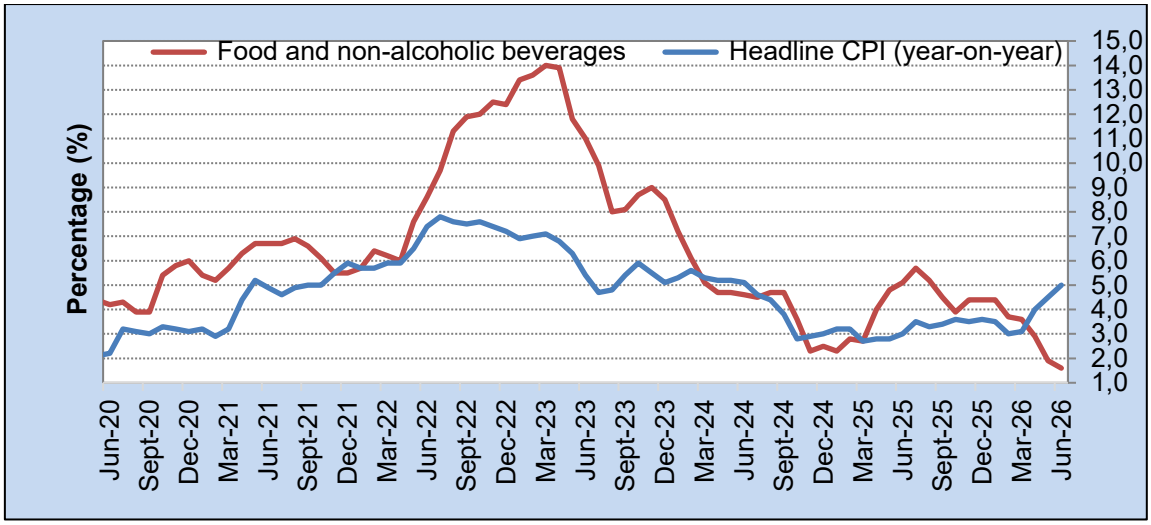

Figure 3: South Africa's headline CPI and Food & non-alcoholic beverages' CPI
Source: Stats SA, 2026; NAMC calculations

2. Monthly comparison of prices between urban and rural areas for June 2026

Table 1 presents a comparative analysis of selected food item prices in urban and rural areas during June 2026. The urban food prices are on average R1.49 higher than of those in the rural areas for the nine food items. Urban households paid more than their rural counterparts for Ceylon/black tea with the largest difference of R13.82, followed by peanut butter (R3.09), sunflower oil (R1.47) white sugar (R0.32), white bread (R0.26) and brown bread (R0.13). Rural households paid R3.32 more for rice, followed by bananas (R2.03) and slightly more for Full cream milk (R0.33). The Information indicates a notable variance of food prices across different geographical areas.

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

Product	Urban Food Prices June 2026 (R/unit)	Rural Food Prices June 2026 (R/unit)	The price difference (R/unit)
Full cream milk - long life 1ℓ	20.76	21.09	-0.33
Brown bread 700g	17.74	17.61	0.13
White bread 700g	19.76	19.50	0.26
Bananas per kg	18.3	20.33	-2.03
Maize meal 2.5kg*	39.79	n/a	n/a
Margarine spread 500g*	40.24	n/a	n/a
Peanut butter 400g	49.93	46.84	3.09
Rice 2kg	37.52	40.84	-3.32
Sunflower oil 750mℓ	37.77	36.30	1.47
Ceylon/black tea 250g	66.59	52.77	13.82
White sugar 2.5kg	67.36	67.04	0.32
Average price difference			**1.49**

Source: Stats SA, 2026; NAMC calculations, * Rural prices for maize meal (2.5 kg) and margarine spread (500g) were not available (n/a) in the June 2026 data.

3. The NAMC food basket: June 2026 vs June 2025

In this section, the cost of NAMC's 28-item urban food basket is explained through a comparison of average food prices in June 2026 and June 2025. **Table 2** presents nominal prices of these 28 food items that comprise the NAMC's urban food basket. The analysis shows that the cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket increased by 1.5% in June 2026 when compared to the same period last year, reaching R1362.14. However, this is equivalent to a 0.1% month-to-month decrease from the R1363.35 cost recorded in May 2026. Between June 2026 and June 2025, among these 28 items, only 12 items recorded price increases that exceeded the 1-3% inflation target set by the South African Reserve Bank (SARB). Notable products in this category include tomatoes which experienced a substantial price surge of 13.8%, followed by beef offal (12.7%), Ceylon/black tea (8.4%), polony (7.4%), IQF chicken portions (6.2%), cheddar cheese (5.9%), beef mince (4.4%), white bread (4.3%), peanut butter (4.3%), instant coffee (3.9%), full cream milk (3.6%), and onions (3.3%).

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

Category	Product	June 25 (R/unit)	May 26 (R/unit)	June 26 (R/unit)	Change year-on-year (%)	Change month-on-month (%)
Beans	Baked beans - tinned 410g	15.97	15.24	15.45	-3.26	1.38
	Beans - dried 500 g	35.12	32.25	32.20	-8.31	-0.16
	Peanut butter 400g	47.88	49.74	49.93	4.28	0.38
Coffee & Tea	Ceylon/black tea 250g	61.43	66.45	66.59	8.40	0.21
	Instant coffee 250g	74.23	77.02	77.14	3.92	0.16
Dairy & Eggs	Cheddar cheese per /kg	153.99	163.10	163.10	5.92	0.00
	Eggs 1.5 dozen	65.29	61.23	61.13	-6.37	-0.16
	Full cream milk -long life 1ℓ	20.04	20.52	20.76	3.59	1.17
Fats & Oils	Brick margarine 500g	32.12	32.95	32.49	1.15	-1.40
	Sunflower oil 750mℓ	36.68	37.43	37.77	2.97	0.91
Fruit	Apples per kg	28.00	26.48	25.57	-8.68	-3.44
	Bananas per kg	19.32	21.92	18.30	-5.28	-16.51
	Oranges per kg	22.73	24.83	22.33	-1.76	-10.07
Animal Protein	Beef mince per kg	117.92	124.35	123.15	4.44	-0.97
	Beef offal per kg	54.77	60.12	61.73	12.71	2.68
	Chicken giblets per kg	46.64	47.26	46.91	0.58	-0.74
	Fish (excl. tuna) 400g	28.43	29.05	29.15	2.53	0.34
	IQF chicken portions 2kg	96.38	101.69	102.33	6.17	0.63
	Polony 1kg	57.24	60.74	61.45	7.35	1.17
Bread & Cereals	Brown bread 700g	17.42	17.61	17.74	1.84	0.74
	White bread 700g	18.94	19.61	19.76	4.33	0.76
	Rice 2kg	43.88	37.86	37.52	-14.49	-0.90
	Maize meal 5kg	77.13	68.51	67.31	-12.73	-1.75
Vegetables	Cabbage each	23.93	22.33	22.79	-4.76	2.06
	Onions per kg	27.00	24.83	27.89	3.30	12.32
	Potatoes per kg	21.32	18.17	17.98	-15.67	-1.05
	Tomatoes per kg	31.91	34.12	36.31	13.79	6.42
Sugary foods	White sugar 2.5kg	66.30	67.94	67.36	1.60	-0.85
Total Rand Value		**1 342.01**	**1 363.35**	**1 362.14**	**1.5%**	**-0.1%**

Source: Stats SA, 2026; NAMC calculations

Figure 4 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 June 2026 with June 2025 (year-on-year) and June 2026 with May 2026 (month-on-month). When examining year-on-year price differences, the food group that contributed most significantly to the observed food inflation was coffee & tea, with a 5.9% increase. Following this was animal protein, which increased by 5.8%, then dairy & eggs (2.4%), fats & oils (2.1%), sugary foods (1.6%), and vegetables (0.8%). In contrast, bean products

decreased by 1.4%, while fruits, and bread & cereals dropped by 5.5% and 9.6%, respectively. When reviewing month-on-month changes, vegetables showed an increase of 5.6%, followed by bean products and animal protein for which each rose by 0.4%, then coffee & tea (0.2%), and dairy & eggs (0.1%). In contrast, fats & oils prices decreased by 0.2%, followed by sugary foods (0.9%), bread & cereals (0.9%), and fruits (9.6%).

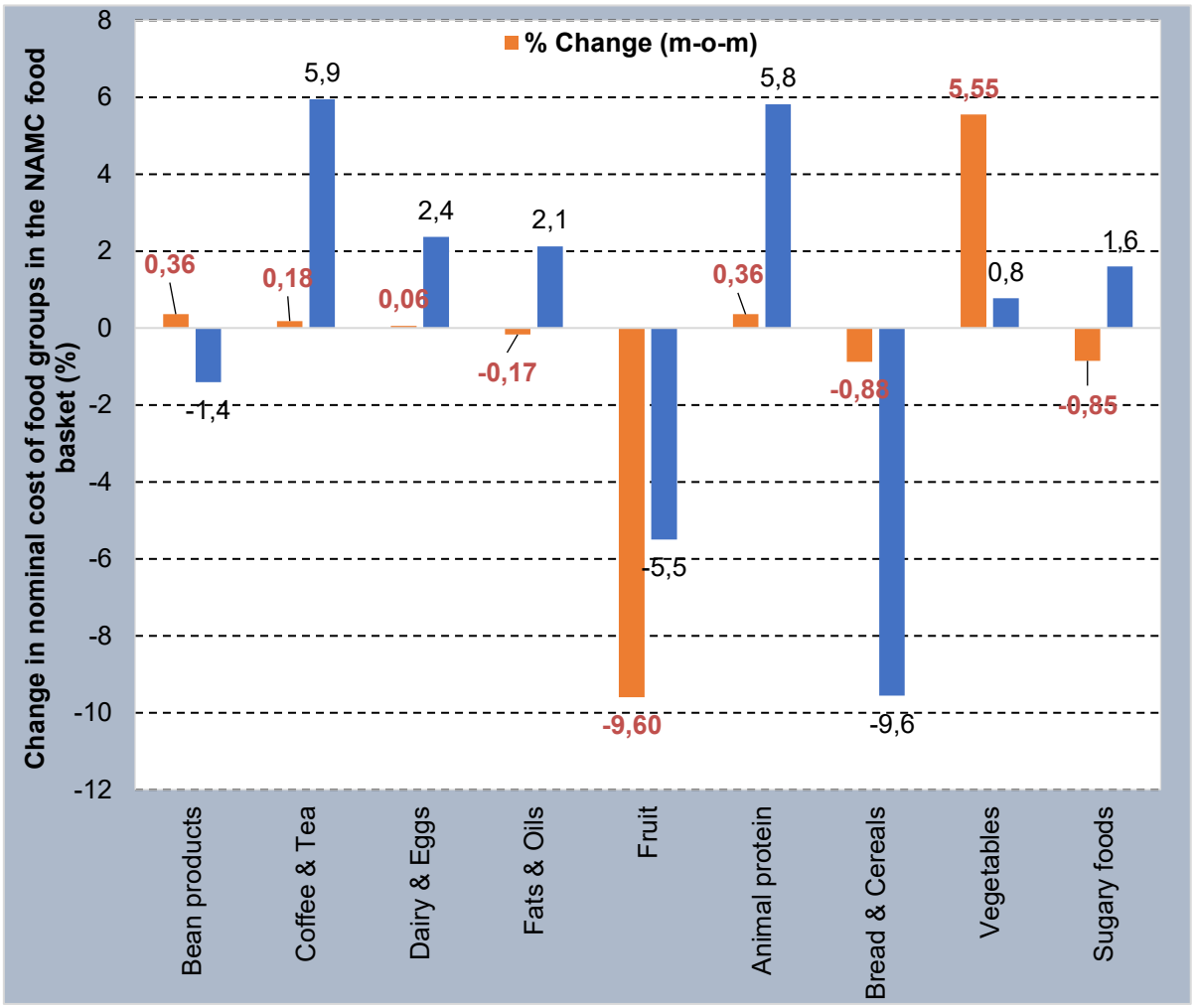

Figure 4: Nominal change in the cost of specific food groups within the NAMC's 28-item food basket, comparing June 2026 vs. June 2025 and June 2026 vs. May 2026
Source: Stats SA, 2026; NAMC calculations

In conclusion, food inflation in South Africa decreased for the fifth consecutive month in June 2026, while headline inflation increased notably for the fourth consecutive month since March 2026. These trends align with global developments, where food prices decreased due to the drop in international prices for sugar, cereals, and dairy products. Despite the slight decline in food and NAB inflation in South Africa, price indices of some food groups remained elevated; these were animal protein, coffee and tea, dairy & eggs, fats & oils, vegetables and sugary products. Domestically, these inflationary pressures were also mirrored in the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket, which recorded a modest year-on-year increase alongside a slight month-on-month decrease. Furthermore, persistent spatial price disparities remain evident, although their direction varies across food products. Urban consumers paid notably higher prices for items such as tea, peanut butter, and white sugar whereas rural consumers faced higher prices for products including rice, bananas and full-cream long-life milk. Despite the continued moderation in domestic food prices, geopolitical threats brought about by the developments in the geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, coupled with rising electricity tariffs, and fuel price hikes continue to threaten the domestic price outlook.

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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