

**Key data from the October 2023 Household Affordability Index**

The October 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 October 2023:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket is **R5 297,58**.
- **Month-on-month:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R141,81 (2,8%)**, from R5 155,77 in September 2023 to R5 297,58 in October 2023.
- **Year-on-year:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R509,75 (10,6%)**, from R4 787,83 in October 2022 to R5 297,58 in October 2023.

**The following foods increased in price in October 2023.**

Foods which increased in price in October 2023, by **5% or more**, include: rice (5% - a 10kg bag of rice increased on average by R8,56 to R166,35), potatoes (40% - a 10kg pocket of potatoes increased on average by R41,47 to R145,31), eggs (19% - 60 eggs [2 X 30 egg trays] increased on average by R26,39 to R162,10), curry powder (7%), gizzards (5%), chicken livers (7%), wors (7%), fish (10%), tomatoes (11%), butternut (6%), spinach (5%), apples (6%), oranges (13%), margarine (6%), and apricot jam (5%).

*Whilst many foods increased above 5% in October 2023 – the core drivers of the higher-priced food basket are potatoes, eggs, and rice.*

Foods which increased in price in October 2023, by **2% or more**, include: white sugar (2%), sugar beans (2%), soup (2%), tea (4%), chicken feet (2%), beef liver (3%), beef (2%), green pepper (4%), canned beans (2%), and bananas (4%).

**Statistics South Africa's latest Consumer Price Index.**

Statistics South Africa's latest *Consumer Price Index* for September 2023<sup>i</sup> shows that **Headline inflation was 5,4%**, and for the **lowest expenditure quintiles 1-3, it is 8,3%, 7,8% and 6,8%** respectively. **CPI Food inflation was 8,0%** (for CPI Food & NAB it was 8,1%, we use the figure excluding non-alcoholic beverages). *STATS SA's Producer Price Index* for September 2023<sup>ii</sup> shows **agriculture was 7,8%**.

**Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked.**

*In October 2023, food baskets increased in all areas.*

The Joburg basket **increased** by R258,20 (4,9%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R617,21 (12,6%) year-on-year, to **R5 509,09** in October 2023.

The Durban basket **increased** by R170,46 (3,4%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R503,16 (10,8%) year-on-year, to **R5 177,62** in October 2023.

The Cape Town basket **increased** by R90,25 (1,7%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R532,09 (11,2%) year-on-year, to **R5 262,66** in October 2023.

The Springbok basket **increased** by R186,57 (3,4%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R567,83 (11,2%) year-on-year, to **R5 635,61** in October 2023.

The Maritzburg basket **increased** by R6,86 (0,1%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R245,82 (5,2%) year-on-year, to **R4 949,81** in October 2023.

The Mtubatuba basket **increased** by R144,43 (2,7%) month-on-month, and **increased** by R1 112,17 (25,5%) year-on-year, to **R5 473,87** in October 2023.

*(See pages 10-15 for area specific data, in the October 2023, Household Affordability Index).*

## **Workers**

The National Minimum Wage is **R25,42** an hour and **R203.36** for an 8-hour day. In October 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 558 per person per month.**

The October 2023 cost of a basic nutritional food basket for a family of four persons is **R3 655,70** (See page 6 of October 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 **55,7%** of a worker's wage (R2 490,92/R4 473,92). Food is bought after monies for transport and electricity have been paid for or set aside (leaving only **R1 983,00** – for food and everything else), and so in October 2023, PMBEJD calculates that workers' families will **underspend on food by a minimum of 45,8% (having R1 983,00 left after transport and electricity, and with food costing R3 655,70)**. **In this scenario there is no possibility of a worker being able to afford enough nutritious food for her family. If the entire R1 983,00 all went to buy food, then for a family of 4 persons, we are looking at R495,75 per person per month. This is below the food poverty line of R760** (See page 8 of October 2023, Household Affordability Index).

## **Women and children**

In October 2023, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet was **R932,73**. Over the past month, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R25,30** or **2,8%**. Year-on-year, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R107,42** or **13%** (See page 6 of October 2023, Household Affordability Index).

In October 2023, the **Child Support Grant** of **R510** is **33%** below the **Food Poverty Line** of **R760**, and **45%** below the average **cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet (R932,73)**.

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

The October 2023 *Household Domestic & Personal Hygiene Index* shows an **increase** of **R2,21 (0,2%)** month-on-month. Year-on-year the household domestic and personal hygiene products index **increased** by **R109,04 (12,3%)** bringing the total average cost of basic household domestic and personal hygiene products to **R999,05 in October 2023** (See page 5 of October 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.*

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<sup>i</sup> STATSSA (2023). **Consumer Price Index September 2023**. Statistical release P0141. 18 October 2023. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P4, 7. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141September2023.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> STATSSA (2023). **Producer Price Index September 2023**. Statistical release P0142.1. 26 October 2023. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P12. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P01421/P01421September2023.pdf>