Retail Prices of Food, 1948

Bulletin No. 965

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Maurice J. Tobin, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
Ewan Clague, *Commissioner*

Letter of Transmittal

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS,
Washington, D. C., August, 31 1949.

The SECRETARY OF LABOR:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a report on retail prices and indexes of retail prices of foods for the year 1948.

In 1948, retail food prices advanced to all-time highs. The post World War II peak attained in July was followed by a reversal of trend and steady declines each month through December.

A mimeographed report on retail prices of food, giving index numbers by group and subgroup of commodities and average prices for individual foods in each of 56 cities will continue to be issued monthly and will be available on request as heretofore.

This report was prepared by Frances H. Martin of the Food Section of the Bureau's Branch of Consumers' Prices.

EWAN CLAGUE, *Commissioner.*

Hon. MAURICE J. TOBIN,
Secretary of Labor.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. - - - - - - - - Price 15 cents

Contents

TABLES

APPENDIX

APPENDIX TABLES

Retail Prices of Food, 1948

Summary

During 1948 retail food prices advanced to a new record high, reaching a postwar peak in July. Through the remaining months they declined continuously, and in December 1948 reached a level 1 percent below December 1947. Despite this slight decline over the year, food prices for 1948 averaged 8.5 percent higher than in 1947.

Marked fluctuations occurred during the year. After rising in January, retail food prices turned downward in February and March, following some of the sharpest declines in the history of farm commodity prices—especially those for wheat, corn, hogs, and soybeans. As in 1947, there was speculation over whether these declines signaled the downturn for prices of all commodities. However, sustained consumer demand, strengthened by rising incomes and lower income taxes, and export demands following passage of the Foreign Assistance Act, pushed food prices to new highs. The retail food price peak reached in July was 49 percent above the June 1946 level and 17 percent above June 1920, the peak after World War I. After July, food prices declined about 5 percent to the end of the year.

Table 1 and chart 1 present the trend in retail prices of all foods combined, from 1913 through 1948.

Food Prices During 1948

For the second year, retail food price movements were materially affected by the supplies and prices of wheat and corn. In January 1948, retail food prices continued upward from their previous record of December, with all groups except eggs and sugar contributing to the rise. At the beginning of the year, corn prices were high as a result of the short 1947 crop, and wheat, although plentiful, reflected the high prices of corn. In February, grain prices broke sharply, reacting from the substantial rises during the last half of 1947. The improved crop outlook at home and abroad forecast better supplies. At the same time, demand was somewhat diminished by curtailed Government buying of wheat and flour, and by unfavorable livestock-feed price ratios, which resulted in heavy slaughter of livestock. Retail food prices, reversing their upward trend, were carried down nearly 2½ percent from mid-January to mid-February, when prices of all major groups except fruits and vegetables and beverages decreased. While the February decline was not so large at retail as at wholesale, many retailers followed rapidly the wholesale price reductions and the trend lasted through mid-March, when prices fell further by 1.2 percent to reach the low for the year.

By mid-April, a rise of 2.8 percent nearly wiped out the declines of February and March, as meat supplies were reduced by a strike of packing-house workers, and prices of fresh fruits and vegetables and dairy products reached new highs. In May, supplies of meats were still curtailed by the packing-house strike, while demand remained very strong. Prices continued upward to reach a peak in July. Although peaks were reached in August for most groups, August prices for all foods combined decreased slightly on the average, because of a larger-than-seasonal drop of 8.2 percent in the prices of fresh fruits and vegetables. Fats and oils started down at this time with the prospect of good oilseed crops.

By late August, there was no doubt that 1948 was a year of record crop production which would have far-reaching effects on later food supplies and prices. Demand began to slow up at the existing price levels, and heavy livestock shipments started in advance of the season. As the year progressed, a record corn crop of over 3½ billion bushels was harvested, accompanied by bumper crops of wheat and oilseeds. These crop harvests, presaging more abundant supplies of food and feed, including meats, fats and oils, and dairy products, influenced retail food prices downward for the remainder of the year.

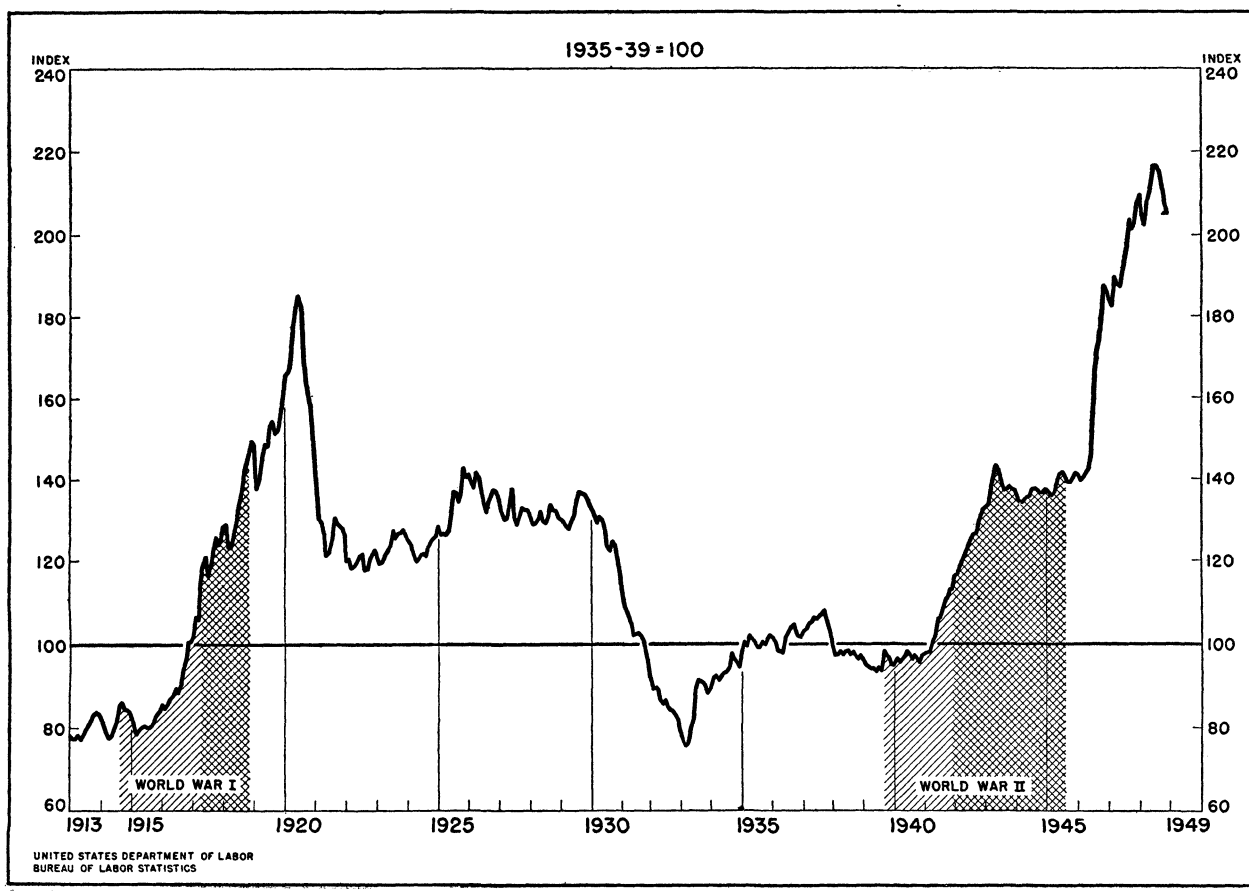
TABLE 1.—*Indexes of retail prices of food in large cities combined, by year, 1913–48, and by month, January 1946 to December 1948*

[1935-39=100]

Year	All-foods index	Year	All-foods index	Year	All-foods index
BY YEAR					
1913	79.9	1925	132.9	1937	105.3
1914	81.8	1926	137.4	1938	97.8
1915	80.9	1927	132.3	1939	95.2
1916	90.8	1928	130.8	1940	96.6
1917	116.9	1929	132.5	1941	105.5
1918	134.4	1930	126.0	1942	123.9
1919	149.8	1931	103.9	1943	138.0
1920	168.8	1932	86.5	1944	136.1
1921	128.3	1933	84.1	1945	139.1
1922	119.9	1934	93.7	1946	159.6
1923	124.0	1935	100.4	1947	193.8
1924	122.8	1936	101.3	1948	210.2

Year and month	All-foods index	Year and month	All-foods index	Year and month	All-foods index
BY MONTH					
1946		1947		1948	
January	141.0	January	183.8	January	209.7
February	139.6	February	182.3	February	204.7
March	140.1	March	189.5	March	202.3
April	141.7	April	188.0	April	207.9
May	142.6	May	187.6	May	210.9
June	145.6	June	190.5	June	214.1
July	165.7	July	193.1	July	216.8
August	171.2	August	196.5	August	216.6
September	174.1	September	203.5	September	215.2
October	180.0	October	201.6	October	211.5
November	187.7	November	202.7	November	207.5
December	185.9	December	206.9	December	205.0

Chart 1.—Retail Prices of Food in Large Cities Combined



Contrary to the usual seasonal movement, in September, food price declines gained momentum in all major groups except eggs, coffee, and sugar. Although in October, November, and December, additional food price decreases of between 1 and 2 percent were reported each month, prices remained at a relatively high level. By December, retail prices of foods were still 40.8 percent higher than in June 1946, and 10.8 percent above June 1920.

Changes in Food Prices by City

Of the 56 cities surveyed by the Bureau, retail food price changes from December 1947 to December 1948 ranged from a decrease of 5.6 percent in Birmingham to an increase of 5.1 percent in Butte. Even though prices averaged higher over the year for each of the 56 cities, by December 1948 retail food prices for large cities combined were about 1 percent lower than in December 1947, as prices in 42 of these cities had dropped to a level below that at the end of 1947. These decreases over the year ranged from 0.1 percent in Portland, Maine, and Buffalo to 5.6 percent in Birmingham. Three cities showed no change over December 1947. The price declines were fairly general throughout the Nation, except in the West, where five of the seven far western cities reported increases, one city reported a decline, and one was at the level of December 1947.

Throughout the year the pattern followed by the 56 cities was an interesting one. In February after the market break, food prices in all 56 cities declined. In March, 48 cities continued to decline, while 6 moved upward. By April all 56 cities increased. In May the increase included 52 cities, and in June and July, 50. In August, 26 cities continued the increase, while 28 started to decline. From September on, the number of cities reporting declines varied from 45 to 54. During the year, record peaks were reached by 25 cities in July and 26 in August.

Indexes of average retail food prices by city during 1948 are presented in table 2. (Annual average prices of individual foods by city are shown in table 5.)

Trend of Prices for Major Food Groups

Price movements among the major food groups varied greatly from December 1947 to December 1948, despite the net decline of only 1 percent for all groups combined. Prices decreased for six of the major food groups: fats and oils (11.4 percent); eggs (8.0 percent); fruits and vegetables (6.3 percent); sugar and sweets (5.8 percent); dairy products (2.8 percent); and cereals and bakery products (0.2 percent). Prices increased for only two groups: meats, poultry, and fish (6.2 percent); and beverages (4.7 percent). Compared with the prewar period, 1935–39, prices in December 1948 had risen most for meats, poultry, and fish (141.3 percent) and eggs (117.3 percent), while prices had increased least for cereals and bakery products (70.2 percent), and sugar and sweets (73.0 percent).

Table 3 presents indexes of retail food prices by group for the years 1923 through 1948 and for each month in 1948. The accompanying chart shows the trend of retail food prices by group through 1948.

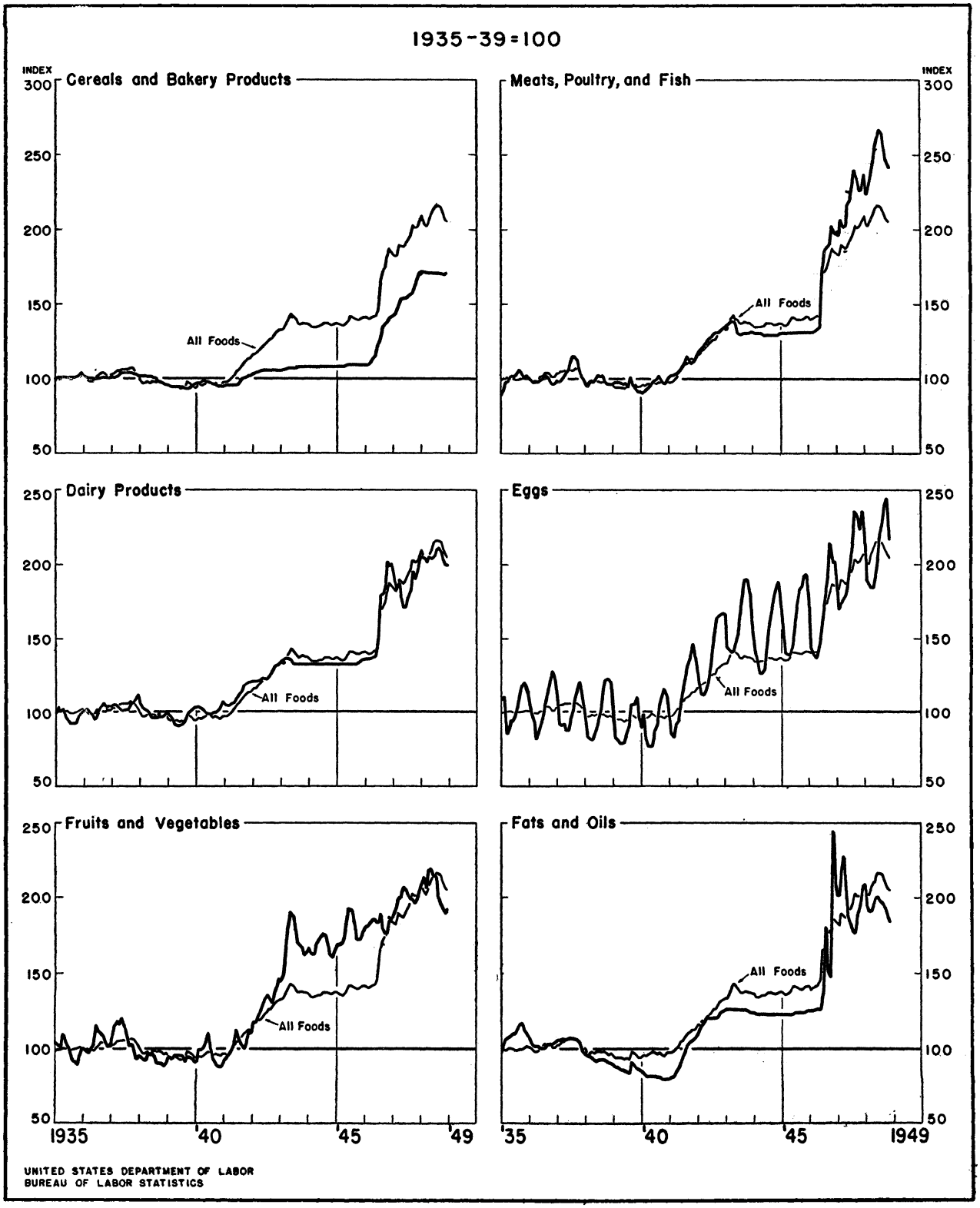
Cereals and bakery products.—In contrast to the sharp upward trend of the previous 2 years, retail prices for cereals and bakery products combined remained relatively stable during 1948. After a 1.3 percent rise in January to a new high for this group, prices declined in February and March, and remained fairly steady through November. Despite a fractional advance in December, prices were slightly below those at the close of 1947.

The largest factor in this decrease was the 11.4 percent drop in the retail price of flour, as it followed wheat prices downward. Millers continued to follow a cautious buying policy, and demand was lowered by reduced flour exports. Corn meal prices were reduced 10.6 percent. The price of rice, although showing a decline of 8.0 percent in its first full year without control, by December 1948 was 11.0 percent higher than in June 1947, its last month under price control. Over the year, cooky prices increased 8.2 percent, corn flakes 5.0 percent, and rolled oats 2.1 percent. Bread prices also increased 2.0 percent despite an 11.4 percent lower average in flour prices. In December record highs were reached in prices of bread, rolled oats, and cookies.

Meats, poultry, and fish.—Prices for the meats, poultry, and fish group increased 6.2 percent over the year, with chickens up 9.1 percent, fish 8.5 percent, and meats 5.5 percent. Higher prices for beef, veal, and lamb more than offset lower pork prices in the meats group, with largest increases occurring for hamburger (19.9 percent),

840009—49—2

Chart 2.—Retail Prices for Groups of Food in Large Cities Combined



veal cutlets (16.7 percent), and round steak and chuck roast (over 10.0 percent). Salt pork prices decreased 23.1 percent and sliced bacon 14.4 percent. During the first part of the year, supplies declined but per capita consumption was well maintained, and prices rose to new highs through August. By September, consumers' price resistance mounted, and per capita consumption declined, leaving large supplies of meat on the market and forcing prices downward through the remainder of the year.

At the beginning of 1948, there were fewer livestock on farms than in any year since 1939. The short 1947 corn crop caused unusually high feed prices, which resulted in unfavorable livestock-feed ratios, and consequently, high prices for meat animals. This combination of circumstances encouraged heavy slaughter. Later in the year, as record grain production materialized, feed costs dropped sharply, and the United States Department of Agriculture urged farmers to rebuild their animal stocks. However, in September the effects of buyer resistance to record prices, and heavy livestock marketings with fear of the outlook for declining prices, took effect and brought price declines in advance of the usual seasonal trend. By December, demand for meat was relatively slow, with large supplies being carried over.

After an increase of 4.5 percent in January, prices for meats, poultry, and fish were 237.5 percent of the 1935–39 average; only 1.3 percent below the previous record high of 240.6 of September 1947. Prices for the group then broke sharply in February (5.3 percent), as meat prices dropped 6.6 percent, with pork down 10.5 percent, beef and veal 4.8 percent, lamb 3.5 percent, and chickens 1.8 percent. However, prices were still 3.5 percent above the average for the year of 1947. In March, prices steadied. Stimulated by the strike of packing-house workers from March 16 to May 22, and with reduced production, prices reached new highs in each month from April through August. The postwar peak in August brought the meats, poultry, and fish price index to a level 267.0 percent of the 1935–39 average. The high for lamb (275.0) was reached in July, beef and veal (286.2) in August, and pork (247.9) in September. The high for fish (328.1) was in November and December. Rapid declines in retail prices of meats, poultry, and fish from September through December brought prices down to 241.3 percent of the 1935–39 average, 9.6 percent below the high of August.

Lamb prices started downward in August, and continued down through December, although slaughter was high in relation to supplies. In September, beef and veal prices started their year-end decline in advance of the usual seasonal trend. From October through December, pork prices dropped sharply, and by mid-December had reached a point 206.2 percent of the 1935–39 average, only 0.9 percent above the level of March and 2.0 percent above the low of the year in February.

At the end of 1948, housewives were encouraged to find that round steak had dropped to 88 cents a pound on the average, compared with $1.01 in August, and pork chops averaged about 67½ cents a pound compared with 92 cents in September.

Dairy products.—A decline over the year of 2.8 percent in prices of dairy products was the result of lower butter prices (down 20.8 percent) which more than offset increases for evaporated milk (11.6 percent), fresh milk (about 7½ percent), and cheese (4½ percent). Butter, declining from an average price of 95.4 cents per pound in December 1947, to 75.6 cents in December 1948 had a greater influence on the down-trend of food prices than any other single item in the index.

Prices of dairy products during 1948 defied the usual seasonal trends. After a rise in January, they declined in February and March. In April, prices rose 2.3 percent contraseasonally as the price of butter soared upward by 7.6 percent when the bill to eliminate the margarine tax was tabled temporarily by Congress. By June, prices had risen slightly instead of following the regular seasonal decline. Prices continued upward, reaching the highest point on record in August, then during the remainder of the year declined sharply and contraseasonally.

During the first of the year, storage supplies and production of dairy products were low. As the year progressed, stocks accumulated with larger than usual supplies of milk diverted to cheese and butter. Large oilseed crops brought lower prices of oils used in the manufacture of margarine. Consequently, margarine became keener competition, with prices decreasing 8.9 percent over the year to 38.0 cents per pound, approximately half the price of butter.

TABLE 2.—*Indexes of retail prices of food, by city [1] and by month, 1948*

[1935–39=100]

Region and city	1948											
	Average for the year	Jan. 15	Feb. 15	Mar. 15	Apr. 15	May 15	June 15	July 15	Aug. 15	Sept. 15	Oct. 15	Nov. 15	Dec. 15
United States	210.2	209.7	204.7	202.3	207.9	210.9	214.1	216.8	216.6	215.2	211.5	207.5	205.0
New England													
Boston	200.9	200.3	195.0	192.2	198.2	199.2	204.1	210.2	208.8	207.2	202.6	199.2	194.2
Bridgeport	206.2	204.5	197.5	195.6	201.4	207.5	210.3	214.4	214.6	212.7	209.3	205.9	201.0
Fall River	205.8	202.6	198.4	197.2	201.2	207.2	211.3	214.1	213.5	211.6	209.1	202.5	200.4
Manchester	209.3	208.8	203.2	202.0	204.9	208.9	213.0	218.4	217.8	215.5	210.4	204.8	203.6
New Haven	200.9	201.5	195.8	193.0	197.7	201.2	205.4	208.3	205.6	205.3	203.5	199.6	194.5
Portland, Maine	200.8	199.6	193.5	192.4	197.0	199.4	204.1	209.7	209.8	207.0	204.1	198.0	195.0
Providence	216.6	215.0	210.5	205.5	213.1	217.9	222.0	224.9	227.2	223.8	218.4	211.7	209.2
Middle Atlantic													
Buffalo	204.9	202.1	196.7	196.6	200.2	207.9	211.6	212.9	213.0	210.1	206.4	201.6	200.0
Newark	205.3	201.4	200.3	196.4	203.0	204.7	209.9	212.8	212.6	211.1	205.8	203.9	201.2
New York	210.5	209.7	206.7	201.2	208.6	210.0	213.9	217.9	216.9	216.2	211.5	208.7	204.3
Philadelphia	205.3	205.6	199.3	196.3	202.8	205.0	209.4	210.9	212.5	212.0	208.4	202.0	199.3
Pittsburgh	213.6	212.8	205.4	204.8	209.8	213.7	219.6	222.3	220.9	219.5	215.1	211.0	208.0
Rochester	202.7	202.1	196.9	196.7	200.8	205.1	208.8	211.2	209.7	207.3	200.7	196.7	196.5
Scranton	209.8	213.1	203.2	201.8	208.9	212.2	216.1	218.2	217.3	213.2	209.2	202.8	201.1
East North Central													
Chicago	215.2	213.2	204.8	204.3	212.2	218.4	221.3	224.7	223.6	221.4	218.0	211.9	208.2
Cincinnati	212.8	213.0	209.0	206.1	210.1	213.5	216.3	220.4	218.1	218.0	214.4	209.4	205.2
Cleveland	218.8	217.6	212.5	209.3	213.0	218.0	223.7	226.2	229.0	225.6	220.9	217.0	213.0
Columbus, Ohio	196.0	196.7	192.6	190.8	193.1	195.3	199.2	201.9	202.2	200.8	197.2	193.1	189.4
Detroit	205.0	205.1	199.4	197.7	203.9	208.0	211.3	213.2	210.1	207.6	204.4	199.9	198.7
Indianapolis	209.2	208.2	204.2	203.8	205.7	208.0	211.5	212.6	217.1	216.0	211.8	206.8	204.8
Milwaukee	210.9	206.4	203.4	204.6	210.9	213.7	215.3	218.3	218.8	216.3	211.2	207.5	205.0
Peoria	220.4	219.5	208.9	205.8	217.0	223.8	227.3	224.9	230.8	230.3	222.1	218.0	216.8
Springfield, Ill	218.5	217.9	211.4	209.1	212.6	219.3	224.4	224.9	227.0	226.4	219.5	215.2	214.4
West North Central													
Cedar Rapids [2]	217.0	214.6	208.9	208.2	217.0	219.7	224.3	224.4	222.2	220.2	218.0	214.4	211.8
Kansas City	199.8	199.4	192.5	193.0	197.9	202.2	204.4	204.4	205.4	204.4	201.1	198.5	194.7
Minneapolis	202.7	202.6	197.2	198.1	203.0	206.0	206.2	208.2	209.2	206.0	202.2	197.8	195.6
Omaha	205.7	204.2	197.7	197.7	202.5	207.2	210.1	208.6	211.1	210.3	210.2	205.6	203.1
St. Louis	217.5	217.2	212.8	210.9	213.6	218.2	222.0	224.2	225.3	223.0	217.4	213.1	212.2
St. Paul	199.5	198.6	194.0	195.3	200.5	203.5	203.7	204.7	204.5	203.1	199.7	194.8	192.1
Wichita [2]	221.9	222.4	215.1	215.9	220.3	225.3	226.4	226.7	224.7	223.0	220.0	222.2	220.4
South Atlantic													
Atlanta	208.4	211.9	205.6	201.1	204.7	207.9	209.9	212.4	215.7	214.2	208.3	205.9	203.3
Baltimore	221.2	220.2	214.5	212.3	217.8	221.6	225.3	227.7	228.9	228.7	224.5	218.7	214.6
Charleston, S. C	204.5	206.6	200.2	199.1	204.8	206.7	208.1	211.4	208.0	207.7	204.9	198.9	197.1
Jacksonville	216.2	216.2	212.2	208.1	214.7	217.3	222.9	222.8	220.7	219.3	217.5	212.6	209.9
Norfolk	213.9	216.5	210.2	206.0	210.5	213.3	214.4	216.9	220.5	220.2	217.1	211.8	209.8
Richmond	205.6	209.1	201.3	197.6	200.6	203.4	205.3	209.4	211.7	214.1	209.7	203.6	201.5
Savannah	220.8	222.9	219.6	213.6	221.4	223.3	224.5	228.3	223.3	222.4	219.2	215.0	216.0
Washington, D. C	208.2	209.5	202.0	198.9	205.1	209.7	215.4	215.1	214.9	212.9	209.2	203.5	201.8
Winston-Salem [2]	209.9	214.5	207.9	202.7	206.0	208.4	209.5	212.9	215.8	215.6	212.7	206.1	206.6
East South Central													
Birmingham	211.7	218.0	211.1	207.2	207.5	209.6	212.7	218.0	219.3	216.3	210.8	205.4	204.8
Jackson [2]	218.3	223.3	221.3	214.6	218.3	218.0	216.7	220.8	220.6	220.7	218.6	212.7	213.8
Knoxville [2]	237.9	244.3	239.6	230.0	233.9	236.2	238.4	241.7	244.6	241.6	236.7	233.9	233.9
Louisville	201.2	200.1	198.0	193.9	198.2	201.6	203.8	206.8	207.4	207.2	201.7	198.9	196.6
Memphis	224.4	230.7	224.5	219.9	222.2	223.2	226.7	229.8	227.1	227.8	223.7	219.0	217.9
Mobile	217.0	219.6	215.5	212.2	216.3	217.0	219.8	222.5	222.7	222.1	213.8	211.3	211.8
West South Central													
Dallas	210.7	210.3	205.7	203.0	206.7	210.5	210.8	213.3	215.2	217.3	214.7	212.7	208.2
Houston	219.9	221.5	218.1	216.0	219.3	218.1	220.0	222.1	223.8	223.7	220.8	217.6	218.1
Little Rock	207.9	211.4	206.1	203.8	206.4	209.2	210.0	213.4	212.4	212.0	206.5	202.4	201.6
New Orleans	224.9	226.4	225.6	224.3	228.7	223.0	227.3	233.2	228.5	227.7	220.5	218.0	216.1
Mountain													
Butte	208.9	204.8	202.1	200.5	201.3	207.4	214.7	216.6	215.1	214.5	214.9	209.3	205.7
Denver	210.0	208.6	203.4	202.3	208.5	213.3	216.5	217.0	213.1	210.5	208.3	207.7	211.0
Salt Lake City	212.5	211.3	207.9	207.3	212.9	216.8	215.8	217.1	216.0	214.7	211.2	208.8	209.8
Pacific													
Los Angeles	212.5	212.2	210.9	208.9	213.9	212.6	212.1	213.1	212.7	212.1	213.1	213.7	214.9
Portland, Oreg	226.4	223.0	219.2	220.4	223.2	229.5	228.2	233.7	234.1	231.4	227.7	222.9	223.5
San Francisco	220.8	218.9	215.4	215.3	219.5	223.4	221.6	223.2	224.3	224.2	223.0	219.5	221.1
Seattle	217.6	218.4	214.7	212.5	215.5	221.4	220.3	223.4	221.9	221.0	217.5	213.4	211.8

[1] Aggregate costs of foods in each city, weighted to represent total purchases by families of wage earners and lower-salaried workers, have been combined for the United States with the use of population weights.

[2] June 1940=100.

Eggs.—Egg prices declined 8.0 percent over the year, although averaging the highest on record. Consumer demand remained high, partly because of high prices for meat, and commercial egg stocks at the end of the year were next to the smallest on record. In November 1948, retail egg prices in large cities combined averaged 84.5 cents per dozen—higher than in any month since December 1920. Per capita consumption of eggs in 1948 was the second highest on record, and the Government found it necessary to buy only about a third of the amount of the previous year to maintain farm prices at 90 percent of parity. Although farm flocks averaged 2½ percent smaller during the year, the rate of lay which has been increasing over recent years, was high enough to bring 1948 egg production above 1947.

Fruits and vegetables.—Retail prices of fruits and vegetables declined 6.3 percent over the year. Prices for fresh and dried fruits and vegetables dropped 7.5 and 10.0 percent, more than offsetting an increase of 1.3 percent in prices of canned products. Prices of fresh fruits and vegetables declined over the year. With plentiful supplies, decreases for all vegetables except sweetpotatoes more than offset increases for fruits, supplies of which were 6 percent below 1947. Largest vegetable declines were for carrots, cabbage, and

TABLE 3.—*Indexes of retail prices of food, in large cities combined,*[1] *by commodity group, by year, 1923 to 1948, and by month, January 1948 to December 1948*

[1935-39=100]

Year and month	All foods	Cereals and bakery products	Meats, poultry, and fish	Meats				Chickens	Fish	Dairy products	Eggs	Fruits and vegetables				Beverages	Fats and oils	Sugar and sweets
				Total	Beef and veal	Pork	Lamb					Total	Fresh	Canned	Dried			
BY YEAR, 1923 TO 1948[2]																		
1923	124.0	105.5	101.2							129.4	136.1	169.5	173.6	124.8	175.4	131.5	126.2	175.4
1924	122.8	107.2	102.4							124.1	139.0	159.5	162.7	122.2	159.6	147.6	134.1	159.1
1925	132.9	116.0	111.3							128.1	151.2	185.1	193.5	132.3	159.0	170.3	149.1	124.6
1926	137.4	115.7	117.8							127.4	141.7	210.8	226.2	122.9	152.4	170.4	145.0	120.0
1927	132.3	113.3	116.0							130.7	133.2	183.8	194.4	120.8	145.9	163.3	132.8	127.2
1928	130.8	110.1	123.1							131.4	137.3	161.4	166.5	120.6	153.9	165.2	128.3	123.1
1929	132.5	107.6	127.1							131.0	143.8	169.0	173.5	124.3	171.0	164.8	127.2	114.3
1930	126.0	104.3	119.1							121.0	121.4	177.5	185.7	118.6	158.7	143.4	119.2	107.4
1931	103.9	91.4	101.1							102.8	95.6	125.7	128.7	103.3	118.7	124.6	96.0	99.1
1932	86.5	82.6	79.3							84.9	82.3	103.5	105.9	91.1	91.2	112.6	71.1	89.6
1933	84.1	84.7	68.9							82.8	77.9	113.8	118.9	87.9	88.4	102.4	66.4	94.3
1934	93.7	98.3	78.9							90.9	88.6	119.1	122.3	103.9	101.1	107.6	76.4	97.9
1935	100.4	101.8	99.9	100.7	98.8	104.7	96.3	95.5	98.2	97.5	104.2	99.7	98.8	106.2	100.8	104.0	110.3	100.7
1936	101.3	100.7	98.9	98.6	94.7	103.4	101.1	101.1	98.5	101.6	103.3	104.8	106.2	100.9	96.6	99.4	102.8	99.6
1937	105.3	103.3	105.8	106.4	106.5	106.6	105.2	104.9	101.0	105.4	101.2	107.9	108.6	103.2	116.0	103.6	105.8	101.2
1938	97.8	99.8	98.9	97.8	98.7	96.3	97.9	104.6	101.3	99.6	100.3	93.2	92.1	97.4	93.3	97.7	93.5	97.9
1939	95.2	94.5	96.6	96.6	101.1	88.9	99.5	93.8	101.0	95.9	91.0	94.5	95.1	92.3	93.3	95.5	87.7	100.6
1940	96.6	96.8	95.8	94.4	102.8	81.1	99.7	94.8	110.6	101.4	93.8	96.5	97.3	92.4	100.6	92.5	82.2	96.8
1941	105.5	97.9	107.5	106.5	110.8	100.1	106.6	102.1	124.5	112.0	112.2	103.2	104.2	97.9	106.7	101.5	94.0	106.4
1942	123.9	105.1	126.0	122.5	123.6	120.4	124.1	122.6	163.0	125.4	136.5	130.8	132.8	121.6	136.3	122.1	119.6	126.5
1943	138.0	107.6	133.8	124.2	124.7	119.9	136.9	146.1	206.5	134.6	161.9	168.8	178.0	130.6	158.9	124.8	126.1	127.1
1944	136.1	108.4	129.9	117.9	118.7	112.2	134.5	151.0	207.6	133.6	153.9	168.2	177.2	129.5	164.5	124.3	123.3	126.5
1945	139.1	109.0	131.2	118.0	118.4	112.6	136.0	154.4	217.1	133.9	164.4	177.1	188.2	130.2	168.2	124.7	124.0	126.5
1946	159.6	125.0	161.3	150.8	150.5	148.2	163.9	174.0	236.2	165.1	168.8	182.4	190.7	140.8	190.4	139.6	152.1	143.9
1947	193.8	155.4	217.1	214.7	213.6	215.9	220.1	183.2	271.4	186.2	200.8	199.4	201.5	166.2	263.5	186.8	197.5	180.0
1948	210.2	170.9	246.5	243.9	258.5	222.5	246.8	203.2	312.8	204.8	208.7	205.2	212.4	158.0	246.8	205.0	195.5	174.0
BY PRICE REPORTING PERIOD, 1948																		
1948																		
Jan. 15	209.7	172.7	237.5	233.4	239.7	225.9	231.5	200.0	310.9	205.7	213.6	208.3	215.7	158.0	256.8	201.9	209.3	183.4
Feb. 15	204.7	171.8	224.8	218.0	228.2	202.2	223.4	196.4	315.0	204.4	189.2	213.0	222.0	157.7	256.0	204.0	194.2	176.8
Mar. 15	202.3	171.0	224.7	218.2	228.5	204.3	216.8	194.7	313.6	201.1	186.3	206.9	214.2	157.7	253.9	204.4	191.7	174.4
Apr. 15	207.9	171.0	233.8	229.5	241.2	212.3	232.6	198.4	307.2	205.8	184.7	217.4	228.4	156.4	252.1	204.4	191.4	173.6
May 15	210.9	171.1	244.2	242.0	255.8	219.1	253.5	202.1	305.0	204.8	184.9	218.0	229.4	156.4	250.0	204.6	196.6	173.0
June 15	214.1	171.2	255.1	255.2	273.9	223.5	271.2	207.6	299.3	205.9	194.2	214.9	225.2	157.4	248.0	205.1	200.5	170.6
July 15	216.8	171.0	261.8	263.0	280.9	233.8	275.0	209.3	301.6	209.0	204.3	213.4	223.2	157.7	248.0	205.2	200.8	170.9
Aug. 15	216.6	170.8	267.0	269.3	286.2	246.1	266.6	207.8	304.4	211.0	220.2	199.6	204.8	157.8	249.2	205.3	197.8	172.3
Sept. 15	215.2	170.7	265.3	265.9	280.8	247.9	256.6	209.4	314.9	208.7	226.6	195.8	199.6	159.0	249.1	205.6	196.8	173.2
Oct. 15	211.5	170.0	256.1	254.3	269.8	233.9	249.4	204.0	325.9	203.0	239.0	193.5	197.3	158.9	238.1	205.9	193.0	173.1
Nov. 15	207.5	169.9	246.7	243.1	262.4	214.4	246.5	200.5	328.1	199.5	244.3	189.4	192.4	159.4	230.6	206.4	189.4	173.3
Dec. 15	205.0	170.2	241.3	235.4	255.1	206.2	238.6	208.0	328.1	199.2	217.3	192.3	196.2	159.4	229.8	207.8	184.4	173.0

[1] Aggregate costs in each city weighted to represent total purchases of families of wage earners and lower-salaried workers, have been combined with the use of population weights.

[2] Comparable indexes for the years 1923–34 have been computed by converting indexes from the 1923–25 base to the 1935–39 base.

TABLE 4.—*Average retail prices of principal foods in large cities combined, by month, 1948*

Article	1948												
	Average for the year	Jan. 15	Feb. 15	Mar. 15	Apr. 15	May 15	June 15	July 15	Aug. 15	Sept. 15	Oct. 15	Nov. 15	Dec. 15
Cereals and bakery products:	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*
Cereals:													
Flour, wheat, 5 pounds	49.0	54.4	50.9	49.7	49.0	48.9	48.7	48.2	47.9	47.8	47.6	47.5	47.9
Corn flakes, 11 ounces	16.6	16.3	16.3	16.4	16.6	16.6	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.8	16.8
Corn meal, pound	10.9	11.3	11.3	11.1	11.1	11.1	11.0	11.1	11.1	11.0	10.8	10.2	10.0
Rice, do	20.8	20.9	21.1	21.0	21.1	21.1	21.3	21.5	21.6	21.6	20.0	19.5	19.2
Rolled oats, 20 ounces	17.1	16.9	16.9	16.9	17.1	17.1	17.1	17.1	17.1	17.1	17.1	17.1	17.2
Bakery products:													
Bread, white, pound	13.9	13.8	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.9
Vanilla cookies, do	44.0	42.4	43.3	43.4	43.7	43.6	43.9	44.3	44.3	44.4	44.5	44.8	45.0
Meats, poultry, and fish:													
Meats:													
Beef:													
Round steak, do	90.5	84.0	78.2	79.1	84.7	90.3	97.2	99.5	101.2	98.9	93.7	91.0	88.3
Rib roast, do	73.7	69.8	65.6	65.4	68.6	71.9	76.8	79.6	81.5	79.9	76.9	75.4	72.9
Chuck roast, do	64.4	59.0	56.3	56.0	59.1	63.6	69.5	70.8	72.3	70.7	67.6	65.4	62.1
Hamburger, do	56.1	49.4	48.6	48.9	51.4	55.2	60.2	61.6	62.6	61.6	59.9	57.1	56.2
Veal:													
Cutlets, do	97.8	91.7	90.9	90.4	93.7	97.9	100.7	102.1	103.5	103.1	101.1	99.1	99.2
Pork:													
Chops, do	77.2	72.3	65.9	69.9	73.6	77.0	78.5	83.3	91.1	91.8	83.7	72.4	67.4
Bacon, sliced, do	76.9	86.8	74.2	70.8	72.9	75.9	76.9	77.9	78.6	79.0	78.9	76.5	74.6
Ham, whole, do	68.0	69.0	62.3	62.8	64.9	65.7	68.0	71.8	73.8	74.4	70.4	66.8	65.6
Salt pork, do	43.9	54.2	49.7	44.8	43.8	42.5	41.1	40.9	40.5	40.9	41.8	41.8	44.2
Lamb:													
Leg, do	71.1	66.7	64.4	62.5	67.1	73.1	78.2	79.3	76.9	74.0	71.9	71.1	68.8
Poultry: Roasting chickens, do	61.3	60.3	59.2	58.7	59.9	61.0	62.6	63.1	62.7	63.2	61.6	60.5	62.8
Fish: [1]													
Salmon, pink, 16-ounce can	54.9	51.8	51.6	51.7	52.1	52.4	53.2	53.5	54.7	56.3	59.4	61.3	61.1
Dairy products:													
Butter, pound	86.7	93.9	90.4	86.4	93.0	92.5	91.0	91.7	89.4	84.7	77.4	74.9	75.6
Cheese, do	65.6	63.0	64.5	63.4	62.8	64.5	66.2	68.2	69.8	68.7	67.4	64.1	64.2
Milk:													
Fresh (delivered), quart	21.8	21.1	21.2	21.2	21.2	20.8	21.2	21.5	22.1	22.7	22.8	23.1	22.6
Fresh (grocery), do	20.8	20.2	20.3	20.3	20.2	20.1	20.3	20.6	21.3	21.4	21.6	21.6	21.3
Evaporated, 14½-ounce can	14.8	13.5	14.0	14.1	14.1	14.4	15.0	15.2	15.6	15.8	15.5	15.0	14.8
Eggs: Fresh, dozen	72.3	74.0	65.6	64.6	64.0	64.1	67.3	70.8	76.3	78.4	82.7	84.5	75.2
Fruits and vegetables:													
Fresh fruits:													
Apples, pound	11.9	11.5	10.9	10.8	10.9	12.0	14.1	13.9	11.8	11.3	11.5	12.0	12.6
Bananas, do	15.9	15.6	15.6	15.4	15.5	15.6	15.8	16.3	16.4	16.3	16.3	16.4	16.3
Oranges, size 200, dozen	44.7	37.7	38.4	41.0	40.4	42.2	43.8	47.8	51.8	52.9	54.3	42.7	43.4
Fresh vegetables:													
Beans, green, pound	21.6	21.8	28.0	20.8	25.0	24.9	20.2	20.4	19.2	18.7	16.9	24.5	18.9
Cabbage, do	6.6	8.5	7.3	6.7	9.5	7.7	6.9	5.9	5.3	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.4
Carrots, bunch	12.1	13.2	14.0	12.2	13.7	16.7	14.1	10.9	9.9	10.2	10.3	9.9	9.9
Lettuce, head	13.6	16.6	12.6	11.4	13.2	16.5	13.5	14.6	11.8	12.9	13.4	13.1	14.1
Onions, pound	10.6	11.8	15.1	16.0	18.2	12.0	10.8	10.4	7.3	6.4	6.1	6.4	6.5
Potatoes, 15 pounds	83.8	84.2	88.7	88.7	91.1	94.0	94.6	89.2	80.3	75.7	72.7	71.5	74.8
Spinach, pound	12.0	13.7	[2]	12.3	12.0	11.4	10.4	12.5	[2]	13.2	11.6	11.1	11.7
Sweetpotatoes, do	10.9	10.2	10.7	10.8	11.1	11.7	14.2	[2]	12.2	10.2	9.4	9.4	10.3
Canned fruits:													
Peaches, No. 2½ can	31.5	31.3	31.1	31.0	31.0	31.0	31.0	31.2	31.4	31.8	32.1	32.4	32.4
Pineapple, do	37.1	35.3	35.5	[2]	36.2	36.3	36.6	[2]	37.0	38.0	38.4	38.8	39.5
Canned vegetables:													
Corn, No. 2 can	19.7	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.6	19.7	19.7	19.7	19.8	19.9	19.8	19.9
Peas, do	15.1	15.4	15.4	15.1	14.8	14.7	14.7	14.8	15.1	15.3	15.3	15.4	15.3
Tomatoes, do	16.5	16.7	16.6	16.7	16.5	16.5	16.6	16.6	16.4	16.5	16.3	16.3	16.2
Dried fruits: Prunes, pound	21.4	22.2	22.0	21.5	21.2	21.1	20.8	20.9	20.8	20.9	21.3	21.5	22.1
Dried vegetables: Navy beans, do	22.0	22.9	23.0	23.1	23.1	22.9	22.8	22.7	23.0	22.9	20.4	18.8	18.1
Beverages: Coffee, do	51.4	50.6	51.2	51.3	51.3	51.3	51.4	51.5	51.5	51.6	51.6	51.8	52.1
Fats and oils:													
Lard, do	29.6	35.6	29.2	28.6	28.9	29.6	29.6	29.5	29.4	29.6	29.2	28.5	27.0
Hydrogenated shortening, do	44.0	46.8	45.1	44.4	42.9	43.8	45.2	45.7	43.4	43.0	42.6	42.5	42.0
Salad dressing, pint	39.6	37.8	38.5	38.5	38.7	39.8	40.5	40.8	40.8	40.8	40.1	39.7	39.4
Margarine, pound	41.4	42.0	41.5	40.8	40.8	42.4	44.1	43.7	42.9	41.9	40.2	38.9	38.0
Sugar and sweets:													
Sugar, do	9.4	9.9	9.5	9.4	9.4	9.3	9.2	9.2	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.4	9.3

[1] Costs of fresh and/or frozen fish are included in the index, but average prices are not computed.

[2] Inadequate reports.

onions (about 40 percent). Orange prices advanced 15.2 percent, with increased demand during 1948 caused by the shortage of other fruits. In addition to the strong demand for fresh oranges, a new record was set in the production of canned and frozen orange juice. Prices of apples rose 8.9 percent because of a considerably smaller crop. Cold storage stocks of apples at the end of 1948 were about 40 percent lower than a year earlier. Banana prices increased 4½ percent.

In January, retail prices of fresh fruits and vegetables rose 1.7 percent and in February, influenced by frost and drought, the group increased a further 2.9 percent, as green beans and onions continued upward by 28 percent, and spinach 16 percent. The more abundant lettuce and cabbage declined (24 and 14 percent). Increasingly plentiful supplies in March brought green bean prices down 26 percent, spinach 23 percent, and the average for fresh fruits and vegetables down 3.5 percent. April brought an increase of 6.6 percent, with large vegetable price increases. There was a less-than-seasonal rise in May, as plentiful supplies of onions (down 34 percent) and cabbage (down 19.2 percent) came on the market. From June through November, prices declined to 16.1 percent below the level of May, and after rising 2.0 percent in December were still slightly below the level of June 1946. Prices of canned fruits and vegetables increased 1.3 percent over the year, with increased material and labor costs. Prices of dried fruits and vegetables dropped 10.0 percent. Prices of prunes declined only 1.3 percent throughout the year although supplies were excessive because of fluctuating domestic demand and uncertainty over export requirements. The Government found it necessary to purchase large amounts of prunes and find outlets for purchases through export channels, and domestically through school lunch programs and institutions. Dried bean prices tumbled 19½ percent from December 1947 to December 1948. The 1948 bean crop was 13 percent larger than 1947, and near the record crop of 1943.

Beverages.—Beverage prices rose 4.7 percent during 1948. The average retail price of coffee in December 1948 was 52.1 cents a pound compared with 49.8 cents in December 1947. Coffee prices rose in 8 months of the year, with no changes in the other 4 months. Shipping strikes were important in the movement of coffee prices during the year. The New York dock strike brought licensed warehouse stocks down to such an extent that by November 20, they were the lowest since coffee trading on the exchange was resumed in October 1946. Roasters found their operations reduced by the resulting coffee shortage; then the increase in green coffee prices made advances in their prices necessary. In spite of rising prices during 1948, coffee consumption increased 3 percent over 1947, and imports were the second highest on record.

Fats and oils.—Prices of fats and oils dropped 11.4 percent over the year. Lard (down 25.4 percent) was mainly responsible, declining in 8 months of the year. The largest decreases were in February (17.9 percent), during the heavy selling of hogs after the market break, and in December (5.4 percent). Prices declined progressively from October through December, with early marketing of the spring pig crop beginning in late September. In November and December when hogs marketed averaged near the record weights of 1945, lard output was markedly greater than a year earlier. The price of lard in December 1948 had dropped to 27.0 cents a pound from the 36.2 cent price of December 1947. Over the year margarine declined 8.9 percent, and hydrogenated shortening 7.8 percent, while salad dressing rose 6.8 percent. Abundant crops of oilseeds in the fall of 1948 brought lower vegetable oil prices, and higher consumption of margarine and shortening. Butter encountered keen competition in margarine which averaged about half the price of butter and reached a new record production for the year—about 900 million pounds, compared with 746 million pounds in 1947. Exports of fats and oils in 1948 were lower than in 1947.

Sugar and sweets.—In the first full year free of price and ration controls since 1942, the retail price of sugar decreased 5.8 percent, although consumption by civilians was the largest on record and quotas were set on the quantities marketed. The lowering of the sugar tariff at the beginning of 1948 in the face of a record world supply was a contributing cause of the decline.

Retail Prices of Individual Foods in 1948

Average retail prices of individual foods for large cities combined are presented in table 4 for each month in 1948. Annual average retail prices of individual foods in each of 56 cities, for 1948, are shown in table 5.

TABLE 5.—*Annual average retail prices of principal foods, by city, 1948*

Article	United States	NEW ENGLAND							MIDDLE ATLANTIC					
		Boston	Bridgeport	Fall River	Manchester	New Haven	Portland, Maine	Providence	Buffalo	Newark	New York	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh	Rochester
Cereals and bakery products:														
Cereals:	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*
Flour, wheat—5 pounds	49.0	48.5	49.6	50.2	51.1	50.0	50.0	48.6	48.2	48.0	48.5	47.1	49.7	50.6
Corn flakes—11 ounces	16.6	15.6	15.8	16.4	17.2	16.6	16.9	16.1	15.3	16.1	17.1	16.5	16.5	16.1
Corn meal—pound	10.9	11.1	11.7	11.7	11.4	11.7	11.6	11.7	11.4	11.8	12.0	11.5	11.9	10.8
Rice—do	20.8	21.2	20.5	20.8	(1)	20.5	21.2	20.3	19.4	21.6	21.3	20.1	21.5	20.5
Rolled oats—20 ounces	17.1	16.6	17.5	16.8	16.6	17.1	17.0	16.1	16.5	16.5	16.9	16.5	17.5	17.2
Bakery products:														
Bread, white—pound	13.9	14.1	12.9	14.4	13.5	13.5	13.3	14.1	13.7	14.2	14.9	15.1	13.6	13.8
Vanilla cookies—do	44.0	(1)	(1)	(1)	41.4	38.1	(1)	42.6	(1)	(1)	(1)	40.1	(1)	(1)
Meats, poultry, and fish:														
Meats:														
Beef:														
Round steak—do	90.5	102.3	100.4	99.0	99.7	102.8	93.5	97.9	85.3	96.4	96.2	97.6	90.4	88.2
Rib roast—do	73.7	72.6	73.7	71.0	70.2	72.5	68.1	72.4	70.8	73.5	76.7	75.7	74.3	71.9
Chuck roast—do	64.4	69.3	70.4	65.7	65.2	66.6	(1)	(1)	63.9	67.7	67.5	66.3	65.8	64.3
Hamburger—do	56.1	61.6	63.4	63.4	62.1	(1)	60.3	59.7	58.0	63.0	61.2	57.4	59.2	54.6
Veal: Cutlets—do	97.8	96.0	100.3	(1)	99.5	105.6	(1)	100.4	98.4	104.6	107.4	108.0	97.6	99.7
Pork:														
Chops—do	77.2	78.7	78.2	80.3	78.2	77.9	77.1	79.1	80.3	78.8	79.0	80.6	80.7	81.4
Bacon, sliced—do	76.9	76.8	77.0	76.7	76.5	76.0	75.3	75.8	69.3	78.3	80.1	78.9	76.3	72.0
Ham, whole—do	68.0	69.3	69.0	69.4	67.5	69.5	67.2	68.7	66.9	69.3	70.4	69.0	65.9	67.1
Salt pork—do	43.9	36.3	34.7	35.8	35.1	36.1	40.1	35.1	55.4	46.6	(1)	49.2	45.7	54.0
Lamb: Leg—do	71.1	72.4	72.6	72.7	72.0	72.2	71.1	72.3	68.6	69.3	70.5	71.3	72.2	69.3
Poultry: Roasting chickens—do	61.3	61.6	62.7	63.1	58.4	62.2	59.9	63.2	58.4	60.2	61.0	60.4	(1)	62.7
Fish:[2] Salmon, pink—16-ounce can	54.9	52.7	53.4	55.0	54.5	55.5	(1)	52.4	53.7	(1)	55.8	53.5	58.4	54.2
Dairy products:														
Butter—pound	86.7	86.0	86.3	85.5	84.2	86.4	83.8	86.9	85.0	87.9	88.4	87.4	86.9	85.3
Cheese—do	65.6	61.0	(1)	62.6	(1)	65.2	64.0	(1)	63.6	64.9	70.8	62.8	64.0	(1)
Milk:														
Fresh (delivered)—quart	21.8	23.0	23.0	22.6	22.9	22.1	21.7	23.1	22.1	24.5	24.2	21.3	21.1	22.3
Fresh (grocery)—do	20.8	21.7	22.2	22.1	22.4	21.7	21.9	21.1	20.2	22.7	22.0	20.8	20.7	21.1
Evaporated—14½-ounce can	14.8	15.1	15.0	15.3	15.2	15.0	15.2	14.6	14.4	14.8	15.1	15.0	14.7	15.0
Eggs: Fresh—dozen	72.3	77.4	80.4	76.4	75.6	78.1	77.8	74.9	73.5	79.6	79.8	77.4	73.0	74.3
Fruits and vegetables:														
Fresh fruits:														
Apples—pound	11.9	10.9	11.0	12.3	10.0	11.0	10.6	11.9	10.7	11.8	12.9	12.1	10.6	9.2
Bananas—do	15.9	15.2	16.0	15.9	15.3	15.4	15.6	15.7	16.4	15.0	15.5	15.8	17.0	15.5
Oranges, size 200—dozen	44.7	42.4	47.8	49.3	49.0	43.9	42.4	38.6	47.8	47.9	46.5	41.4	45.9	45.7
Fresh vegetables:														
Beans, green—pound	21.6	21.9	23.8	(1)	(1)	24.4	(1)	22.7	21.8	19.6	21.0	21.6	20.8	24.2
Cabbage—do	6.6	7.3	6.9	7.4	7.3	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.0	7.2	7.3	6.9	7.0	6.3
Carrots—bunch	12.1	13.2	14.2	13.8	13.0	13.6	12.7	13.6	12.0	14.0	13.8	13.3	12.9	11.1
Lettuce—head	13.6	16.7	16.3	16.8	15.9	15.0	14.4	16.1	13.8	14.9	14.9	15.3	14.2	14.5
Onions—pound	10.6	10.4	10.5	10.9	10.2	10.4	10.6	10.4	10.9	10.6	10.7	10.4	10.9	9.5
Potatoes—15 pounds	83.8	77.2	78.4	70.6	71.7	75.0	67.6	76.1	74.2	81.6	80.4	81.4	81.4	66.9
Spinach—pound	12.0	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	12.2	(1)	(1)	(1)	12.9	13.7	12.4	12.7	(1)
Sweetpotatoes—do	10.9	10.5	11.0	11.3	(1)	(1)	(1)	11.0	(1)	10.7	12.1	10.9	12.2	(1)
Canned fruits:														
Peaches—No. 2½ can	31.5	32.4	33.4	33.2	32.0	32.4	34.8	31.7	32.6	32.2	32.8	30.3	33.7	33.4
Pineapple—do	37.1	36.1	39.0	(1)	(1)	37.9	(1)	36.0	(1)	36.5	39.3	(1)	(1)	(1)
Canned vegetables:														
Corn—No. 2 can	19.7	20.4	20.0	19.9	20.4	19.7	20.4	19.1	19.1	20.0	21.0	19.2	20.0	19.1
Peas—do	15.1	17.9	(1)	17.1	17.0	17.6	17.5	16.9	15.8	15.8	16.7	15.0	15.3	16.0
Tomatoes—do	16.5	18.5	17.2	16.0	15.7	16.2	17.5	16.8	17.8	16.7	16.7	16.8	17.0	19.2
Dried fruits: Prunes—pound	21.4	21.2	22.4	21.5	21.7	22.1	22.1	20.1	20.8	21.9	21.5	19.9	22.1	22.0
Dried vegetables: Navy beans—do	22.0	24.7	22.8	24.6	24.6	21.1	25.5	23.8	20.4	22.7	23.4	23.4	21.4	22.1
Beverages: Coffee—do	51.4	54.6	52.6	52.6	52.1	52.2	53.2	51.3	50.1	51.6	51.5	49.6	51.2	50.6
Fats and oils:														
Lard—do	29.6	31.1	30.1	30.0	30.0	30.2	29.9	29.7	28.0	30.7	30.9	29.0	29.6	29.1
Hydrogenated shortening—do	44.0	43.8	44.6	44.8	44.4	44.6	44.1	43.8	43.6	44.1	44.8	44.4	44.4	44.2
Salad dressing—pint	39.6	41.6	42.9	41.2	44.7	41.5	42.0	41.5	36.7	42.4	44.1	37.8	40.8	36.9
Margarine—pound	41.4	40.6	41.4	41.4	41.2	41.3	42.6	41.0	42.0	42.2	41.6	41.3	41.9	42.2
Sugar and sweets: Sugar—do	9.4	9.1	9.5	9.4	9.4	9.3	9.4	9.1	9.4	9.3	9.3	8.9	9.7	9.5

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 5.—*Annual average retail prices of principal foods, by city, 1948*—Continued

Article	MIDDLE ATLANTIC—Continued	EAST NORTH CENTRAL								WEST NORTH CENTRAL			
	Scranton	Chicago	Cincinnati	Cleveland	Columbus	Detroit	Indianapolis	Milwaukee	Peoria	Springfield	Cedar Rapids	Kansas City	Minneapolis	Omaha
Cereals and bakery products:														
Cereals:	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*
Flour, wheat, 5 pounds	46.1	47.1	50.4	48.4	48.4	48.4	49.7	49.1	46.5	46.4	49.0	47.5	49.4	47.7
Corn flakes, 11 ounces	16.8	16.0	16.3	17.6	16.4	16.6	16.2	16.1	16.4	17.1	17.9	17.7	17.5	17.4
Corn meal, pound	11.4	12.0	11.2	12.3	10.7	12.0	11.3	11.7	13.1	13.3	12.3	12.9	11.9	11.3
Rice, do	20.5	20.4	19.8	21.2	20.3	21.1	20.5	(1)	20.9	20.3	21.3	20.3	19.7	19.8
Rolled oats, 20 ounces	16.8	16.3	17.4	17.0	17.3	17.1	17.3	16.6	17.0	17.6	17.4	17.0	17.3	16.8
Bakery products:														
Bread, white, pound	14.4	13.0	13.1	13.6	12.4	13.4	12.8	12.8	13.7	14.2	13.3	12.5	13.0	13.4
Vanilla cookies, do	37.7	53.8	(1)	(1)	(1)	48.8	54.0	(1)	53.6	(1)	51.3	56.5	52.0	48.1
Meats, poultry, and fish:														
Meats:														
Beef:														
Round steak, do	90.2	88.7	89.7	86.1	87.7	84.2	88.5	86.8	89.1	86.5	85.1	86.7	86.2	84.9
Rib roast, do	71.9	74.3	72.5	75.1	73.1	70.9	70.8	71.4	(1)	66.0	62.1	73.0	74.3	68.9
Chuck roast, do	64.7	65.3	64.1	65.2	65.0	62.4	62.6	65.2	62.4	60.4	60.3	61.6	64.2	59.7
Hamburger, do	58.1	54.8	54.9	53.2	56.5	53.6	53.1	56.4	55.0	53.5	54.0	54.4	53.2	52.4
Veal: Cutlets, do	98.2	94.1	94.5	96.6	91.2	91.1	91.6	86.7	90.2	87.7	85.7	89.2	89.2	86.2
Pork:														
Chops, do	79.5	77.8	77.6	76.8	75.7	78.4	74.7	73.6	74.9	73.2	72.1	73.3	73.9	68.9
Bacon, sliced, do	76.8	76.6	78.7	73.1	76.3	74.0	75.4	78.6	75.2	75.9	74.6	77.8	79.4	76.8
Ham, whole, do	67.2	65.0	68.2	66.6	67.5	68.2	66.6	67.3	66.6	65.7	65.0	65.8	66.9	66.4
Salt pork, do	55.4	48.2	44.4	46.4	42.8	44.9	(1)	47.4	41.7	(1)	45.2	43.5	47.0	44.4
Lamb: Leg, do	73.6	69.2	77.5	72.4	76.8	70.6	(1)	74.0	(1)	(1)	(1)	76.3	68.9	71.0
Poultry: Roasting chickens, pound	59.2	58.3	72.0	60.9	68.3	60.6	(1)	59.2	(1)	61.4	(1)	(1)	54.7	44.9
Fish: [2] Salmon, pink, 16-ounce can	54.9	45.6	54.6	54.1	56.5	54.9	57.0	58.4	(1)	56.8	(1)	55.1	55.2	54.5
Dairy products:														
Butter, pound	84.7	84.3	81.5	85.6	82.7	85.6	84.3	85.1	80.3	84.0	81.4	84.3	84.6	82.9
Cheese, do	62.6	64.4	62.6	65.2	59.9	61.9	64.6	63.9	62.0	62.4	64.0	62.5	65.2	61.4
Milk:														
Fresh (delivered), quart	21.5	22.2	21.6	20.9	19.7	20.3	20.1	19.4	22.3	20.4	17.1	20.2	19.5	19.5
Fresh (grocery), do	21.5	20.5	20.3	19.7	19.2	19.5	19.8	19.0	20.6	19.8	17.1	19.4	18.2	18.8
Evaporated, 14½-ounce can	14.6	14.7	14.9	15.1	15.0	14.6	14.8	14.5	14.4	14.6	15.4	14.6	15.2	14.6
Eggs: Fresh, dozen	74.3	67.4	64.4	75.0	66.1	69.8	64.5	63.5	56.7	53.6	54.3	62.2	61.5	55.9
Fruits and vegetables:														
Fresh fruits:														
Apples, pound	10.1	12.0	12.0	12.0	10.8	10.8	11.3	12.3	11.0	10.6	11.3	11.8	13.2	12.2
Bananas, do	15.1	16.3	16.5	15.8	16.2	16.1	(1)	16.7	16.3	17.3	(1)	17.4	16.3	16.5
Oranges, size 200, dozen	45.1	47.6	37.3	47.7	48.1	48.5	45.5	52.2	46.4	46.3	47.5	50.8	51.7	51.8
Fresh vegetables:														
Beans, green, pound	19.8	21.8	20.2	23.2	21.1	24.4	19.3	24.2	(1)	(1)	(1)	22.5	(1)	(1)
Cabbage, do	5.5	6.5	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.8	6.1	7.1	6.7	6.8	6.1	6.3	6.5
Carrots, bunch	12.2	11.4	12.2	12.2	12.7	11.8	12.8	11.0	12.4	12.3	12.4	12.1	11.2	12.6
Lettuce, head	14.4	13.4	14.5	14.5	14.3	14.2	14.6	13.1	13.5	12.9	13.9	14.2	13.6	13.9
Onions, pound	9.6	10.0	11.0	10.9	11.2	10.6	11.4	9.8	10.6	11.1	11.6	11.0	10.4	11.2
Potatoes, 15 pounds	64.2	100.0	97.2	82.7	77.7	79.1	88.1	86.7	79.0	80.9	79.6	92.0	82.0	83.2
Spinach, pound	(1)	14.7	14.6	(1)	14.6	(1)	14.6	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Sweetpotatoes, do	10.0	12.2	11.3	12.0	11.5	12.8	11.3	(1)	11.5	11.9	(1)	(1)	12.2	(1)
Canned fruits:														
Peaches, No. 2½ can	31.3	31.2	31.6	32.1	31.7	32.4	31.8	32.0	30.7	33.5	34.3	33.0	34.2	32.1
Pineapple, do	(1)	37.2	(1)	39.6	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	41.0	42.2	40.9
Canned vegetables:														
Corn, No. 2 can	19.5	19.3	19.2	19.9	18.0	19.8	19.6	20.3	20.4	20.2	19.0	20.6	18.6	18.1
Peas, do	13.4	14.5	15.0	13.6	15.4	14.0	15.6	13.7	13.6	16.1	15.7	13.7	13.5	13.8
Tomatoes, do	15.5	17.3	17.2	(1)	16.2	16.9	16.9	17.7	17.3	18.6	18.8	14.7	18.3	16.2
Dried fruits: Prunes, pound	(1)	21.5	23.2	23.4	22.0	22.0	22.8	22.2	22.3	21.0	(1)	22.1	21.4	21.7
Dried vegetables: Navy beans, do	21.0	20.0	20.3	21.3	17.6	21.2	21.4	21.1	19.6	19.8	20.3	17.7	20.2	17.3
Beverages: Coffee, do	49.3	49.7	51.7	50.6	50.9	49.8	51.4	50.5	50.8	53.1	50.9	51.6	52.5	51.6
Fats and oils:														
Lard, do	28.6	28.4	30.3	32.4	29.0	30.3	29.2	28.3	28.7	28.2	29.6	28.3	28.7	28.2
Hydrogenated shortening, do	42.5	43.6	43.7	44.4	44.0	43.6	43.2	42.9	43.2	45.0	43.8	44.5	45.2	41.2
Salad dressing, pint	40.8	37.7	40.2	37.7	39.2	36.7	39.4	38.0	38.2	45.9	39.4	38.9	38.9	37.8
Margarine, pound	41.8	41.5	41.6	39.2	39.9	40.5	42.4	56.1	37.7	41.0	46.7	42.4	44.5	41.8
Sugar and sweets: Sugar, do	9.0	9.5	9.5	9.8	9.7	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.7	9.8	10.0	9.8	9.9	9.4

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 5.—*Annual average retail prices of principal foods, by city, 1948*—Continued

Article	WEST NORTH CENTRAL—Continued			SOUTH ATLANTIC									EAST SOUTH CENTRAL	
	St. Louis	St. Paul	Wichita	Atlanta	Baltimore	Charleston, S. C.	Jacksonville	Norfolk	Richmond	Savannah	Washington, D. C.	Winston-Salem	Birmingham	Jackson
Cereals and bakery products:	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*
Cereals:														
Flour, wheat, 5 pounds	48.5	50.1	46.8	53.0	47.9	52.2	48.7	49.5	49.1	50.3	49.2	52.2	49.5	54.8
Corn flakes, 11 ounces	16.5	18.0	18.9	16.5	17.0	19.6	16.0	17.6	17.0	18.2	17.2	17.1	18.0	20.2
Corn meal, pound	12.2	11.9	12.8	7.6	11.9	11.9	12.6	(1)	9.0	10.4	10.9	8.7	9.1	9.7
Rice, do	19.5	19.3	19.8	20.6	21.3	18.8	20.0	19.7	20.0	20.2	22.4	21.4	20.8	21.9
Rolled oats, 20 ounces	16.8	17.7	17.4	17.4	17.1	18.0	16.7	17.2	17.3	17.2	17.5	18.2	16.6	18.0
Bakery products:														
Bread, white, pound	13.4	13.2	13.8	13.9	14.1	13.9	13.3	13.4	13.6	13.6	13.1	14.4	14.3	14.6
Vanilla cookies, do	50.0	51.2	57.4	42.0	(1)	40.6	42.4	38.1	(1)	47.4	42.8	39.6	37.2	40.9
Meats, poultry, and fish:														
Meats:														
Beef:														
Round steak, do	89.4	82.0	85.5	89.2	94.6	90.5	89.2	92.9	91.3	87.4	91.5	88.9	87.4	91.2
Rib roast, do	68.6	70.9	(1)	73.0	73.8	77.7	75.8	73.0	73.4	73.9	72.9	71.9	68.9	(1)
Chuck roast, do	60.7	62.3	58.7	65.0	64.3	62.8	64.2	63.5	61.6	60.6	62.4	63.3	59.4	62.5
Hamburger, do	55.4	54.9	50.1	52.3	61.5	(1)	46.6	55.7	54.4	50.8	58.7	54.7	53.5	50.1
Veal: Cutlets, do	92.9	85.9	89.5	91.4	105.8	101.9	91.5	99.5	97.9	88.8	99.5	88.7	80.3	89.3
Pork:														
Chops, do	73.1	73.1	72.0	70.7	78.5	70.1	72.1	73.2	74.7	69.4	77.3	69.1	66.4	72.5
Bacon, sliced, do	75.5	78.8	78.0	77.7	79.6	77.2	78.7	74.0	77.5	76.4	77.7	77.9	74.2	80.8
Ham, whole, do	65.3	66.5	65.2	66.8	69.4	67.7	67.6	68.8	68.0	63.5	67.5	69.5	64.4	68.8
Salt pork, do	44.7	46.8	47.3	42.4	44.3	43.6	41.1	44.6	45.2	40.6	43.6	42.1	41.8	44.6
Lamb: Leg, do	68.4	70.7	80.1	80.2	72.6	(1)	76.4	72.2	72.3	77.9	70.3	76.5	70.5	(1)
Poultry: Roasting chickens, pound	(1)	56.7	55.4	62.3	57.5	63.2	65.9	(1)	53.8	64.2	56.1	60.2	60.0	63.2
Fish: [2] Salmon, pink, 16-ounce can	55.4	54.8	57.7	56.0	54.5	54.6	54.1	54.4	(1)	56.2	56.3	57.4	54.5	(1)
Dairy products:														
Butter, pound	84.9	84.6	85.6	92.3	89.8	91.5	87.7	88.7	89.0	88.2	88.5	94.4	91.4	89.8
Cheese, do	62.8	66.5	61.5	62.3	67.4	62.1	62.4	63.7	63.7	62.2	69.9	63.4	61.2	64.7
Milk:														
Fresh (delivered), quart	22.5	19.0	20.2	22.3	20.7	22.6	25.8	23.1	21.7	24.8	21.0	22.8	24.2	22.3
Fresh (grocery), do	21.8	17.5	19.6	22.4	20.5	22.5	25.8	23.2	22.1	24.5	20.2	23.1	24.0	22.4
Evaporated, 14½-ounce can	14.2	15.2	14.6	14.6	15.2	15.0	14.0	14.7	14.7	14.5	15.4	15.2	14.2	15.3
Eggs: Fresh, dozen	62.3	61.1	55.5	66.0	73.6	66.1	70.4	69.7	70.3	67.0	73.3	68.3	63.7	65.0
Fruits and vegetables:														
Fresh fruits:														
Apples, pound	11.6	13.5	13.3	12.5	11.8	13.1	12.7	12.1	11.2	11.8	11.7	10.3	14.2	14.8
Bananas, do	17.0	16.8	16.3	14.1	16.5	14.7	12.4	(1)	15.4	14.1	16.2	14.8	14.0	13.4
Oranges, size 200, dozen	49.3	49.6	52.4	31.6	38.0	32.2	25.0	33.6	36.8	28.1	39.1	34.8	30.4	38.4
Fresh vegetables:														
Beans, green, pound	22.3	23.6	22.5	18.4	19.4	20.2	19.3	19.7	20.0	19.2	19.8	17.7	22.3	24.3
Cabbage, do	6.8	6.7	7.2	5.8	6.9	6.1	5.4	5.7	5.6	5.2	6.1	6.1	5.8	6.5
Carrots, bunch	11.8	11.6	12.3	11.8	13.5	13.5	11.8	13.3	13.3	12.5	13.4	14.4	12.0	11.7
Lettuce, head	13.6	14.4	16.5	13.5	15.3	15.2	13.2	14.3	15.0	13.7	16.0	14.8	12.9	13.5
Onions, pound	10.5	10.6	11.5	11.0	11.3	11.2	10.4	10.8	10.9	10.9	10.8	12.4	11.4	12.1
Potatoes, 15 pounds	87.9	88.1	93.7	84.2	83.2	84.9	81.7	76.5	74.0	79.8	77.7	88.8	87.1	110.7
Spinach, pound	13.2	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Sweetpotatoes, do	10.3	12.5	12.1	9.7	10.8	9.2	10.2	9.1	10.1	9.0	10.4	9.1	9.4	9.5
Canned fruits:														
Peaches, No. 2½ can	32.1	33.7	33.4	32.6	32.1	32.9	30.9	31.0	32.6	33.6	32.1	33.6	32.8	33.4
Pineapple, do	(1)	42.7	(1)	(1)	36.9	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Canned vegetables:														
Corn, No. 2 can	20.0	19.1	20.6	20.2	18.8	20.2	19.9	18.2	18.6	22.2	19.5	20.0	20.8	21.9
Peas, do	14.3	13.0	16.5	15.3	15.9	16.5	13.7	17.0	13.5	15.2	13.9	18.9	13.6	14.6
Tomatoes, do	15.9	17.4	17.2	14.8	15.7	15.0	14.4	14.5	14.4	14.7	15.3	16.1	15.5	16.3
Dried fruits: Prunes, pound	21.7	20.7	(1)	22.2	22.6	23.5	21.9	21.2	20.3	22.8	21.0	22.2	21.7	(1)
Dried vegetables: Navy beans, do	19.8	19.3	19.5	20.3	21.6	24.4	20.8	21.0	20.6	22.2	22.6	19.0	22.5	21.7
Beverages: Coffee, do	50.8	53.6	52.0	52.7	52.4	58.1	52.3	46.4	52.0	52.8	50.8	56.3	48.1	57.7
Fats and oils:														
Lard, do	27.0	29.2	26.8	28.8	28.7	31.9	29.0	29.7	28.6	30.1	29.2	31.5	27.4	30.9
Hydrogenated shortening, do	42.5	42.1	43.2	43.7	44.7	44.5	43.3	43.3	44.3	43.5	44.2	45.8	41.2	44.2
Salad dressing, pint	38.1	37.9	39.2	38.8	39.1	39.7	38.2	39.0	39.2	39.1	41.1	40.6	40.2	42.8
Margarine, pound	39.9	48.6	42.4	42.4	42.3	40.8	40.1	42.7	41.9	40.7	43.0	44.2	40.2	41.6
Sugar and sweets: Sugar, do	9.5	10.1	9.8	9.0	9.4	9.4	8.8	9.5	9.3	8.8	9.5	9.6	9.2	9.3

See footnotes at end of table.

TABLE 5.—*Annual average retail prices of principal foods, by city, 1948*—Continued

Article	EAST SOUTH CENTRAL—Continued				WEST SOUTH CENTRAL				MOUNTAIN			PACIFIC			
	Knoxville	Louisville	Memphis	Mobile	Dallas	Houston	Little Rock	New Orleans	Butte	Denver	Salt Lake City	Los Angeles	Portland, Oreg.	San Francisco	Seattle
Cereals and bakery products:	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*	*Cents*
Cereals:															
Flour, wheat, 5 pounds	53.2	48.8	53.2	49.6	46.7	47.1	51.2	51.2	51.0	42.5	49.4	51.6	51.3	54.1	51.6
Corn flakes, 11 ounces	17.9	17.2	18.5	17.6	16.5	16.4	20.1	17.0	17.8	19.0	16.5	15.9	17.0	17.4	16.8
Corn meal, pound	7.7	10.3	10.2	10.6	12.0	11.8	12.8	12.2	14.3	11.8	13.3	12.4	13.0	12.8	12.8
Rice, do	22.1	20.4	19.1	19.6	22.0	21.7	19.4	19.2	20.7	21.6	19.1	22.2	23.4	23.9	22.5
Rolled oats, 20 ounces	18.0	17.2	17.3	17.5	16.7	16.9	17.6	17.7	19.5	17.5	18.2	17.6	19.1	18.8	18.2
Bakery products:															
Bread, white, pound	14.1	12.8	14.2	16.6	13.7	12.7	13.1	13.8	13.6	13.1	12.6	14.4	14.6	15.3	14.6
Vanilla cookies, do	45.5	32.9	47.8	37.2	43.1	42.6	39.5	46.6	50.8	51.6	32.4	43.7	47.3	46.9	46.3
Meats, poultry, and fish:															
Meats:															
Beef:															
Round steak, do	88.8	85.5	86.7	85.6	87.6	94.9	87.7	97.3	86.2	84.8	84.8	85.4	83.2	90.2	89.4
Rib roast, do	69.9	68.5	69.8	71.5	72.6	80.5	73.2	81.1	71.4	71.4	70.2	76.2	71.6	75.9	76.2
Chuck roast, do	61.2	60.3	59.8	58.9	60.4	65.5	60.2	64.1	57.9	63.5	58.2	60.0	61.0	(1)	62.6
Hamburger, do	53.8	51.1	50.1	50.1	53.1	55.5	51.7	54.2	51.3	51.8	54.1	51.2	51.6	48.9	56.4
Veal: Cutlets, do	86.7	94.2	(1)	87.1	90.4	89.4	87.4	97.7	86.1	83.5	87.8	97.7	90.4	101.5	(4)
Pork:															
Chops, do	69.4	74.4	71.6	70.0	68.1	74.6	69.3	74.0	74.3	72.7	75.2	87.2	77.5	85.2	79.4
Bacon, sliced, do	76.4	74.7	76.0	70.8	75.8	75.4	75.5	76.3	80.2	80.0	81.0	81.6	79.9	80.9	80.3
Ham, whole, do	66.6	62.5	65.8	67.2	67.3	68.9	64.6	70.2	68.0	63.4	66.3	70.1	68.2	71.7	69.6
Salt pork, do	44.4	(1)	42.8	44.8	40.6	47.2	43.1	42.9	48.9	45.2	46.3	50.2	49.0	53.6	48.7
Lamb: Leg, do	(1)	76.2	(1)	77.6	76.3	78.7	77.3	77.0	71.6	69.3	68.8	70.7	70.7	72.3	68.8
Poultry: Roasting chickens, do	70.4	58.1	58.0	62.0	60.2	63.2	57.7	63.4	(1)	51.1	60.6	63.3	(1)	(1)	57.4
Fish: [2] Salmon, pink, 16-ounce can	(1)	56.8	(1)	52.9	57.0	54.3	57.7	54.8	57.4	56.5	55.0	54.5	(1)	(1)	53.0
Dairy products:															
Butter, pound	88.1	85.0	87.2	87.0	88.8	86.2	85.6	86.9	83.7	85.9	87.8	89.9	86.7	92.8	89.2
Cheese, do	62.1	61.8	63.3	64.4	64.4	66.3	59.7	65.1	60.9	(1)	60.7	70.0	68.2	71.4	63.7
Milk:															
Fresh (delivered), quart	20.2	22.0	18.8	24.0	21.1	23.3	22.0	22.2	18.4	19.6	18.5	20.0	19.6	20.2	20.0
Fresh (grocery), do	20.5	21.3	18.8	24.1	20.7	21.8	22.0	21.4	18.4	18.3	17.7	19.1	19.6	19.2	19.2
Evaporated, 14½-ounce can	15.6	15.0	14.6	14.3	14.7	14.7	14.8	14.4	16.0	14.5	14.4	14.3	14.3	15.0	14.5
Eggs: Fresh, dozen	64.3	64.8	67.6	64.6	69.5	67.2	65.1	65.2	74.6	68.5	70.7	75.6	70.2	76.5	74.4
Fruits and vegetables:															
Fresh fruits:															
Apples, pound	11.5	11.6	13.7	14.0	13.4	16.2	13.3	13.2	11.6	12.8	11.4	13.2	12.4	10.8	(1)
Bananas, do	14.9	16.5	16.6	11.2	14.3	14.6	15.4	10.9	17.7	16.8	16.7	17.7	18.6	18.6	17.4
Oranges, size 200, dozen	34.4	38.2	37.0	32.6	44.8	42.8	48.4	33.6	53.9	56.5	46.2	39.7	45.8	39.6	54.6
Fresh vegetables:															
Beans, green, pound	23.3	20.1	23.3	20.0	20.3	24.3	22.1	21.3	(1)	(1)	(1)	23.1	(1)	(1)	(1)
Cabbage, do	6.2	7.0	5.6	6.5	5.4	6.6	5.8	5.8	8.3	6.0	5.8	5.6	7.1	6.1	8.2
Carrots, bunch	13.2	12.2	11.4	10.3	10.2	11.0	11.0	10.6	12.5	10.6	9.5	9.9	11.2	10.7	12.1
Lettuce, head	13.5	13.8	14.4	13.6	13.1	14.1	14.4	13.4	15.5	12.8	11.6	10.2	13.7	9.3	11.6
Onions, pound	11.6	11.3	12.0	10.5	10.3	11.2	11.0	9.6	12.1	10.4	10.6	10.3	11.0	10.8	11.5
Potatoes, 15 pounds	90.8	81.2	95.3	101.0	98.9	114.1	86.8	89.9	80.8	81.9	82.6	90.2	87.3	94.8	87.8
Spinach, pound	(1)	16.4	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Sweetpotatoes, do	10.2	11.4	11.3	8.7	10.0	10.9	10.2	8.4	(1)	11.8	12.5	14.7	(1)	(1)	(1)
Canned fruits:															
Peaches, No. 2½ can	33.6	31.5	31.2	29.3	31.1	30.7	31.1	32.4	34.0	31.1	31.8	27.2	31.5	29.5	29.5
Pineapple, do	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Canned vegetables:															
Corn, No. 2 can	21.5	19.6	18.7	20.0	20.1	19.3	20.6	20.6	21.2	19.2	18.1	19.6	19.2	20.8	19.6
Peas, do	15.5	14.2	15.1	(1)	15.6	17.1	16.2	13.3	17.2	14.1	15.3	14.3	17.0	15.0	14.8
Tomatoes, do	16.5	15.4	15.2	15.2	14.1	14.4	14.0	15.8	18.2	18.0	[3] 21.5	[3] 21.5	[3] 25.8	[3] 22.1	[3] 24.8
Dried fruits: Prunes, pound	22.8	21.4	(1)	20.0	22.3	21.6	22.0	21.9	21.2	(1)	20.5	19.8	20.5	18.4	20.3
Dried vegetables: Navy beans, do	17.7	18.1	(1)	21.2	23.3	24.8	20.3	20.8	18.3	19.5	18.9	24.6	24.3	24.3	23.7
Beverages: Coffee, do	49.2	52.8	52.1	54.3	51.9	52.5	51.0	55.4	56.1	54.9	53.9	53.0	53.6	53.8	54.2
Fats and oils:															
Lard, do	31.1	28.9	28.7	29.1	(1)	31.4	31.2	29.5	33.8	29.4	32.0	31.9	34.0	35.0	34.1
Hydrogenated shortening, do	45.8	44.2	(1)	40.9	41.9	42.9	42.4	43.5	49.0	42.1	44.4	43.0	44.0	46.1	45.0
Salad dressing, pint	41.1	37.7	40.7	42.8	35.6	36.4	41.0	41.4	40.8	39.9	39.8	39.9	40.7	41.2	39.3
Margarine, pound	43.2	42.6	39.5	40.9	40.4	42.1	42.5	41.5	42.6	42.5	45.5	40.7	41.4	42.8	43.6
Sugar and sweets: Sugar, do	10.0	9.7	9.4	8.9	9.3	9.1	9.3	8.8	10.8	9.8	10.2	9.2	9.9	9.3	9.8

[1] Not available. Insufficient number of reports secured during the year.
[2] Costs of fresh and/or frozen fish are included in the index, but average prices are not computed.
[3] No. 2½ can.

Appendix

Brief Description of Retail Food Price Index

The Retail Food Price Index, a component of the Consumers' Price Index, measures average changes in retail prices of a fixed list of foods of constant quantity and quality, bought by moderate-income families in large cities. This is in line with the general purpose of the Consumers' Price Index of measuring how much more or less it costs at one time than at another to purchase a fixed list of goods.[1] The index is not designed to measure how much more it costs to live in one city than in another.[2]

Retail food prices were first collected in 1903, when the Bureau's representatives obtained prices for the years 1890 through 1903 from grocers' records. At that time, 30 foods were priced in 171 representative cities in 33 States. Since then changes in the lists of foods and in the number of cities have been made, with the number of foods varying between 16 and 87 and the number of cities between 39 and 171. The base period, collection and computation methods, and techniques have also changed from time to time.

Currently the Bureau publishes retail prices of 50 foods in 56 cities. Each month about 80,000 quotations are collected from 1,650 independent stores and 150 chain organizations representing 6,500 chain stores, or a total of about 8,150 stores.

Store Sample Selection

In selecting the sample of stores for food price reports, the Bureau has taken into account type of store in terms of foods handled, size of store as measured by sales volume, and geographic location within the city.

Revisions in store samples are made from time to time, to maintain the accuracy of the Bureau's food price index. The latest complete sample revision took place between September 1945 and June 1946.[3] At that time the size of the sample of independent stores in each city was changed so as to be equal to the square root of the total number of independent food stores operating in the city. This relationship was employed since the ratio necessary to obtain stable average prices in a small city is higher than is necessary for a large metropolitan area.

A complete listing of all independent stores in each of the 56 cities was classified according to type of commodities handled—combination stores (groceries and meats), groceries only, meats only, produce markets, etc. The listing for each store type was further classified by sales volume class—under $50,000, $50,000 and under $250,000, and $250,000 and over annual sales volume. Stores were further distributed within city areas and a random selection then made within each area to fulfill the sample requirements. The result was a self-weighting sample of independent stores based on current distribution of total independent store sales in each city. The Bureau continued to include all important chain stores in each city.

Collection of Prices

The Bureau collects retail prices of 50 foods in each of the 56 large cities included in its Retail Food Price Index, during the first 3 days of the week containing the fifteenth of the month. Local Bureau representatives collect retail food prices from grocers who report voluntarily. The representatives are provided with a description (specification) of the quality for which price quotations are desired. Within the range of each specification, they are instructed to secure a price for the type, brand, etc. that is sold in greatest volume in each store. Specifications are defined precisely enough to insure a meaningful average price and avoid movement in the index because of shifts in the quality priced from one period to the next. They are also broad enough, within limitations, to provide an adequate number of quotations and to allow for city and regional differences in grades, types, package sizes, etc.

[1] A detailed discussion of the Consumers' Price Index will be presented in a forthcoming bulletin, Consumers' Prices in the United States, 1942-48 (Bull. 966). The index as it was computed through 1941 is described in Changes in Cost of Living in Large Cities in the United States 1913-41 (Bull. 699).

[2] A special study of differences in costs between cities is presented in The City Worker's Family Budget in the Monthly Labor Review, February 1948 (also reprinted as Serial No. R. 1909).

[3] See Store Samples for Retail Food Prices in Monthly Labor Review for January 1947; also reprinted as Serial No. R. 1878.

Prices are obtained for items found to be most important in wage earners' family budgets as shown by a comprehensive study in 1934–36. The selection of the index items also takes into account similarity of price changes, since it is impossible for the Bureau to collect prices for all of the many foods purchased by families. Price movements of foods not included in the monthly surveys are imputed to those of other foods or food groups showing similar price trends, by means of allocation of weights.

Processing

Each month, the Bureau's field representatives return their pricing schedules to the Washington office, where they are edited carefully for conformance to the required specifications; conversions to uniform quantity unit are made as necessary, and weighting factors are entered in preparation for machine tabulation. The data are then processed by machine tabulation.

The Retail Food Price Index is a fixed-base-weighted-aggregate index. Weighting factors are used to maintain appropriate relationships, (1) among chain stores (outlet weights), (2) between chain and independent stores (chain-independent ratio), (3) among foods in each city (consumption weights), and (4) among cities (population weights).

Average prices for each food in each city are computed separately for chain and independent stores. Weighting factors (called outlet weights) based on annual volume sales of retail reporters are used in calculating average prices for chain stores within each city. A simple average of independent store prices is obtained, since the sample was selected to be a self-weighting sample. Chain and independent average prices for a city are combined by use of chain-independent ratios to obtain average prices for the city. This chain-independent ratio is based on the percentage of total food sales in a city made by chains and by independent stores.

Consumption weights (called quantity weighting factors) for each city are applied to the individual food prices to give them their correct proportions in the city's group and all-foods indexes. These weights are based on consumer expenditure data obtained in 1934–36. The resulting weighted aggregates are combined to obtain indexes for the major food groups and for all foods combined.

City population weights are employed in obtaining average prices and indexes for 56 cities combined. These weights are based on the population of the metropolitan area containing the city in which prices are collected and that of cities in the same region and size class. Adjustments in these population weights were made in February 1943 in accordance with Census Bureau estimates of changes in population from April 1940 to May 1942, based on the registrations for the sugar-ration book. Table A shows the population weights now in use.

Relative Importance

The relative importance [4] of the individual foods in the over-all index is computed and released by the Bureau once each year.

These relative importance figures are percentage distributions of the values of the individual foods in the index as of a certain date. The values are obtained by multiplying the quantity consumption weights by the average prices for the specified date. Thus, the relative importance figures are not weights in themselves. They change from time to time as prices for the various foods change at different rates, since the consumption weights used in their computation remain constant. Table B presents a tabulation of foods priced, individually and by groups, and relative importance (percentage) of each in the all-foods index for 56 large cities combined, for the base period (1935–39), December 1947, and December 1948.

Revisions

In order to maintain the accuracy of the index, special tests and surveys from which revisions may develop, are made from time to time. Some of the more important recent revisions are described below.

Adjustments to wartime and then to postwar conditions were made in March 1943 and February 1946. In March 1943,[5] quantity weights of 27 foods were reduced in line with anticipated

[4] See Consumers' Price Index: Relative Importance of Components, in the Monthly Labor Review for August 1948; also reprinted as Serial No. R. 1933.

[5] See Bureau of Labor Statistics Cost-of-Living Index in Wartime, in the Monthly Labor Review for July 1943; also reprinted as Serial No. R. 1545.

1943 supplies available to consumers under rationing regulations, and weights of 26 less scarce commodities were increased. At the same time 7 foods were added to the index. The chain-independent store ratio was revised on the basis of latest available estimates of changes in volume of food sold through chains and independent stores. Five cities were added to the index, increasing the total number from 51 to 56. The population weights were changed to take into account the marked shifts in population during wartime.

In February 1946,[6] the Retail Food Price Index was again revised to eliminate the special wartime adjustments. Prewar consumption weights were restored, with minor adjustments to retain the 7 items added to the index in 1943, and outlet weights within cities were changed, using the latest sales volume data available.

The computation of average prices for chain and independent stores, separately, was initiated at this time. Formerly the ratio between the two types of stores was used in computing city averages but the computation procedure did not maintain the fixed ratio when the number of quotations varied from period to period. The revised procedure was an improvement in that the stability of the averages would be affected less by short supplies, since the chain-independent ratio would remain fixed, even though some reporters were unable to furnish price quotations every collection date because of food shortages.

During this revision some changes in editing were also introduced. The sample of stores was considered large enough that minor changes in the sample of stores or shifts from one brand to another within specification did not require adjustment for comparability in computing indexes. Index numbers for individual items which were begun at this time are used in obtaining percentage changes, rather than prices, since major differences in the sample and in specifications are still taken care of in the index by linking.

After February 1946, sales taxes were no longer included in the published average prices, but were incorporated in the index for each city. Average prices in cities having sales taxes were reduced by the amount of tax formerly included.

The last major revision took place in August 1947,[7] when the list of foods included in the index was reduced from 62 to 50, a new subgroup for meats (excluding poultry and fish) was added and the number of quotations from independent stores for dry groceries and staples was reduced. This reduction did not materially affect the accuracy of the average prices because of the small amount of price variation from store to store for these foods.

As procedures change and revisions are made, indexes are linked (made equal in a given month) so that changes arising from the mechanics of revisions do not alter the level of the index and it continues to reflect price movements only.

Publications

Retail food price data are issued regularly as follows:

1. Consumers' Price Index and Retail Food Prices (monthly—mimeographed).
2. Retail Food Prices by cities (monthly—mimeographed).
3. Retail Food Prices by Cities—Annual Averages (annually—mimeographed).
4. Monthly Labor Review (monthly).
5. Retail Prices of Food (annually).

[6] See Store Samples for Retail Food Prices, in the Monthly Labor Review for January 1947; also reprinted as Serial No. R. 1878.

[7] See Revision of Retail Food Price Index in August 1947, in the Monthly Labor Review for October 1948; also reprinted as Serial No. R. 1941.

TABLE A.—*Population weights used in computing retail food prices and indexes for 56 cities combined*

City	Weight	City	Weight	City	Weight
	Percent		*Percent*		*Percent*
56 cities combined	100.0	Indianapolis, Ind	1.2	Peoria, Ill	0.4
		Jackson, Miss	.2	Philadelphia, Pa	7.2
Atlanta, Ga	1.3	Jacksonville, Fla	1.1	Pittsburgh, Pa	4.2
Baltimore, Md	1.8	Kansas City, Mo	1.3	Portland, Maine	.2
Birmingham, Ala	1.7	Knoxville, Tenn	.3	Portland, Oreg	.7
Boston, Mass	4.9	Little Rock, Ark	.2	Providence, R. I	.8
Bridgeport, Conn	.6	Los Angeles, Calif	5.6	Richmond, Va	.8
Buffalo, N. Y	1.6	Louisville, Ky	1.0	Rochester, N. Y	2.3
Butte, Mont	.1	Manchester, N. H	.1	St. Louis, Mo	2.5
Cedar Rapids, Iowa	.1	Memphis, Tenn	.5	St. Paul, Minn	.6
Charleston, S. C	.4	Milwaukee, Wis	1.7	Salt Lake City, Utah	.3
Chicago, Ill	8.1	Minneapolis, Minn	1.1	San Francisco, Calif	3.1
Cincinnati, Ohio	1.8	Mobile, Ala	.3	Savannah, Ga	.2
Cleveland, Ohio	3.6	Newark, N. J	1.6	Scranton, Pa	.9
Columbus, Ohio	1.3	New Haven, Conn	2.1	Seattle, Wash	1.3
Dallas, Tex	1.8	New Orleans, La	1.1	Springfield, Ill	.6
Denver, Colo	.8	New York, N. Y	11.8	Washington, D. C	1.9
Detroit, Mich	6.1	Norfolk, Va	.7	Wichita, Kans	.3
Fall River, Mass	.4	Omaha, Nebr	1.1	Winston-Salem, N. C	.2
Houston, Tex	2.1				

TABLE B.—*List of foods and relative importance of individual foods and groups of foods included in the Retail Food Price Index, in the base period (1935–39), December 1947, and December 1948*

Food	1935–39 average	December 1947	December 1948	Food	1935–39 average	December 1947	December 1948
	Percent	*Percent*	*Percent*		*Percent*	*Percent*	*Percent*
All foods	100.0	100.0	100.0	Fruits and vegetables	21.6	20.6	19.6
				Fresh fruits and vegetables	16.5	16.1	15.2
Cereals and bakery products	15.6	13.8	13.9	Fresh fruits:			
Cereals:				Apples	2.1	2.2	2.4
Flour, wheat	1.8	2.5	2.1	Bananas	1.4	1.7	1.8
Macaroni	1.0	(3)	(3)	Oranges	3.4	2.0	2.3
Corn flakes	1.4	.5	.5	Fresh vegetables:			
Corn meal	.3	.4	.4	Beans, green	.8	.7	.7
Rice	(1)	.3	.3	Cabbage	.7	.8	.5
Rolled oats	(3)	.7	.7	Carrots	.9	1.5	.9
Bakery products:				Lettuce	1.7	1.4	1.4
Bread, white	6.7	7.8	8.1	Onions	1.1	1.3	.8
Bread, whole wheat	.8	(3)	(3)	Potatoes	3.2	3.4	3.2
Bread, rye	1.2	(3)	(3)	Spinach	.8	.7	.7
Vanilla cookies	1.8	1.6	1.8	Sweetpotatoes	.4	.4	.5
Soda crackers	.6	(3)	(3)	Canned fruits and vegetables	4.1	3.1	3.2
				Canned fruits:			
Meats, poultry, and fish	28.2	30.8	32.8	Peaches	.6	.4	.5
Meats	22.4	24.6	26.1	Pineapple	.4	.4	.4
Beef:				Canned vegetables:			
Round steak	3.8	4.2	4.7	Corn	.7	.6	.6
Rib roast	4.6	3.9	4.3	Peas	.9	.4	.4
Chuck roast	1.7	1.8	2.0	Tomatoes	1.5	1.3	1.3
Hamburger	(3)	1.6	1.9	Dried fruits and vegetables	1.0	1.4	1.2
Veal:				Dried fruits:			
Cutlets	1.9	1.9	2.2	Prunes	.6	.7	.7
Pork:				Dried vegetables:			
Chops	3.5	3.4	3.4	Navy beans	.4	.7	.5
Bacon, sliced	1.9	2.3	2.0				
Ham, whole	2.2	2.3	2.3	Beverages	3.4	2.9	3.0
Salt pork	.3	.5	.4	Coffee	2.6	2.9	3.0
Lamb:				Tea	.8	(3)	(3)
Leg	1.2	2.7	2.9				
Rib chops	1.3	(3)	(3)	Fats and oils	3.2	3.5	3.2
Poultry: Roasting chickens	3.3	2.9	3.2	Lard	1.1	1.3	1.0
Fish	2.5	3.3	3.5	Other shortening	.7	(3)	(3)
Fish (fresh, frozen)	1.7	2.2	2.2	Hydrogenated shortening	(3)	.6	.6
Salmon, pink	.8	1.1	1.3	Mayonnaise	.9	(3)	(3)
				Salad dressing	(3)	.8	.9
Dairy products	19.1	19.1	18.8	Margarine	.3	.8	.7
Butter	5.4	7.0	5.6	Peanut butter	.2	(3)	(3)
Cheese	1.6	1.7	1.8				
Milk, fresh (delivered)	2 11.1	6.7	6.1	Sugar and sweets	3.4	3.0	2.9
Milk, fresh (grocery)	(2)	2.8	4.2	Sugar	3.4	3.0	2.9
Milk, evaporated	1.0	.9	1.1				
Eggs, fresh	5.5	6.3	5.8				

[1] Not included in index.
[2] Not given separately for delivered and grocery milk.
[3] Not priced.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1949