

### 1. Key data from the May 2026 Household Affordability Index

The May 2026 Household Affordability Index, which tracks the prices of 44 basic foods from 52 supermarkets and 36 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), Mthatha (Eastern Cape), Pietermaritzburg (KwaZulu-Natal), Springbok (Northern Cape), and Mtubatuba (Northern KwaZulu-Natal), shows that:

- **In May 2026:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket is **R5 479,26**.
- **Month-on-month:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R27,17 (0,5%)**, from R5 452,09 in April 2026 to R5 479,26 in May 2026.
- **Year-on-year:** The average cost of the Household Food Basket **increased** by **R12,67 (0,2%)**, from R5 466,59 in May 2025 to R5 479,26 in May 2026.

### 2. Food pricing trends in May 2026.

In May, of the 44 foods tracked in the basket: 25 foods increased in price, and 19 foods decreased in price (See page 2 of May 2026, Household Affordability Index).

**The overall trends on the household food basket showed vegetable prices and some staple foods up; and meat and fruit prices down.**

*Below are the month-on-month price movements of individual foods in the average household food basket:*

**Foods in the basket which increased in price in May 2026 by 5% or more**, include: onions (7%), tomatoes (11%), carrots (16%), butternut (9%), and cabbage (11%).

**Foods in the basket which increased in price in May 2026 by 2% or more**, include: maize meal (2%), cake flour (2%), white sugar (2%), salt (4%), tea (4%), chicken livers (3%), fish (4%), spinach (3%), *cremora* (2%), canned beans (2%), and apricot jam (2%).

**Foods in the basket which decreased in price in May 2026, by 5% or more**, include: apples (-7%), and oranges (-21%).

**Foods in the basket which decreased in price in May 2026, by 2% or more**, include: sugar beans (-4%), potatoes (-3%), soup (-3%), full cream milk (-4%), chicken feet (-4%), beef (-2%), beef tripe (-4%), and bananas (-4%).

### 3. Inflation on the food baskets per area tracked.

*In May 2026, food baskets increased in price in: Joburg (R58,68), Cape Town (R54,78), Pietermaritzburg (R47,62), Mtubatuba (R73,67), and Mthatha (R175,76). Food baskets decreased in Durban (-R142,77), and Springbok (-R52,19).*

*(See pages 8-15 for area specific data, in the May 2026, Household Affordability Index).*

### 4. Statistics South Africa's Consumer Price Index and Producer Price Index.

Statistics South Africa's latest *Consumer Price Index* for April 2026<sup>1</sup> shows that **Headline inflation was 4,0%**, and for the **lowest expenditure quintiles 1-3 it is 2,6%, 2,6%, and 2,8%** respectively. **CPI Food & non-alcoholic beverages inflation was 0,7% month-on-month and 2,9% year-on-year.** STATS SA's *Producer Price Index* for

<sup>1</sup> STATSSA (2026). **Consumer Price Index April 2026**. Statistical release P0141. 20 May 2026. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P3, 6.  
See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141April2026.pdf>

March 2026<sup>2</sup> shows **Agriculture was -5%**, of which, *Products of crops and horticulture* was **-17,5%**, and *Live animals and animal products* was **14,2%**.

### **5. Workers and The National Minimum Wage**

The National Minimum Wage is R30,23 per hour, R241,84 for an 8-hour day, and R5 078,64 for an average 21-day working month.

In May 2026, with **20 working-days**, the maximum National Minimum Wage for a General Worker is **R4 836,80**. 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**. The maximum wage of **R4 836,80** when disbursed in a **family of four persons is R1 209,20**. This is **below the National Upper-Bound Poverty Line of R2 846 per capita per month**, and **below the National Lower-Bound Poverty Line of R1 415 per capita per month** (in May 2025 prices).<sup>3</sup>

On our calculations, electricity, and transport will take up **R2 781,85 (57,5%)** of a worker's wage in May 2026 (R1600,00 for transport and R1 181,85 for electricity).

After paying for transport and electricity, workers are left with **R2 054,95**.

Food is bought after monies for transport and electricity have been paid for or set aside.

The May 2026 average cost of a basic nutritional food basket for a family of four persons is **R3 795,23** (See page 5 of May 2026, Household Affordability Index).

The minimum shortfall on food for a workers' family in May 2026 is **45,9%** (a shortfall of R1 740,28 on a basket of nutritional food costing R3 795,23). **If all the remaining money (R2 054,95) went to buy food, then for a family of 4, it would provide R513,74 per person per month. This is 40% below the National Food Poverty Line of R855 per person per month.** Note that: the Food Poverty Line is a monetary-based threshold below which a person cannot consume enough food to meet their minimum daily energy requirements. (See page 7 of May 2026, Household Affordability Index).

*Note: Taxi fares have increased in all areas tracked in April and May or will increase on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June – from R2-R5 per local trip, with local fares set to average around R18 to R25. The data in the affordability tables will be adjusted in the June Household Affordability Index.*

### **6. Women and children: the Child Support Grant**

In May 2026, the average monthly cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet was **R967,08**. Over the past month, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **increased** by **R2,14 (0,2%)**. Year-on-year, the average cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet **decreased** by **R12,57 (-1,3%)**. See page 5 of May 2026, Household Affordability Index.

In May 2026, the **Child Support Grant** of **R580 per month** is **32% below** the **National Food Poverty Line** of **R855 per month** (in May 2025 prices), and **40% below** the average monthly **cost to feed a child a basic nutritious diet (R967,08)**.

### **7. PMBEJD's Basic Nutritional Food Basket for families**

As financial and economic circumstances worsen, so too does household health and nutrition. The gap between what women are able to buy for their families and what they need to buy for proper nutrition widens.

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<sup>2</sup> STATSSA (2026). **Producer Price Index March 2026**. Statistical release P0142.1. 30 April 2026. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P12. See Link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P01421/P01421March2026.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> STATSSA (2026). **National Poverty Lines 2025**. Statistical Release P0310.1. 29 January 2026. Statistics South Africa. Pretoria. P3. See link: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P03101/P031012025.pdf>

The *Basic Nutritional Food Basket*, is a basket designed by a Registered Dietician and includes foods which does constitute proper and healthy nutrition, unlike the Household Food Basket, which does not.<sup>4</sup> The Basic Nutritional Food Basket ensures that current food expenditure (severely limited by affordability constraints) is not conflated with the food expenditure required to secure proper nutrition. Read together with the *Household Food Basket*, the *Basic Nutritional Food Basket* assists to provide a more comprehensive picture of the economic situation and food crisis South African households face. *Table 1*.

**Table 1:** May 2026: The Basic Nutritional Food Index: household sizes 4, 5 &7.

By number of family members	Index 2025/26			change in Rands		change in %	
	May_2025	Apr_2026	May_2026	Apr 2026 vs. May 2026	May 2025 vs. May 2026	Apr 2026 vs. May 2026	May 2025 vs. May 2026
Four (4)	R3 843,40	R3 787,34	R3 795,23	R 7,89	-R 48,17	0,2%	-1,3%
Five (5)	R4 855,47	R4 786,33	R4 797,12	R 10,79	-R 58,35	0,2%	-1,2%
Seven (7)	<b>R6 711,16</b>	<b>R6 618,99</b>	<b>R6 634,22</b>	<b>R 15,23</b>	<b>-R 76,94</b>	<b>0,2%</b>	<b>-1,1%</b>

**Month-on-month:** The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members increased** by **R15,23 (0,2%)** from R6 618,99 in April 2026 to R6 634,22 in May 2026.

**Year-on-year:** The cost of a **basic nutritional food basket for a family of 7 members decreased** by **R76,94 (-1,1%)** from R6 711,16 in May 2025 to R6 634,22 in May 2026.

In May 2026, *The Basic Nutritional Food Basket*, using the same household size (7) as tracked by the Household Food Basket, is **R6 634,22**. This shows that the difference in cost between the foods which families living on low incomes try and buy each month (a household food basket) and the foods which families would like to buy and should buy to meet basic nutrition (a basic nutritional food basket) was **R1 154,96** (R5 479,26 vs. R6 634,22).

**It shows that as at May 2026, families living on low-incomes may underspend on basic nutritional food by a minimum of 17% (R1 154,96).** It means that the nutritional health and wellbeing of households is far worse than that shown by the Household Food Basket, and that the economic situation households face, with its attendant food crisis in homes is much deeper (*See page 5 of May 2026, Household Affordability Index*).

<sup>4</sup> The Basic Nutritional Food Basket includes a greater variety of better quality nutritionally-rich foods and in higher quantities to provide a family with a basic but nutritionally complete monthly diet. The basket can be amended to respond to families of various sizes, genders, ages and life stages through its connection to four "energy groups." Food price data for the Basic Nutritional Food Basket is collected with the Household Food Basket and conforms to the same methodology. *See page 5 of April 2026, Household Affordability Index*.