

Issued January 21, 1955

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Washington 25, D. C.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX - DECEMBER 1954

Consumer prices in urban areas declined 0.3 percent on the average in December, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Most of the decrease was due to lower food prices, although prices were also lower for transportation, apparel, reading and recreation, personal care, and the "other goods and services" category. Fuel, residential rent, and medical care costs were higher.

The Consumer Price Index for December 1954 was 114.3 (1947-49 = 100), 0.5 percent lower than a year ago, and 1.0 percent below the record high level of October 1953.

FOOD Retail food prices declined 0.6 percent between mid-November and mid-December 1954, the fifth consecutive monthly decrease. Since July, average food prices have dropped 3.7 percent, with monthly decreases ranging from 0.5 percent to 1.3 percent.

Major influences contributing to the food decline were substantially lower prices for eggs, pork chops, chickens, lettuce, and oranges. Egg prices were down seasonally (about 8 percent) as reductions were reported in 43 of the 46 cities in the index. At an average price of 53.6 cents a dozen, eggs in December were 23 percent lower than in December 1953, and were selling at the lowest prices for any December since 1941. Usually egg prices reach their lowest level in early spring, rising to a peak in October or November, but with production at a record rate, prices this year have not exhibited their usual seasonal movement. Prices of pork chops declined 5 percent between November and December, but ham prices rose slightly. At the end of the year pork prices were about 8 percent below December 1953. Prices of frying chickens declined 3½ percent during the month, as supplies continued at record levels. Other meats for which lower prices prevailed in December were frankfurters, chuck roast, and leg of lamb.

Oranges averaged 8 percent lower in price than in November and canned orange juice prices declined 1½ percent, reflecting higher than average production. Bananas declined 3½ percent during the month, but apple prices were 3 percent higher than in November. Lettuce prices dropped 17 percent, as lower prices were reported in 41 of the 46 cities, with reductions ranging up to 46 percent. Prices of green beans also were 13 percent lower than in November. These declines were nearly counterbalanced by higher prices for tomatoes (up 17 percent), cabbage (up 19 percent), and sweetpotatoes (up 8½ percent). Tea prices rose for the ninth consecutive month to a level about 9 percent above December 1953. Coffee prices edged up (0.2 percent), with increases reported in 24 cities.

HOUSING After three months at the same level, the housing costs index rose 0.2 percent between November and December as a result of higher prices for fuel oil and coal and continued increases in residential rents. Higher rates for gas and other public utilities were reported in several cities. Prices of housefurnishings averaged unchanged from November. Some decreases in electrical appliances and furniture were reported in a number of cities. Household operation costs declined 0.1 percent, primarily because of decreases in laundry soap and detergent prices.

OTHER COMMODITIES AND SERVICES The transportation index declined 0.2 percent, primarily because of substantial decreases in used car prices, following introduction of the 1955 model automobiles. New car prices were higher than in November, as more 1955 models were on the market.

The apparel price decline in December is due principally to the end-of-season sale prices for women's and girls' coats and women's wool suits reported in practically all cities.

Prices were lower for television sets and radios, and movie admissions declined with the return to regular prices after showings of special features in a number of cities.

Medical care costs continued their slow advance as higher fees were reported in December by physicians and dentists. Hospitals in 7 cities quoted higher ward and room rates because of higher expenses. The personal care and "other goods and services" groups each declined slightly.

YEAR-END SUMMARY During 1954 the Consumer Price Index moved within the very narrow range between 114.3 and 115.2. The greatest month-to-month change in the average of all goods and services prices was 0.3 percent. From 115.2 in January, the index moved downward slowly for 3 months to 114.6. It turned up in May and by July had regained its January level. Since July the price index has edged down steadily, except for a 0.1 percent rise in November. Beginning in September, the index has been lower each month than for the corresponding month of the previous year.

Most of the change during the year was due to decreasing food prices. The total food index was down 1.7 percent and food at home was down 2.2 percent. All subgroups of food at home, except cereals and bakery products, reflected lower prices than a year ago. The December 1954 prices of meats, poultry, and fish averaged more than 5 percent below December 1953, primarily because of larger 1954 production of pork and poultry. Dairy products were down 3.2 percent, reflecting chiefly the reduction in Government support prices. During most of the first eight months of the year, prices of other groups of foods rose, largely because of higher coffee prices, but declined slightly in the last four months of the year as coffee prices fell and egg prices went down. Prices of restaurant meals advanced during the year.

The advance of 0.7 percent in the overall prices of housing in 1954 resulted largely from steadily increasing residential rents, which rose 1.4 percent. This compares with a 5.7 percent increase during 1953, indicating that rents are levelling off for the first time since mid-1947 when Federal rent controls were first relaxed. During this period, in which Federal, State, and local controls gradually were lifted, rents advanced 37.8 percent. In 1954, rent decreases began to appear more frequently, particularly in smaller cities, and more recently in a few large cities. The average costs of gas and electricity, solid fuels and fuel oil, and household operation also were higher than in December 1953. Housefurnishings prices dropped 2.5 percent during the year as retailers generally reduced prices of electrical appliances to meet competition from discount houses, and reductions in Federal excise taxes largely were passed on to consumers.

Apparel prices moved generally downward in 1954. The net decrease over the year was 0.9 percent. Women's and girls' apparel prices were down 1.5 percent from December 1953 and men's and boys', 1.0 percent, but footwear and other apparel prices were slightly higher than a year ago.

Transportation costs declined 1.2 percent from December 1953 to December 1954, as used car prices decreased steadily, and prices of tires also were lower. New car prices rose slightly.

The medical care index, which reflects the general continued increases in prices of services, rose in every month in 1954 except June, to the end of the year, when it was 2.2 percent higher than in December 1953. Personal care costs were unchanged on the average from last year, as higher prices for barber and beauty shop services were counterbalanced by reduced excise taxes on cosmetics.

The decline of 2.1 percent for reading and recreation resulted from lower prices for television sets, radios, toys, and sporting goods. "Other goods and services" prices fell 0.3 percent during the year.

TABLE 1. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- U.S. CITY AVERAGE ALL ITEMS AND COMMODITY GROUPS
Indexes and Percent Changes for Selected Dates

Group	December 1954	November 1954	October 1954	December 1953	June 1950	Year 1939
	This Month	Last Month	2 Months Ago	Last Year	Pre-Korea	Pre-World War II
<u>INDEXES (1947-49 =100)</u>						
ALL ITEMS	114.3	114.6	114.5	114.9	101.8	59.4
FOOD ^{1/}	110.4	111.1	111.8	112.3	100.5	47.1
Food at home	109.2	110.1	110.9	111.7	100.5	47.1
Cereals and bakery products	123.3	123.1	122.7	120.9	102.7	57.2
Meats, poultry and fish	102.2	103.5	103.9	107.8	106.1	41.6
Dairy products	106.8	106.6	106.7	110.3	92.3	49.8
Fruits and vegetables	108.4	109.6	111.1	109.2	102.5	46.3
Other foods at home	112.0	113.7	115.7	113.5	94.1	48.4
HOUSING ^{2/}	119.7	119.5	119.5	118.9	104.9	76.1
Rent	129.4	129.2	129.0	127.6	108.7	86.6
Gas and electricity	109.1	108.7	108.5	107.2	102.7	104.9
Solid fuels and fuel oil	125.5	124.2	123.8	125.3	107.6	56.4
Housefurnishings	105.4	105.4	105.6	108.1	97.4	53.4
Household operation	117.7	117.8	117.6	117.0	99.6	68.1
APPAREL	104.3	104.6	104.6	105.3	96.5	52.5
Men's and boys'	106.5	106.5	106.4	107.6	98.1	4/
Women's and girls'	99.0	99.5	99.6	100.5	93.3	4/
Footwear	116.9	117.0	116.7	116.1	102.1	4/
Other apparel	91.1	91.2	91.1	90.9	88.4	4/
TRANSPORTATION	127.3	127.6	125.0	128.9	109.9	68.9
MEDICAL CARE	126.3	126.1	125.9	123.6	105.4	72.6
PERSONAL CARE	113.6	113.8	113.4	113.6	99.2	59.6
READING AND RECREATION	106.6	106.8	106.9	108.9	102.5	63.0
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES ^{3/}	119.9	120.0	120.1	120.3	103.7	70.6

PERCENT CHANGE TO DECEMBER 1954 FROM:

	November 1954	October 1954	December 1953	June 1950	Year 1939
ALL ITEMS	- 0.3	- 0.2	- 0.5	12.3	92.4
FOOD ^{1/}	- 0.6	- 1.3	- 1.7	9.9	134.4
Food at home	- 0.8	- 1.5	- 2.2	8.7	131.8
Cereals and bakery products	0.2	0.5	2.0	20.1	115.6
Meats, poultry and fish	- 1.3	- 1.6	- 5.2	- 3.7	115.7
Dairy products	0.2	0.1	- 3.2	15.7	114.5
Fruits and vegetables	- 1.1	- 2.4	- 0.7	5.8	134.1
Other foods at home	- 1.5	- 3.2	- 1.3	19.0	131.4
HOUSING ^{2/}	0.2	0.2	0.7	14.1	57.3
Rent	0.2	0.3	1.4	19.0	49.4
Gas and electricity	0.4	0.6	1.8	6.2	4.0
Solid fuels and fuel oil	1.0	1.4	0.2	16.6	122.5
Housefurnishings	0	- 0.2	- 2.5	8.2	97.4
Household operation	- 0.1	0.1	0.6	18.2	72.1
APPAREL	- 0.3	- 0.3	- 0.9	8.1	98.7
Men's and boys'	0	0.1	- 1.0	8.6	4/
Women's and girls'	- 0.5	- 0.6	- 1.5	6.1	4/
Footwear	- 0.1	0.2	0.7	14.5	4/
Other apparel	- 0.1	0	0.2	3.1	4/
TRANSPORTATION	- 0.2	1.8	- 1.2	15.8	84.8
MEDICAL CARE	0.2	0.3	2.2	19.8	74.0
PERSONAL CARE	- 0.2	0.2	0	14.5	90.6
READING AND RECREATION	- 0.2	- 0.3	- 2.1	4.0	69.2
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES ^{3/}	- 0.1	- 0.2	- 0.3	15.6	69.8

^{1/} Includes restaurant meals not shown separately.

^{2/} Includes home purchase and other home-owner costs not shown separately.

^{3/} Includes tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and "miscellaneous services" (such as legal services, banking fees, burial services, etc.).

^{4/} Not available.

TABLE 2. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- ALL ITEMS INDEXES FOR SELECTED DATES
U.S. CITY AVERAGE AND 20 LARGE CITIES

City	(1 9 4 7 - 4 9 = 1 0 0)					(1935-39 = 100)
	December 1954	November 1954	December 1953	June 1950	Year 1939	December 1954 ^{1/}
U.S. CITY AVERAGE	114.3	114.6	114.9	101.8	59.4	191.1
CITIES PRICED MONTHLY:						
Chicago	117.0	117.6	116.4	102.8	58.6	199.3
Detroit	116.2	116.9	116.4	102.8	59.0	196.1
Los Angeles	115.3	115.0	115.8	101.3	60.4	192.7
New York	112.2	112.7	113.0	100.9	60.1	185.7
Philadelphia	115.6	115.9	115.0	101.6	59.2	192.4
CITIES PRICED IN MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER, DECEMBER ^{2/}						
Atlanta	115.7	116.3	117.1	101.3 ^{4/}	58.3	196.2
Baltimore	114.8	115.2	114.5	101.6	57.9	197.3
Cincinnati	113.3	114.3	114.6	101.2	58.4	190.8
St. Louis	115.4	115.7	116.9	101.1	59.3	192.6
San Francisco	115.7	116.2	116.9	100.9	58.6	197.7
CITIES PRICED IN FEBRUARY, MAY, AUGUST, NOVEMBER ^{2/}						
Cleveland	115.3	115.3	115.5	100.4	59.2	196.5
Houston	116.7	116.5	117.3	103.5	59.5	197.6
Scranton	112.3	112.4	113.4	100.2	58.5	186.6
Seattle	115.7	116.2	116.4	102.0	59.2	197.7
Washington, D. C.	113.5	114.1	114.3	101.6	60.4	186.4
CITIES PRICED IN JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, OCTOBER ^{2/}						
Boston	113.5	113.8	113.8	101.2	61.0	182.7
Kansas City	115.7	115.6	115.7	101.4	61.7	186.3
Minneapolis	116.9	117.3	116.6	102.1 ^{3/}	60.7	193.6
Pittsburgh	114.3	115.4	114.7	99.9	58.1	194.3
Portland, Oreg.	115.2	115.5	116.1	101.5	58.3	199.5

^{1/} These are the same indexes shown in column 1, converted to a base of 1935-39 = 100.

^{2/} Foods, fuels, rents, and a few other items priced monthly; other commodities and services priced quarterly.

^{3/} June 1950; formerly priced March, June, September, December.

^{4/} May 1950; formerly priced February, May, August, November.

TABLE 3. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- PERCENT CHANGES FROM NOVEMBER 1954 TO DECEMBER 1954
U.S. City Average and Five Cities Priced Monthly
All Items and Commodity Groups

City	All Items	Food	Housing	Apparel	Trans- portation	Medical Care	Personal Care	Reading and Recreation	Other Goods & Services
U.S. CITY AVERAGE	- 0.3	- 0.6	0.2	- 0.3	- 0.2	0.2	- 0.2	- 0.2	- 0.1
Chicago	- 0.5	- 1.3	0.2	- 0.4	- 0.7	0	- 0.2	- 0.3	0
Detroit	- 0.6	- 0.8	0	0	- 2.1	0	0.1	- 1.6	- 0.1
Los Angeles	0.3	- 0.2	0.9	0	0.1	0	0	- 0.4	0
New York	- 0.4	- 0.8	0.1	- 0.7	- 0.5	0	- 0.1	- 0.3	- 0.2
Philadelphia	- 0.3	- 0.7	0	- 0.6	- 0.6	0.9	0	- 0.1	0

TABLE 4. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- ALL ITEMS AND COMMODITY GROUPS
December 1954 Indexes and Percent Changes, September 1954 to December 1954
U.S. City Average and 10 Cities Priced in December 1954

Group	U.S. CITY AVERAGE	Atlanta	Balti- more	Chicago	Cincin- nati	Detroit	Los Angeles	New York	Phila- delphia	St. Louis	San Francisco
<u>December 1954 Indexes (1947-49 = 100)</u>											
ALL ITEMS	114.3	115.7	114.8	117.0	113.3	116.2	115.3	112.2	115.6	115.4	115.7
FOOD	110.4	110.0	111.4	108.2	112.0	113.0	110.7	110.1	112.6	112.3	111.8
Food at home	109.2	108.3	110.0	106.7	111.1	111.7	108.6	109.0	111.3	110.1	110.7
Cereals and bakery products	123.3	117.0	122.3	116.7	124.7	119.8	127.5	127.3	120.7	118.8	130.3
Meats, poultry and fish	102.2	104.9	104.4	97.5	104.3	102.2	102.0	103.4	104.5	102.3	105.9
Dairy products	106.8	108.3	109.1	105.5	111.3	106.5	103.3	107.0	112.5	98.2	104.7
Fruits and vegetables	108.4	110.1	105.5	107.2	105.9	119.3	107.0	103.6	110.2	115.7	110.4
Other foods at home	112.0	105.1	112.6	116.6	117.4	113.1	110.5	112.9	112.4	120.6	110.3
HOUSING	119.7	124.0	115.1	128.5	117.6	122.4	125.1	116.1	114.5	119.9	117.8
Rent	129.4	-	-	-	131.6	-	-	-	-	135.5	130.8
Gas and electricity	109.1	113.3	100.0	106.2	119.5	109.0	113.6	108.2	102.3	103.8	130.1
Solid fuels and fuel oil	125.5	119.5	127.2	124.6	127.2	119.3	-	129.8	123.4	138.7	-
Housefurnishings	105.4	109.3	99.1	108.4	101.0	109.0	106.7	105.0	109.3	101.3	105.2
Household operation	117.7	128.6	112.6	121.1	120.1	110.3	108.1	119.1	114.7	119.8	108.9
APPAREL	104.3	110.3	102.5	106.2	103.2	102.4	104.7	103.7	105.8	103.7	101.9
Men's and boys'	106.5	112.1	101.4	111.3	104.0	108.3	108.4	105.9	104.8	107.8	105.3
Women's and girls'	99.0	105.1	98.9	98.0	96.1	94.6	98.5	98.0	104.6	95.7	96.3
Footwear	116.9	123.2	117.0	120.1	122.2	113.0	118.5	115.9	111.2	118.9	115.4
Other apparel	91.1	92.0	94.4	93.6	87.1	87.3	83.4	94.1	92.9	95.8	87.2
TRANSPORTATION	127.3	125.7	138.9	133.1	123.5	122.7	126.4	130.8	137.9	130.6	141.3
MEDICAL CARE	126.3	121.6	133.4	126.1	126.3	127.6	122.9	124.6	133.7	139.9	123.7
PERSONAL CARE	113.6	115.5	107.5	115.2	109.0	119.1	117.1	108.3	117.6	113.6	111.7
READING AND RECREATION	106.6	106.3	117.1	110.7	99.3	108.6	96.9	104.2	113.0	93.4	107.6
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES	119.9	118.0	123.0	118.2	116.3	124.7	114.3	121.0	123.9	113.6	115.5

Percent Change -- September 1954 to December 1954

ALL ITEMS	- 0.3	- 0.5	- 0.3	- 0.3	- 0.9	0	- 0.1	- 0.4	- 0.5	- 0.3	- 0.4
FOOD	- 1.8	- 2.9	- 2.5	- 1.8	- 2.0	- 1.1	- 1.4	- 1.5	- 2.3	- 2.7	- 2.0
Food at home	- 2.2	- 3.6	- 2.9	- 2.3	- 2.4	- 1.2	- 1.9	- 2.0	- 2.6	- 3.4	- 2.5
Cereals and bakery products	0.6	0.1	0.3	0.1	3.0	1.6	0.5	1.7	0	0	- 0.5
Meats, poultry and fish	- 4.2	- 6.2	- 4.0	- 4.1	- 4.0	- 3.4	- 4.8	- 3.8	- 3.8	- 4.0	- 2.9
Dairy products	0.9	0.2	0.2	1.8	3.5	3.3	0.5	0.9	3.9	- 3.3	- 0.7
Fruits and vegetables	- 1.9	- 7.4	- 5.7	- 2.2	- 5.4	1.9	- 0.8	- 3.4	- 6.5	- 2.2	0.5
Other foods at home	- 3.4	- 2.5	- 3.3	- 4.0	- 4.6	- 4.7	- 2.0	- 2.9	- 4.2	- 5.2	- 6.1
HOUSING	0.2	- 0.1	0.6	0.5	0.5	- 0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3
Rent	0.5	-	-	-	1/2.3	-	-	-	-	1/1.3	1/1.4
Gas and electricity	1.1	1.8	0.4	- 0.1	3.7	0.8	3.7	0	0	0	0
Solid fuels and fuel oil	2.5	1.5	5.0	1.3	3.3	0.3	-	5.5	5.2	1.4	-
Housefurnishings	- 0.6	- 0.3	0	- 0.1	- 0.5	0	- 0.9	- 0.9	- 0.1	- 1.4	0.4
Household operation	0.3	- 0.6	1.4	0	0.3	0.1	0	0.2	0.8	0.7	- 0.1
APPAREL	0	0	- 0.6	- 0.7	- 0.9	- 0.5	- 0.1	- 0.7	- 0.5	- 0.2	- 1.2
Men's and boys'	0.1	0	0	- 0.1	- 0.9	0	- 0.6	0	0.2	- 0.2	- 0.2
Women's and girls'	0	- 0.2	- 1.2	- 1.7	- 1.6	- 1.0	- 0.2	- 1.6	- 0.9	- 0.5	- 2.4
Footwear	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.2	0	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.3
Other apparel	0.2	0	- 0.7	- 0.5	0.1	- 0.3	0.8	- 0.2	- 0.3	- 0.2	- 0.7
TRANSPORTATION	0.7	4.8	2.7	0	- 2.9	4.0	2.7	0.8	0.4	4.4	0.8
MEDICAL CARE	0.5	0.4	0	2.8	1.2	0.6	0	0.5	1.1	2.8	0.2
PERSONAL CARE	0.1	0	0.1	0.1	- 0.3	0	- 0.3	0.6	0.3	- 0.2	- 0.1
READING AND RECREATION	0.1	- 2.1	- 0.7	0.1	1.0	- 0.5	- 2.2	- 0.3	- 0.6	1.1	1.4
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES	- 0.2	- 0.1	- 0.1	0	- 1.4	0	- 0.2	- 0.2	0.3	- 0.2	- 0.3

1/ Change from June 1954 to December 1954.

TABLE 5. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- FOOD AND ITS SUBGROUPS
 December 1954 Indexes and Percent Changes, November 1954 to December 1954
 U. S. City Average and 20 Large Cities
 (1947-49 = 100)

City	Total Food		Total Food at Home		Cereals & Bakery Products		Meats, Poultry & Fish		Dairy Products		Fruits & Vegetables		Other Foods at Home	
	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change	Index	Percent Change
U.S. CITY AVERAGE . .	110.4	- 0.6	109.2	- 0.8	123.3	0.2	102.2	- 1.3	106.8	0.2	108.4	- 1.1	112.0	- 1.5
Atlanta	110.0	- 0.5	108.3	- 0.6	117.0	0.4	104.9	- 1.6	108.3	0.3	110.1	- 1.1	105.1	- 0.7
Baltimore	111.4	- 0.9	110.0	- 1.0	122.3	- 0.1	104.4	- 1.3	109.1	0.3	105.5	- 0.9	112.6	- 2.0
Boston	108.5	- 0.4	106.8	- 0.5	119.1	0	99.2	- 1.2	111.4	1.3	106.2	1.1	103.7	- 2.0
Chicago	108.2	- 1.3	106.7	- 1.7	116.7	0.2	97.5	- 1.9	105.5	- 0.1	107.2	- 3.3	116.6	- 2.2
Cincinnati	112.0	- 0.9	111.1	- 1.1	124.7	0.2	104.3	- 1.8	111.3	0.1	105.9	- 0.7	117.4	- 1.7
Cleveland	108.9	- 0.7	107.7	- 0.8	120.5	0.2	99.9	- 0.6	103.5	0.2	103.9	- 2.6	116.1	- 1.3
Detroit	113.0	- 0.8	111.7	- 0.8	119.8	1.8	102.2	- 0.9	106.5	0.2	119.3	- 2.0	113.1	- 2.0
Houston	109.8	- 0.5	108.8	- 0.5	118.2	0	98.7	- 1.1	108.7	- 0.2	113.0	- 1.1	112.3	- 0.1
Kansas City	107.1	- 0.7	105.7	- 1.0	120.3	0.3	97.9	- 1.9	108.5	0.2	103.9	- 1.7	105.6	- 0.9
Los Angeles	110.7	- 0.2	108.6	- 0.4	127.5	0.3	102.0	- 1.1	103.3	0	107.0	0.5	110.5	- 0.8
Minneapolis	109.9	- 0.8	109.1	- 1.1	125.4	0.2	97.8	- 0.6	102.9	0.5	114.3	- 1.0	117.5	- 3.5
New York	110.1	- 0.8	109.0	- 1.4	127.3	0	103.4	- 1.6	107.0	- 0.2	103.6	- 1.6	112.9	- 2.5
Philadelphia	112.6	- 0.7	111.3	- 1.0	120.7	- 0.1	104.5	- 0.8	112.5	0.2	110.2	- 0.8	112.4	- 2.6
Pittsburgh	110.8	- 0.9	110.0	- 1.0	124.6	0.2	98.7	- 1.0	110.0	0	105.5	- 2.0	120.9	- 1.9
Portland, Ore.	109.7	- 0.1	108.8	- 0.1	124.4	- 0.1	103.7	- 1.6	102.5	0.1	109.1	1.6	110.4	0.2
St. Louis	112.3	- 1.1	110.1	- 1.3	118.8	0.2	102.3	- 1.3	98.2	- 1.7	115.7	- 2.0	120.6	- 1.6
San Francisco	111.8	- 0.7	110.7	- 0.9	130.3	0	105.9	- 0.8	104.7	0.3	110.4	- 1.1	110.3	- 1.8
Scranton	108.1	- 1.5	107.8	- 1.7	118.6	- 0.1	102.3	- 1.4	108.3	0.1	102.0	- 5.7	109.8	- 2.1
Seattle	110.8	0.2	110.5	0.3	127.4	0.4	102.7	- 0.8	105.9	0	115.0	3.0	109.9	- 0.6
Washington, D.C.	109.7	- 0.4	108.1	- 0.6	120.8	0.1	98.2	- 0.5	110.8	- 0.4	105.1	1.5	111.9	- 2.2

TABLE 6. RETAIL FOOD PRICES FOR DECEMBER 1954 AND NOVEMBER 1954
 U.S. City Average

Food and Unit	December 1954	November 1954	Food and Unit	December 1954	November 1954
CEREALS AND BAKERY PRODUCTS:	(Cents)	(Cents)	Fresh (continued)	(Cents)	(Cents)
Flour, wheat 5 lb.	54.0	53.8	Grapefruit * each		
Biscuit mix 20 oz.	27.4	27.4	Peaches * lb.		
Corn meal lb.	12.6	12.6	Strawberries * pt.		
Rice lb.	17.6	17.6	Grapes, seedless * lb.		23.1
Rolled oats 20 oz.	18.6	18.5	Watermelons * lb.		
Corn flakes 12 oz.	22.0	22.0	Potatoes 15 lb.	78.1	78.2
Bread, white lb.	17.6	17.5	Sweetpotatoes lb.	12.4	11.4
Soda crackers lb.	27.2	27.2	Onions lb.	7.7	7.6
Vanilla cookies 7 oz.	23.8	23.8	Carrots lb.	14.2	13.9
MEATS, POULTRY AND FISH:			Lettuce head	14.4	17.3
Round steak lb.	92.3	92.4	Celery lb.	13.5	13.5
Chuck roast lb.	52.7	53.0	Cabbage lb.	7.8	6.5
Rib roast lb.	72.1	71.8	Tomatoes lb.	29.1	24.9
Hamburger lb.	40.0	40.0	Beans, green lb.	21.8	25.1
Veal cutlets lb.	107.9	108.4	Canned		
Pork chops, center cut lb.	77.2	81.2	Orange juice 46 oz. can	35.2	35.7
Bacon, sliced lb.	71.3	71.4	Peaches #2 1/2 can	32.9	32.7
Ham, whole lb.	64.1	63.7	Pineapple #2 1/2 can	38.7	38.7
Lamb, leg lb.	68.9	69.9	Fruit cocktail #2 1/2 can	41.0	41.0
Frankfurters lb.	54.1	54.4	Corn, cream style #303 can	17.5	17.7
Luncheon meat, canned 12 oz.	48.7	48.8	Peas, green #303 can	21.4	21.5
Frying chickens, dressed lb.	39.9	41.4	Tomatoes #303 can	14.8	14.7
Frying chickens, ready-to-cook lb.	49.6	51.5	Baby foods 4 1/2-5 oz.	9.7	9.7
Ocean perch, fillet, frozen lb.	43.7	43.4	Dried		
Haddock, fillet, frozen lb.	48.3	48.9	Prunes lb.	32.1	31.9
Salmon, pink, canned 16 oz.	53.8	53.3	Navy beans lb.	18.2	17.9
Tuna fish, canned 7 oz.	38.3	38.5	OTHER FOODS AT HOME:		
DAIRY PRODUCTS:			Vegetable soup 11 oz. can	14.3	14.3
Milk, fresh, (grocery) qt.	22.3	22.2	Beans with pork 16 oz. can	14.5	14.5
Milk, fresh, (delivered) qt.	23.4	23.3	Gherkins, sweet 7 1/2 oz.	29.2	29.5
Ice cream pt.	29.2	29.4	Catsup, tomato 14 oz.	22.3	22.2
Butter lb.	72.2	71.4	Coffee lb.	105.3	105.1
Cheese, American process lb.	56.8	56.8	Tea 1 lb.	36.1	35.4
Milk, evaporated 14 1/2 oz. can	13.7	13.7	Cola drink carton of 6, 6 oz.	32.2	32.4
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:			Shortening, hydrogenated lb.	35.4	35.4
Frozen			Margarine, colored lb.	29.3	29.1
Strawberries 10 oz.	30.7	30.6	Lard lb.	24.5	25.3
Orange juice concentrate 6 oz.	18.5	18.4	Salad dressing pt.	35.6	35.8
Peas, green 10 oz.	19.4	19.3	Peanut butter lb.	50.4	49.7
Beans, green 10 oz.	24.2	24.0	Sugar 5 lb.	52.3	52.3
Fresh			Corn syrup 24 oz.	23.7	23.7
Apples lb.	13.5	13.1	Grape jelly 12 oz.	25.9	25.9
Bananas lb.	16.8	17.4	Chocolate bar 1 oz.	5.3	5.2
Oranges, size 200 doz.	48.2	52.5	Eggs, Grade A, large doz.	53.6	58.1
Lemons lb.	18.5	18.8	Gelatin, flavored 3-4 oz.	8.5	8.5

* Priced only in season

The Consumer Price Index measures the average change in prices of goods and services customarily purchased by city wage-earner and clerical-worker families. Index numbers are presented on the base 1947-49 = 100, and show the average increase or decrease in prices from the 1947-49 average. For the convenience of users, indexes are also calculated on the base 1935-39 = 100.

About 300 items are priced for the index to estimate the average change in prices of a fixed quantity of goods and services from one period to the next. Among these are all the important items that wage and clerical workers buy, and they are selected so that their average price change will be representative of the price changes on all items. Prices are collected in 46 cities which are representative of all cities in the United States.

Foods, fuels, rents, and a few other items are priced every month in each city. Prices of most other goods and services are obtained every month in the 5 largest cities, every 3 months in 16 other large cities and in 9 medium-sized cities, and every 4 months in 16 small cities. In each city, prices are reported by representative retail stores and service establishments patronized by wage and clerical worker families.

Indexes are calculated for all cities combined (the U.S. city average) and for each of the 20 largest cities. No separate index numbers are calculated for the following 26 medium-sized and small cities which are included in the U.S. average:

Anna, Illinois	Huntington, W. Virginia	Pulaski, Virginia
Camden, Arkansas	Laconia, New Hampshire	Ravenna, Ohio
Canton, Ohio	Lodi, California	Rawlins, Wyoming
Charleston, W. Virginia	Lynchburg, Virginia	San Jose, California
Evansville, Indiana	Madill, Oklahoma	Sandpoint, Idaho
Garrett, Indiana	Madison, Wisconsin	Shawnee, Oklahoma
Glendale, Arizona	Middlesboro, Kentucky	Shenandoah, Iowa
Grand Forks, N. Dakota	Middletown, Connecticut	Youngstown, Ohio
Grand Island, Nebraska	Newark, Ohio	

In the calculation, price changes on individual items are weighted by their importance in wage-earner and clerical-worker family spending. City data are combined by weighting with 1950 population data to arrive at the U.S. city average.

Comparison of city indexes shows only that prices in one city changed more or less than in another. City indexes do not measure differences in price level between cities.

A detailed description of the index containing lists of items priced, their weights, cities included, and an explanation of the index calculation, its uses and limitations, is available in Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin No. 1140 - "The Consumer Price Index - A Layman's Guide," for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. Price 20 cents.

A more technical description of the Consumer Price Index is available upon request to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C.

Historical series of index numbers for the U.S. city average and 20 individual large cities are available upon request. These series include index numbers for All Items, Food, Apparel, and Rent for periods from 1913 to date; and for other groups of goods and services from 1947 to date.

