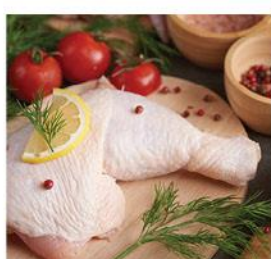




FOOD BASKET PRICE MONTHLY



NAMC FOOD BASKET: 28 SELECTED FOOD ITEMS PRICES

Issue 111 – February 2025

Food Basket Price Monthly

February 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 January 2025 CPI release. This update was mainly based on the results of the income and expenditure survey which began fieldwork in December 2022.

The January 2025 official data is used in this report, as the official release of the February 2025 CPI data is scheduled for March 19, 2025 (see link below from the Stats SA website):

<https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0141/P0141January2025.pdf>

Highlights

During January 2025, the nominal cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket amounted to R1 307.85 compared to the R1 294.42 reported in December 2024. This represents a monthly increase of 1.0% and a year-on-year increase of 4.5%.

January 25 vs. January 24	Inflation bracket				
	12% or more	Between 6% and 11.99%	Between 3% and 5.99%	Between 2.99% and 1%	Inflation close to zero or deflation
Stats SA food groups:			Sugar, confectionery and desserts (5.7%) Fish & other seafood (4.2%) Bread & cereals (3.8%) Processed food (3.8%)	Oils & fats (2.8%) Fruit & nuts (2.1%) Other foods (2.1%) Milk, other dairy products & eggs (1.7%)	Vegetables (0.7%) Meat (-0.5%) Unprocessed food (-0.6%)
Individual food items in NAMC food basket (listed in order of decreasing inflation rates):	Instant coffee (19.3%) Cabbage (18.0%) Ceylon/black tea (13.3%) Dried beans (13.1%)	Peanut butter (9.3%) Maize meal (9.3%) Oranges (7.9%)	White sugar (5.5%) Apples (5.2%) Tinned fish (5.1%) Beef offal (5.1%) Polony (4.3%) Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) chicken portions (3.7%) Cheddar cheese (3.5%)	Full cream long life milk (2.7%) Brick margarine (2.2%) Baked beans (1.8%) White bread (1.6%) Rice (1.5%) Bananas (1.5%) Brown bread (1.0%)	Eggs (0.4%) Onions (0.4%) Sunflower oil (-0.3%) Tomatoes (-1.0%) Beef mince (-1.5%) Chicken giblets (-3.8%) Potatoes (-5.3%)

1. Overall inflation and food inflation

The global nominal food price index reported by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), showed a decrease in January 2025, standing at 124.9 points, 1.6% down from December 2024. The decline was primarily due to a decrease in the price indices for sugar, vegetable oils, and meat, which more than offset increases in price indices for dairy products and cereals. Notably, the sugar price index decreased by 6.8%. The observed decrease was influenced by the higher-than-expected production in Brazil and the favourable prospects for upcoming harvests in major producing countries. The price index for oils decreased by 5.6%, mainly driven by lower world palm and rapeseed oil prices. Notably, soy and sunflower oil quotations remained stable. The meat price index decreased by 1.7% due to lower international ovine, pig, and poultry meat prices, which outweighed increases in bovine meat quotations. Dairy and cereal price indices increased by 2.4% and 0.3%, respectively.

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, and Namibia. Comparing data from December 2024 to January 2025, the majority of the reviewed countries experienced increases in their food inflation rates. Notably, Zambia's food inflation increased from 18.6% to 19.2%, Botswana's from 4.7% to 5.1%, the United Kingdom's from 2.0% to 3.3%, and China's from -0.5% to 0.4%. India's food inflation decreased from 8.4% to 6.0%, Brazil's from 7.7% to 7.3%, Namibia's from 5.9% to 5.3% and South Africa's from 2.5% to 2.3%. Russia's food inflation remained constant at 11.1%.

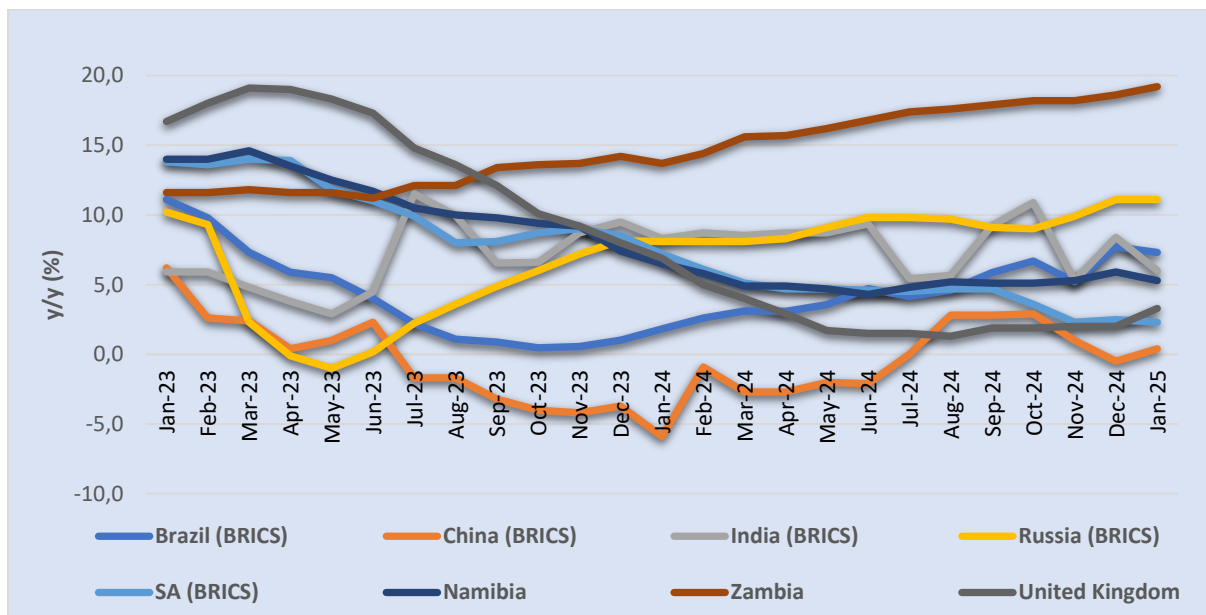


Figure 1: Global food inflation

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

Figure 2 presents the trend in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for South Africa from January 2019 to January 2025, along with the inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages (NAB). On 22 February 2025, the official release by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) confirmed the CPI for January 2025. For January 2025, the annual headline CPI was reported at 3.2%, reflecting a slight increase from the 3.0% reported in December 2024. In contrast, the inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic beverages declined to 2.3% in January 2025 from 2.5% reported in December 2024. Notably, the main drivers of the current inflation on food and NAB were sugar, confectionery and desserts, which experienced a substantial increase of 5.7% in January 2025, followed by fish and other seafood (4.2%), processed food (3.8%), cereal products (3.8%), oils & fats (2.8%), fruits & nuts (2.1%), other foods (2.1%), milk, other dairy products & eggs (1.7%) and vegetables (0.7%). During this period meat and unprocessed foods decreased by 0.5% and 0.6%, respectively.

South Africa's food inflation is expected to remain volatile in the coming months due to unstable global markets and trading uncertainties. Notably, meat prices fell due to lower prices for pig, poultry and ovine which was attributed to outbreak of foot and mouth disease (FMD) in Germany, while maize prices increased due to unfavourable conditions in Argentina and Brazil (FAO, 2025). These global changes in prices are expected to have an impact on food prices in South Africa, especially in import-sensitive sub-sectors. However, it is impressive to note that South Africa's inflation rate has consistently remained below the central bank's target of lower than 6% since June 2023.

Furthermore, as of January 2025, the local price of white maize averaged at R6 823 per ton, marking a 4.5% increase from December 2024. Similarly, yellow maize averaged at R5 600 per ton, reflecting a 6.8% increase compared to the previous month. On the other hand, sunflower seed prices averaged at R10 087 per ton, indicating a 2.7% decline from the preceding month's price.

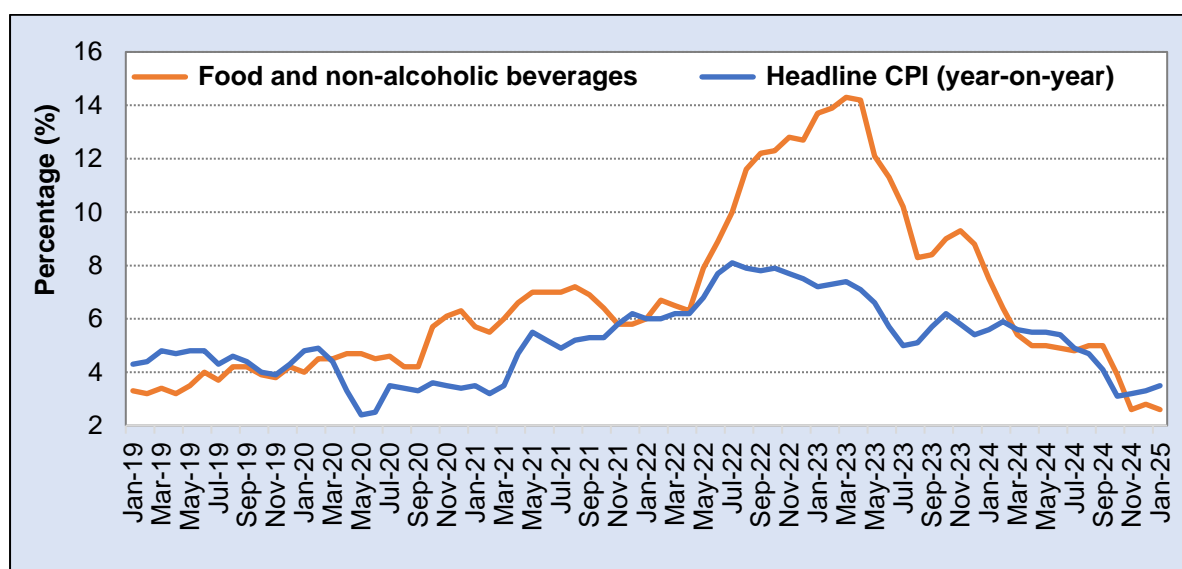


Figure 2: South Africa's headline CPI and Food & non-alcoholic beverages' CPI

Source: Stats SA, 2025; NAMC calculations

2. Monthly comparison of prices between urban and rural areas for January 2025

Table 1 presents a comparative analysis of expenses associated with selected food items in both urban and rural areas during January 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 R10.19, followed by maize meal (R2.69), peanut butter (R2.04), sunflower oil (R0.94), margarine spread (R0.59), brown bread (R0.45) and white bread (R0.43) in comparison to their rural counterparts. On average, urban consumers paid R1.10 more for these 11 food items. This information highlights noteworthy variations in food item costs across different geographical areas.

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

Product	Urban Food Prices January 2025 (R/unit)	Rural Food Prices January 2025 (R/unit)	The price difference (R/unit)
Full cream milk - long life 1ℓ	19.98	20.68	-0.70
Brown bread 700g	17.34	16.89	0.45
White bread 700g	18.82	18.39	0.43
Bananas per kg	21.51	21.99	-0.48
Maize meal 2.5kg	40.39	37.70	2.69

Product	Urban Food Prices January 2025 (R/unit)	Rural Food Prices January 2025 (R/unit)	The price difference (R/unit)
Margarine spread 500g	39.81	39.22	0.59
Peanut butter 400g	48.11	46.07	2.04
Rice 2kg	44.80	46.56	-1.76
Sunflower oil 750ml	35.53	34.59	0.94
Ceylon/black tea 250g	60.02	49.84	10.19
White sugar 2.5kg	65.39	67.73	-2.34
			1.10

Source: Stats SA. 2024; NAMC calculations

3. The NAMC food basket: January 2025 vs January 2024

In this section, the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket's cost is explained through a comparison of average food prices in January 2025 and January 2024. The cost of the NAMC's 28-item urban food basket increased by 4.5% in January 2025 compared to the same period last year, reaching R1 307.85. When compared to the R1 294.42 in December 2024, the basket increased by 1.0% monthly. **Table 2** presents the 28 food items composing the NAMC urban food basket in terms of their nominal prices. Between January 2025 and January 2024, among these 28 items, seven witnessed price increases that exceeded the inflation target set by the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) of 6%. Notable products in this category include instant coffee which experienced a substantial price surge of 19.3%, followed by cabbage (18.0%), Ceylon/black tea (13.3%), dried beans (13.1%), peanut butter (9.3%), maize meal (9.3%) and oranges (7.9%).

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

Category	Product	January-24 R/unit	December- 24 R/unit	January-25 R/unit	Change year-on- year (%)	Change month-on- month (%)
Beans	Baked beans - tinned 410g	15.98	16.42	16.26	1.8%	-1.0%
	Beans - dried 500g	30.89	34.31	34.93	13.1%	1.8%
	Peanut butter 400g	44.02	47.95	48.11	9.3%	0.3%
Coffee & Tea	Ceylon/black tea 250g	52.96	60.12	60.02	13.3%	-0.2%
	Instant coffee 250g	58.86	69.07	70.24	19.3%	1.7%
Dairy & Eggs	Cheddar cheese per kg	141.74	139.99	146.66	3.5%	4.8%
	Eggs 1.5 dozen	68.19	69.65	68.48	0.4%	-1.7%
	Full cream milk - long life 1l	19.45	19.86	19.98	2.7%	0.6%
Fats & Oils	Brick margarine 500g	29.09	29.93	29.73	2.2%	-0.7%
	Sunflower oil 750ml	35.64	35.49	35.53	-0.3%	0.1%
Fruit	Apples per kg	23.94	24.65	25.18	5.2%	2.2%
	Bananas per kg	21.20	24.49	21.51	1.5%	-12.2%
	Oranges per kg	31.12	28.37	33.57	7.9%	18.3%
Animal Protein	Beef mince per kg	105.94	103.83	104.37	-1.5%	0.5%
	Beef offal per kg	49.72	51.92	52.27	5.1%	0.7%
	Chicken giblets per kg	48.19	46.66	46.38	-3.8%	-0.6%
	Fish (excl tuna) - tinned 400g	26.47	27.46	27.83	5.1%	1.3%
	IQF chicken portions 2kg	93.45	95.98	96.94	3.7%	1.0%
	Polony 1kg	54.44	57.43	56.80	4.3%	-1.1%
Bread & Cereals	Brown bread 700g	17.16	17.39	17.34	1.0%	-0.3%
	White bread 700g	18.53	19.02	18.82	1.6%	-1.1%

Category	Product	January-24 R/unit	December-24 R/unit	January-25 R/unit	Change year-on-year (%)	Change month-on-month (%)
	Rice 2kg	44.14	45.81	44.80	1.5%	-2.2%
	Maize meal 5kg	66.90	71.04	73.11	9.3%	2.9%
Vegetables	Cabbage each	19.76	22.63	23.31	18.0%	3.0%
	Onions per kg	20.70	20.92	20.78	0.4%	-0.7%
	Potatoes per kg	22.62	21.38	21.41	-5.3%	0.1%
	Tomatoes per kg	28.39	28.11	28.10	-1.0%	0.0%
Sugary foods	White sugar 2.5kg	62.01	64.54	65.39	5.5%	1.3%
Total Rand Value		1 251.50	1294.42	1307.85	4.5%	1.0%

Source: Stats SA & BFAP. 2025; NAMC calculations

Figure 3 provides an overview of the average nominal cost changes in different food groups within the NAMC's 28-item food basket, offering a comparative analysis of January 2025 with January 2024 (year-on-year) and January 2025 with December 2024 (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 substantial increase of 16.5%. Following this were bean products which increased by 9.3%, sugary foods by 5.5%, fruits by 5.2%, bread & cereals by 5.0%, dairy & eggs by 2.5%, animal protein by 1.7% and fats & oils by 0.8%. Reviewing changes based on a month-on-month basis, fruits showed the most significant escalation by 3.5%. This was followed by dairy & eggs which increased by 2.4%, sugary foods by 1.3%, coffee & tea by 0.8%, bean products by 0.6%, vegetables by 0.6%, bread & cereals by 0.5%, animal products by 0.3% while fats & oils decreased by 0.2%.

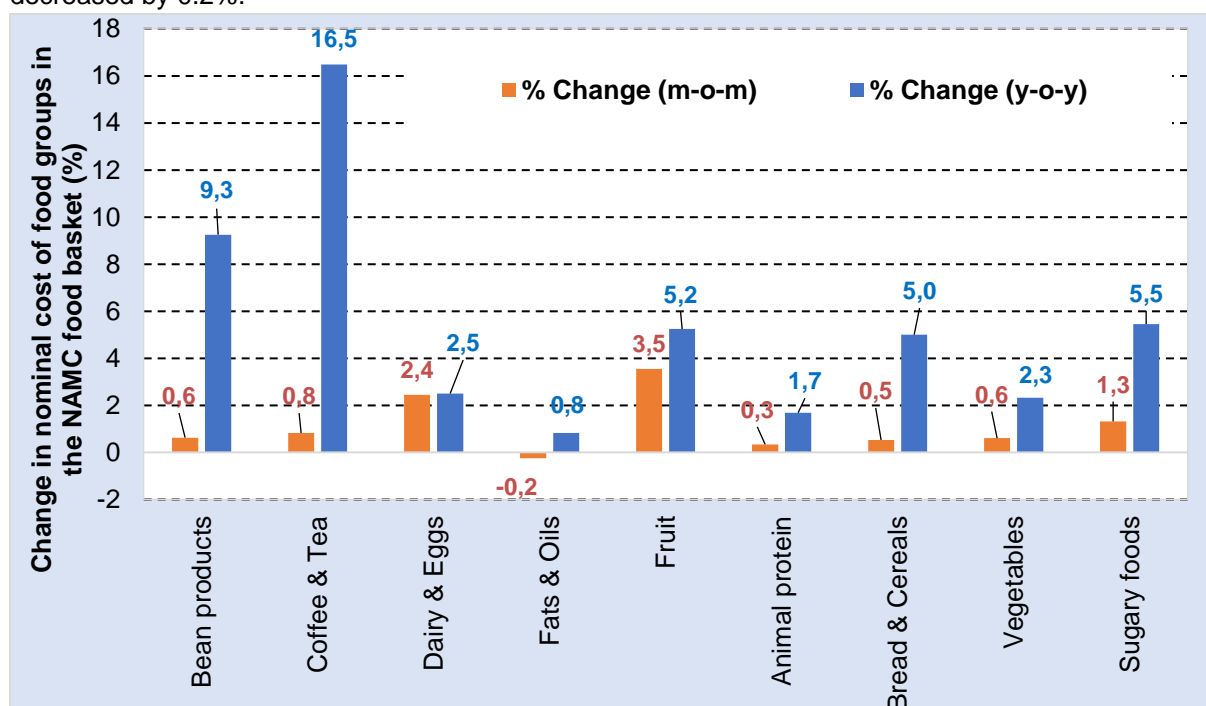


Figure 3: Nominal change in the cost of specific food groups within the NAMC's 28-item food basket, comparing January 2025 vs. January 2024 and January 2025 vs. December 2024

Source: Stats SA data. 2025; NAMC calculations

Background Information:

The NAMC monitors food prices at retail level and releases regular authoritative reports. The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), 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 2000/01 season. The functions of the FPMC were continued by the NAMC 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, came because of discussions with industry to keep a more frequent watch on the movements of food prices.

Compiled by:

Trends and discussion on selected topics:

Thulani Ningi
Lwazi Dladla
Maremo Mphahlele
Corné Dempers
Dr. Moses Lubinga

Enquiries: Thulani Ningi: Tningi@namc.co.za or Dr Moses Lubinga: HLubinga@namc.co.za

Stats SA is acknowledged for assistance provided to the NAMC in terms of food price data.

© 2025. Published by the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC).

Disclaimer:

Information contained in this document results from research funded wholly or in part by the NAMC acting in good faith. Opinions, attitudes, and points of view expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the NAMC. The NAMC makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents of this document and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions regarding the content thereof. No warranty of any kind, implied, expressed, or statutory, including but not limited to the warranties of non-infringement of third-party rights, title, merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose or freedom from computer virus is given with respect to the contents of this document in hardcopy, electronic format, or electronic links thereto. Reference made to any specific product, process, and service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer or another commercial commodity or entity are for informational purposes only and do not constitute or imply approval, endorsement or favouring by the NAMC.