

### **Key data from the May 2023 Household Affordability Index**

The May 2023 Household Affordability Index, which tracks food price data from 47 supermarkets and 32 butcheries, in Johannesburg (Soweto, Alexandra, Tembisa and Hillbrow), Durban (KwaMashu, Umlazi, Isipingo, Durban CBD, Hammarsdale and Pinetown), Cape Town (Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Philippi, Langa, Delft and Dunoon), Pietermaritzburg, Mtubatuba (in Northern KwaZulu-Natal), and Springbok (in the Northern Cape), shows that:

- **In May 2023:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket is **R5 071,59**.
- **Month-on-month:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R47,64 (0,9%)**, from R5 023,95 in April 2023 to R5 071,59 in May 2023.
- **Year-on-year:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R461,70 (10,0%)**, from R4 609,89 in May 2022 to R5 071,59 in May 2023.

### **The following foods increased in price.**

Foods which increased in price in May 2023, by **5% or more**, include: onions (12%), stock cubes (5%), carrots (12%), butternut (14%), and bananas (5%).

Foods which increased in price in May 2023, by **2% or more**, include: maize meal (3%), salt (4%), curry powder (3%), soup (3%), tea (3%), full cream milk (3%), eggs (3%), chicken feet (2%), chicken livers (4%), spinach (4%), peanut butter (3%), and polony (2%).

Statistics South Africa's latest *Consumer Price Index* for April 2023<sup>i</sup> shows that **Headline inflation was 6,8%**, and for the **lowest expenditure quintiles 1-3, it is 11,3%, 10,6% and 9,2%** respectively. **CPI Food inflation was 14,3%** (for CPI Food & NAB it was 13,9%, we use the figure excluding non-alcoholic beverages). STATS SA's *Producer Price Index* for April 2023<sup>ii</sup> shows **agriculture was 3,7%**.

*In May 2023, food baskets decreased in Cape Town and Pietermaritzburg. Food baskets increased in Joburg and Durban, Springbok and Mtubatuba.*

The Joburg basket **increased** by R43,80 (0,9%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R438,36 (9,5%) year-on-year, to **R5 064,87** in May 2023.

The Durban basket **increased** by R159,92 (3,3%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R330,99 (7,0%) year-on-year, to **R5 040,59** in May 2023.

The Cape Town basket **decreased** by R64,85 (-1,3%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R580,48 (13,1%) year-on-year, to **R5 025,00** in May 2023.

The Springbok basket **increased** by R153,95 (2,9%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R564,10 (11,4%) year-on-year, to **R5 491,46** in May 2023.

The Maritzburg basket **decreased** by R27,56 (-0,6%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R478,03 (10,7%) year-on-year, to **R4 941,98** in May 2023.

The Mtubatuba basket **increased** by R93,92 (1,8%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R546,41 (11,6%) year-on-year, to **R5 237,73** in May 2023.

### **Workers**

The National Minimum Wage is **R25,42** an hour and **R203.36** for an 8-hour day. In May 2023, with 22-working days, the maximum National Minimum Wage for a General Worker is **R4 473,92**. Workers work to support their families. The wage workers earn is not just to sustain themselves alone, it is used to support the entire family. For Black South African workers, one wage typically must support 4 people. **Dispersed in a worker's family of 4 persons, the NMW, is reduced to R1 118,48 per person – this is below the upper-bound poverty line of R1 417 per person per month.**

The May 2023 cost of a basic nutritional food basket for a family of four persons is **R3 535,64** (See page 6 of May 2023, Household Affordability Index).

On our calculations, using Pietermaritzburg-based figures for electricity and transport, and the average figure for a minimum nutritional basket of food for a family of four, puts electricity, and transport, taking up **53%** of a worker's wage (R2 371,50/R4 473,92). Food is bought after monies for transport and electricity have been paid for or set aside (leaving only **R2 102,42** – for food and everything else), and so in May 2023, PMBEJD calculates that workers' families will **underspend on food by a minimum of 40,5% (having R2 102,42 left after transport and electricity, and with food costing R3 535,64). In this scenario there is no possibility of a worker being able to afford enough nutritious food for her family.**

**If the entire R2 102,42 all went to buy food, then for a family of 4 persons, we are looking at R525,60 per person per month. This is below the food poverty line of R663** (See page 8 of May 2023, Household Affordability Index).

### **Women and children**

In May 2023, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet was **R901,19**. Over the past month, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R9,06** or **1,0%**. Year-on-year, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R97,74** or **12,2%** (See page 6 of May 2023, Household Affordability Index).

In May 2023, the **Child Support Grant** of **R500** is **25%** below the **Food Poverty Line** of **R663**, and **45%** below the average **cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet (R901,19)**.

### **Household domestic and personal hygiene products**

The May 2023 *Household Domestic & Personal Hygiene Index* shows an **increase** of **R17,35 (1.9%)** month-on-month. Year-on-year the household domestic and personal hygiene products index **increased** by **R138,04 (17,1%)** bringing the total average cost of basic household domestic and personal hygiene products to **R945,34 in May 2023** (See page 5 of May 2023, Household Affordability Index).

*The cost of basic hygiene products is high. These products compete in the household purse with food. These products are essential for good health and hygiene.*

---

<sup>i</sup> STATSSA (2023). **Consumer Price Index April 2023**. Statistical release P0141. 24 May 2023. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P4, 7. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141April2023.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> STATSSA (2023). **Producer Price Index April 2023**. Statistical release P0142.1. 25 May 2023. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P12. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P01421/P01421April2023.pdf>