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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX - MAY 1955

The Consumer Price Index was unchanged between April and May, remaining at 114.2 percent of the 1947-49 average, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. This index has varied by only 0.1 percent in the past 6 months.

Prices for the food, housing, and reading and recreation categories each declined 0.1 percent, while prices of transportation, apparel, medical care, and personal care each rose 0.2 percent. The "other goods and services" category increased 0.1 percent.

FOOD

The decline in food prices was the first since last December. However, half the 46 cities surveyed reported higher average food prices between April and May. At 111.1, the food index was 1.9 percent lower than a year earlier and 10.5 percent above June 1950.

The slight change represented largely the net effect of decreases for poultry, eggs, and beef, and increases for pork and fresh fruits and vegetables, particularly potatoes and apples. Of food at home, only fruits and vegetables averaged higher between April and May. Prices of restaurant meals edged higher.

Fresh fruit and vegetable prices averaged about 3.4 percent higher over the month, somewhat more than usual for this period of the year. The retail prices of white potatoes again advanced (about 15 percent) following the sharp price rise recorded in April. Reflecting the late March freeze, average potato prices increased almost 50 percent from March to May to about 80 cents for 10 pounds. The retail prices of apples, which have been increasing steadily since October 1954, increased another 12 percent over the month. The prices of oranges also advanced, about 5 percent. Prices of lettuce, fresh tomatoes, and strawberries decreased over the month as greater supplies moved into the market.

As supplies increased, poultry prices declined 7.3 percent over the month, following 4 months of steady advance. Meat prices averaged higher in May as prices for pork chops and ham increased 6.6 percent and 2.5 percent respectively, with the seasonal decreases in marketing of hogs. However, prices of all other meat items were lower. Chuck roast prices were down 3.5 percent and round steak, 1.8 percent.

Eggs were a better buy in most cities as the average price decreased 3.1 percent to the lowest for any May since 1950. Dairy products declined for the fifth consecutive month.

Coffee prices continued down, but only slightly, for the fourth consecutive month. Tea prices fell a little following 13 months of continuous advance. The slight decline in the cereals and bakery products index constituted its first decrease in more than a year.

HOUSING

Between April and May, the housing index declined 0.1 percent. There were price decreases for housefurnishings and solid fuels and fuel oil while rents, gas and electric bills, and household operation costs were slightly higher. Housefurnishings prices declined 0.8 percent over the month. Traditional May white sales resulted in reduced prices for sheets. Prices for refrigerators, cook stoves, and washing machines were also lower in some cities as retailers cut prices to meet competition and to promote increased volume.

Substantial price decreases for anthracite, and smaller reductions for bituminous coal and fuel oil, brought the solid fuels and fuel oil index down 2.5 percent from April. These declines are customary with the onset of warmer weather.

Residential rents resumed their gradual increase in May, moving to a level 0.3 percent above April. The majority of rental dwellings reported no change in rent over the month.

Gas and electric bills increased 0.5 percent, on the average, between April and May. The rise of 0.8 percent in household operation costs was due almost entirely to substantial increases in water rates in several cities.

OTHER COMMODITIES  
AND SERVICES

The transportation index rose as a firmer market for used cars was reported in May. Sharp competition among service stations in a few cities brought about large reductions in local gasoline prices.

The apparel index rose slightly between April and May. Some scattered increases were reported in prices for men's street oxfords, reflecting recent advances in leather prices. Shoe repairs were also higher in some cities because of increases in costs of leather and rubber heels.

The medical care index advanced as higher fees for physicians' and surgeons' services were reported in some cities, and higher room rates were posted in a number of hospitals.

Higher prices for haircuts in one city and beauty shop services in a few others were responsible for the increase in the personal care index. Some stores reported reduced prices for television sets and radios to meet competition. Cigarette prices were up in a few cities.

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

Group	May 1955	April 1955	March 1955	May 1954	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 . . . . .	114.2	114.2	114.3	115.0	101.8	59.4
FOOD <sup>1/</sup> . . . . .	111.1	111.2	110.8	113.3	100.5	47.1
Food at home . . . . .	110.0	110.1	109.7	112.8	100.5	47.1
Cereals and bakery products . . . . .	123.8	123.9	123.9	121.3	102.7	57.2
Meats, poultry and fish . . . . .	102.1	103.0	102.3	111.0	106.1	41.6
Dairy products . . . . .	104.0	104.6	105.4	103.5	92.3	49.8
Fruits and vegetables . . . . .	120.2	117.5	112.0	114.6	102.5	46.3
Other foods at home . . . . .	108.4	109.4	111.9	114.5	94.1	48.4
HOUSING <sup>2/</sup> . . . . .	119.4	119.5	119.6	118.9	104.9	76.1
Rent . . . . .	130.3	129.9	130.0	128.3	108.7	86.6
Gas and electricity . . . . .	110.9	110.3	110.3	107.7	102.7	104.9
Solid fuels and fuel oil . . . . .	122.5	125.7	126.2	120.9	107.6	56.4
Housefurnishings . . . . .	103.7	104.5	104.6	105.9	97.4	53.4
Household operation . . . . .	119.0	118.1	117.9	117.2	99.6	68.4
APPAREL . . . . .	103.3	103.1	103.2	104.2	96.5	52.5
Men's and boys' . . . . .	105.7	105.5	105.6	107.3	98.1	4/
Women's and girls' . . . . .	97.3	97.1	97.4	98.5	93.3	4/
Footwear . . . . .	117.4	116.9	116.7	115.9	102.1	4/
Other apparel . . . . .	90.3	90.2	90.4	90.9	88.4	4/
TRANSPORTATION . . . . .	125.5	125.3	127.3	129.1	109.9	68.9
MEDICAL CARE . . . . .	127.5	127.3	127.0	125.1	105.4	72.6
PERSONAL CARE . . . . .	113.9	113.7	113.5	113.0	99.2	59.6
READING AND RECREATION . . . . .	106.5	106.6	106.6	106.4	102.5	63.0
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES <sup>3/</sup> . . . . .	119.9	119.8	119.8	120.1	103.7	70.6

PERCENT CHANGE TO MAY 1955 FROM:

	April 1955	March 1955	May 1954	June 1950	Year 1939
ALL ITEMS . . . . .	0	- 0.1	- 0.7	12.2	92.3
FOOD <sup>1/</sup> . . . . .	- 0.1	0.3	- 1.9	10.5	135.9
Food at home . . . . .	- 0.1	0.3	- 2.5	9.5	133.5
Cereals and bakery products . . . . .	- 0.1	- 0.1	- 2.1	20.5	116.4
Meats, poultry and fish . . . . .	- 0.9	- 0.2	- 8.0	- 3.8	145.4
Dairy products . . . . .	- 0.6	- 1.3	0.5	12.7	108.8
Fruits and vegetables . . . . .	2.3	7.3	4.9	17.3	159.6
Other foods at home . . . . .	- 0.9	- 3.1	- 5.3	15.2	124.0
HOUSING <sup>2/</sup> . . . . .	- 0.1	- 0.2	0.4	13.8	56.9
Rent . . . . .	0.3	0.2	1.6	19.9	50.5
Gas and electricity . . . . .	0.5	0.5	3.0	8.0	5.7
Solid fuels and fuel oil . . . . .	- 2.5	- 2.9	1.3	13.8	117.2
Housefurnishings . . . . .	- 0.3	- 0.9	- 2.1	6.5	94.2
Household operation . . . . .	0.8	0.9	1.5	19.5	74.0
APPAREL . . . . .	0.2	0.1	- 0.9	7.0	96.8
Men's and boys' . . . . .	0.2	0.1	- 1.5	7.7	4/
Women's and girls' . . . . .	0.2	- 0.1	- 1.2	4.3	4/
Footwear . . . . .	0.4	0.6	1.3	15.0	4/
Other apparel . . . . .	0.1	- 0.1	- 0.7	2.1	4/
TRANSPORTATION . . . . .	0.2	- 1.4	- 2.8	14.2	82.1
MEDICAL CARE . . . . .	0.2	0.4	1.9	21.0	75.6
PERSONAL CARE . . . . .	0.2	0.4	0.8	14.8	91.1
READING AND RECREATION . . . . .	- 0.1	- 0.1	0.1	3.9	69.0
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES <sup>3/</sup> . . . . .	0.1	0.1	- 0.2	15.6	69.8

<sup>1/</sup> Includes restaurant meals not shown separately.

<sup>2/</sup> Includes home purchase and other home-owner costs not shown separately.

<sup>3/</sup> Includes tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and "miscellaneous services" (such as legal services, banking fees, burial services, etc.).

<sup>4/</sup> Not available.

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

City	(1947-49 = 100)					(1935-39 = 100)
	May 1955	April 1955	May 1954	June 1950	Year 1939	May 1955 <sup>1/</sup>
U.S. CITY AVERAGE . . . . .	114.2	114.2	115.0	101.8	59.4	190.9
CITIES PRICED MONTHLY:						
Chicago . . . . .	117.2	116.9	117.3	102.8	58.6	199.6
Detroit . . . . .	116.4	116.2	116.9	102.8	59.0	196.5
Los Angeles . . . . .	115.4	114.5	115.9	101.3	60.4	192.8
New York . . . . .	111.8	112.3	112.9	100.9	60.1	185.0
Philadelphia . . . . .	115.5	115.8	115.3	101.6	59.2	192.2
CITIES PRICED IN FEBRUARY, MAY, AUGUST, NOVEMBER <sup>2/</sup>						
	May 1955	February 1955	May 1954	May 1950		May 1955
Cleveland . . . . .	115.3	114.9	115.3	100.4	59.2	196.5
Houston . . . . .	115.5	115.7	116.7	103.5	59.5	195.5
Saranton . . . . .	111.4	111.7	112.3	100.2	58.5	185.1
Seattle . . . . .	116.8	116.3	116.3	102.0	59.2	199.6
Washington, D. C. . . . .	113.5	113.2	113.7	101.6	60.4	186.4
CITIES PRICED IN JANUARY, APRIL, JULY, OCTOBER <sup>2/</sup>						
	April 1955	January 1955	April 1954	April 1950		April 1955
Boston . . . . .	113.4	113.0	112.9	101.2	61.0	182.6
Kansas City . . . . .	115.2	115.3	115.5	101.4	61.7	185.5
Minneapolis . . . . .	117.0	116.5	116.3	102.1 <sup>3/</sup>	60.7	193.8
Pittsburgh . . . . .	113.8	113.8	114.5	99.9	58.1	193.5
Portland, Oreg. . . . .	114.2	114.6	114.8	101.5	58.3	197.8
CITIES PRICED IN MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER, DECEMBER <sup>2/</sup>						
	March 1955	December 1954	March 1954	June 1950		March 1955
Atlanta . . . . .	115.3	115.7	117.0	101.3 <sup>4/</sup>	58.3	195.5
Baltimore . . . . .	114.9	114.8	114.8	101.6	57.9	197.5
Cincinnati . . . . .	113.4	113.3	114.2	101.2	58.4	191.0
St. Louis . . . . .	115.6	115.4	116.9	101.1	59.3	192.9
San Francisco . . . . .	115.6	115.7	116.5	100.9	58.6	197.6

<sup>1/</sup> These are the same indexes shown in column 1, converted to a base of 1935-39 = 100.

<sup>2/</sup> Foods, fuels, rents, and a few other items priced monthly; other commodities and services priced quarterly.

<sup>3/</sup> June 1950; formerly priced in March, June, September, December.

<sup>4/</sup> May 1950; formerly priced February, May, August, November.

TABLE 3. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- PERCENT CHANGES FROM APRIL 1955 TO MAY 1955  
U.S. City Average and Five Cities Priced Monthly  
All Items and Commodity Groups

City	All Items	Food	Housing	Apparel	Transportation	Medical Care	Personal Care	Reading and Recreation	Other Goods & Services
U.S. CITY AVERAGE . . . . .	0	- 0.1	- 0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	- 0.1	0.1
Chicago . . . . .	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.5	0	- 0.3	0	0
Detroit . . . . .	0.2	1.0	- 0.1	0	0.1	0.1	- 0.2	- 1.0	0.1
Los Angeles . . . . .	0.8	- 0.8	2.2	0.3	1.4	0	- 0.1	- 0.4	0.3
New York . . . . .	- 0.4	- 1.0	- 0.3	0	- 0.5	0.6	0.1	- 0.2	0
Philadelphia . . . . .	- 0.3	- 0.4	- 0.8	- 0.4	1.2	0	- 0.1	0.5	- 0.1

TABLE 4. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- ALL ITEMS AND COMMODITY GROUPS  
 May 1955 Indexes and Percent Changes, February 1955 to May 1955  
 U.S. City Average and 10 Cities Priced in May 1955

Group	U.S. CITY AVERAGE	Chicago	Cleveland	Detroit	Houston	Los Angeles	New York	Philadelphia	Scranton	Seattle	Washington, D.C.
May 1955 Indexes (1947-49 = 100)											
ALL ITEMS . . . . .	114.2	117.2	115.3	116.4	115.5	115.4	111.8	115.5	111.4	116.8	113.5
FOOD . . . . .	111.1	109.2	109.6	114.4	110.7	112.1	110.5	112.9	108.6	113.2	111.3
Food at home . . . . .	110.0	107.7	108.6	113.2	109.6	109.6	109.3	111.7	108.4	112.3	109.7
Cereals and bakery products . . . . .	123.8	118.8	120.1	120.0	118.1	127.9	128.0	120.9	117.4	127.8	122.0
Meats, poultry and fish . . . . .	102.1	96.9	100.8	100.3	101.3	101.8	104.0	104.9	102.0	101.6	99.3
Dairy products . . . . .	104.0	103.4	96.5	105.8	108.6	102.9	101.6	106.0	104.9	108.4	109.5
Fruits and vegetables . . . . .	120.2	118.6	119.3	137.2	119.2	116.0	113.4	124.4	117.0	126.7	117.7
Other foods at home . . . . .	108.4	113.9	112.3	110.0	108.2	108.1	109.5	108.0	105.6	108.9	108.0
HOUSING . . . . .	119.4	129.0	122.0	121.8	122.0	125.5	114.9	114.0	114.6	121.3	116.9
Rent . . . . .	130.3	-	-	-	-	139.2	-	-	123.3	-	123.5
Gas and electricity . . . . .	110.9	110.5	109.1	108.7	106.8	116.2	109.0	102.3	119.4	88.8	121.6
Solid fuels and fuel oil . . . . .	122.5	126.2	120.3	119.0	-	-	123.9	113.1	121.3	130.8	128.6
Housefurnishings . . . . .	103.7	105.5	102.5	107.6	99.2	105.8	103.6	105.0	99.9	104.8	105.4
Household operation . . . . .	119.0	121.1	113.8	112.0	127.0	124.5	119.3	114.3	109.9	114.5	119.4
APPAREL . . . . .	103.3	104.2	103.8	101.9	107.1	103.7	101.4	104.1	106.3	105.4	101.1
Men's and boys' . . . . .	105.7	109.6	108.5	106.8	105.5	107.4	105.7	104.3	107.2	108.8	104.7
Women's and girls' . . . . .	97.3	94.8	96.1	94.4	101.5	97.4	93.6	101.6	101.4	99.1	94.8
Footwear . . . . .	117.4	121.2	117.0	113.3	128.7	118.0	116.8	111.5	121.2	121.0	115.2
Other apparel . . . . .	90.3	92.6	92.7	87.1	90.7	82.4	92.9	91.1	91.8	85.9	90.1
TRANSPORTATION . . . . .	125.5	130.2	117.9	120.9	121.9	124.0	128.8	138.7	127.4	126.8	128.6
MEDICAL CARE . . . . .	127.5	128.0	136.6	132.5	124.5	121.4	126.1	135.1	119.7	130.7	118.4
PERSONAL CARE . . . . .	113.9	114.9	114.6	119.3	119.6	117.2	108.5	117.7	121.5	117.5	110.9
READING AND RECREATION . . . . .	106.5	113.1	114.3	107.7	108.2	96.9	104.7	113.0	118.5	109.0	105.3
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES . . . . .	119.9	118.1	118.1	124.8	119.2	114.6	121.0	123.4	115.1	128.4	129.9

Percent Change -- February 1955 to May 1955

ALL ITEMS . . . . .	- 0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	- 0.2	0.6	- 0.6	- 0.2	- 0.3	0.4	0.3
FOOD . . . . .	0.3	0.5	0.7	1.0	0.5	0.9	- 0.5	- 0.3	- 0.1	1.0	0.4
Food at home . . . . .	0.4	0.4	0.8	1.1	0.6	0.2	- 0.8	- 0.4	- 0.2	0.8	0.2
Cereals and bakery products . . . . .	0	- 1.6	- 0.4	0	- 0.5	0.1	- 0.2	- 0.1	- 0.9	0.3	- 0.4
Meats, poultry and fish . . . . .	- 0.4	0	1.1	- 1.0	1.6	0.7	- 2.1	- 1.4	0	- 0.3	- 0.8
Dairy products . . . . .	- 2.0	- 1.8	- 6.3	- 1.0	- 0.1	- 0.1	- 4.2	- 2.9	- 2.9	2.1	- 1.3
Fruits and vegetables . . . . .	8.6	9.4	12.9	12.3	5.4	3.9	7.9	9.5	8.9	6.1	8.5
Other foods at home . . . . .	- 3.3	- 3.1	- 2.5	- 2.8	- 2.6	- 3.0	- 3.3	- 4.3	- 4.3	- 2.5	- 3.5
HOUSING . . . . .	- 0.2	0.5	0.7	- 0.3	- 0.8	2.3	- 1.2	- 0.3	- 1.1	0.6	0.4
Rent . . . . .	0.5	-	-	-	-	<sup>1/</sup> - 0.3	-	-	<sup>1/</sup> 0.2	-	<sup>1/</sup> 0.4
Gas and electricity . . . . .	0.9	4.0	0	- 0.3	0	2.3	0.4	0	0	0.3	2.9
Solid fuels and fuel oil . . . . .	- 2.9	0	- 3.1	- 0.8	-	-	- 5.2	- 10.9	- 8.9	2.5	- 4.5
Housefurnishings . . . . .	- 1.0	- 1.0	- 0.2	0.4	- 2.1	- 1.1	- 1.8	- 1.9	- 0.4	1.3	0.2
Household operation . . . . .	1.1	0.1	1.8	1.4	0	15.1	0.3	- 0.3	0	0.3	2.1
APPAREL . . . . .	- 0.1	- 0.5	0.2	- 0.6	0.8	- 0.2	- 0.5	- 1.4	0.9	- 0.8	- 0.1
Men's and boys' . . . . .	0.1	- 0.6	0.6	- 1.1	0.6	- 0.7	0.2	- 0.3	0.4	- 0.5	- 0.5
Women's and girls' . . . . .	- 0.4	- 0.8	0.2	- 0.7	1.2	0.4	- 1.5	- 2.6	1.2	- 1.7	0
Footwear . . . . .	0.7	0.7	- 0.5	0.5	0.2	0	0.9	0.1	0.7	2.0	0.4
Other apparel . . . . .	- 0.3	- 0.3	0	- 0.3	0	- 0.7	- 0.3	- 1.8	0.3	- 1.0	0
TRANSPORTATION . . . . .	- 1.5	- 2.0	- 1.3	- 0.4	- 1.5	- 1.8	- 1.0	0.6	- 0.6	- 1.3	- 0.3
MEDICAL CARE . . . . .	0.6	0.5	4.3	0.2	3.8	- 1.1	0.9	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
PERSONAL CARE . . . . .	0.4	- 0.3	0.1	- 0.1	0	- 0.8	0.2	- 0.1	9.0	1.3	- 0.4
READING AND RECREATION . . . . .	0.1	- 0.1	- 1.8	- 0.2	- 1.4	- 0.7	0.6	0.2	0	1.5	1.0
OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES . . . . .	0.1	0.3	- 0.8	0.1	0.3	0.4	0	- 0.4	- 0.9	2.0	0.1

<sup>1/</sup> Change from November 1954 to May 1955.

TABLE 5. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX -- FOOD AND ITS SUBGROUPS  
 May 1955 Indexes and Percent Changes, April 1955 to May 1955  
 U. S. City Average and 20 Large Cities  
 (1947-49 = 100)

City	Total Food		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 . .	111.1	- 0.1	110.0	- 0.1	123.8	- 0.1	102.1	- 0.9	104.0	- 0.6	120.2	2.3	108.4	- 0.9
Atlanta . . . . .	111.1	0.3	109.5	0.4	117.6	- 0.3	106.0	- 0.9	108.9	0.8	120.6	2.9	101.5	0
Baltimore . . . . .	111.3	- 0.3	109.7	- 0.4	121.9	0	101.7	- 1.5	108.1	- 0.1	116.9	2.0	107.7	- 1.1
Boston . . . . .	108.8	- 0.2	107.2	- 0.3	119.2	0.1	99.7	- 0.9	104.1	- 1.1	114.5	2.2	104.0	- 1.0
Chicago . . . . .	109.2	0.2	107.7	0.1	118.8	- 0.1	96.9	- 0.3	103.4	- 2.0	118.6	3.9	113.9	- 0.7
Cincinnati . . . . .	112.5	0	111.5	- 0.1	121.9	- 1.2	103.7	- 0.2	106.4	0	118.8	2.8	113.7	- 1.4
Cleveland . . . . .	109.6	1.4	108.6	1.7	120.1	- 0.3	100.8	2.0	96.5	- 0.2	119.3	7.5	112.3	- 1.0
Detroit . . . . .	114.4	1.0	113.2	1.2	120.0	- 0.2	100.3	- 0.4	105.8	3.6	137.2	4.3	110.0	- 0.5
Houston . . . . .	110.7	- 0.4	109.6	- 0.4	118.1	- 0.5	101.3	0.1	108.6	- 0.1	119.2	- 0.3	108.2	- 1.0
Kansas City . . . . .	107.1	0.1	105.5	0	120.9	0.1	98.5	- 0.2	104.4	- 0.1	109.9	1.8	102.2	- 0.9
Los Angeles . . . . .	112.1	- 0.8	109.6	- 1.0	127.9	0	101.8	- 0.3	102.9	0	116.0	- 4.6	108.1	0
Minneapolis . . . . .	111.4	- 0.1	110.6	- 0.2	126.0	- 0.1	98.1	- 0.6	102.6	- 0.3	124.8	1.4	116.2	- 0.9
New York . . . . .	110.5	- 1.0	109.3	- 1.3	128.0	- 0.2	104.0	- 2.4	101.6	- 2.4	113.4	1.8	109.5	- 1.8
Philadelphia . . . . .	112.9	- 0.4	111.7	- 0.5	120.9	- 0.1	104.9	- 2.0	106.0	- 0.3	124.4	3.8	108.0	- 2.5
Pittsburgh . . . . .	111.3	- 0.2	110.5	- 0.2	123.9	- 0.5	98.8	- 0.5	106.8	- 0.1	118.2	2.2	116.7	- 1.4
Portland, Ore. . . . .	110.1	0.1	109.7	0.1	121.1	- 0.2	102.0	- 0.1	102.9	- 0.6	119.0	1.3	108.9	- 0.4
St. Louis . . . . .	112.5	0	110.1	0	118.8	- 0.1	102.3	- 0.2	91.3	1.1	127.2	1.0	117.2	- 0.9
San Francisco . . . . .	113.4	- 0.1	112.6	- 0.2	130.9	0	106.7	- 0.7	104.9	0.3	121.9	0.1	108.4	0
Scranton . . . . .	108.6	- 0.4	108.4	- 0.5	117.4	- 1.0	102.0	0	104.9	- 0.2	117.0	1.6	105.6	- 2.4
Seattle . . . . .	113.2	1.2	112.3	0.9	127.8	0.4	101.6	1.1	108.4	0.2	126.7	2.0	108.9	0.6
Washington, D.C. . . . .	111.3	- 0.2	109.7	- 0.5	122.0	- 0.2	99.3	- 1.2	109.5	- 0.5	117.7	2.2	108.0	- 1.8

TABLE 6. RETAIL FOOD PRICES FOR MAY 1955 AND APRIL 1955  
 U.S. City Average

Food and Unit	May 1955	April 1955	Food and Unit	May 1955	April 1955
CEREALS AND BAKERY PRODUCTS:			Fresh (continued)		
Flour, wheat	5 lb. 53.9	(Cents) 54.1	Grapefruit *	each 10.4	(Cents) 9.9
Biscuit mix	20 oz. 27.4	27.4	Peaches *	lb. 29.7	35.8
Corn meal	lb. 12.6	12.6	Strawberries *	pt. 29.7	35.8
Rice	lb. 17.8	17.8	Grapes, seedless *	lb. 29.7	35.8
Rolled oats	20 oz. 19.1	19.0	Watermelons *	lb. 29.7	35.8
Corn flakes	12 oz. 22.0	22.0	Potatoes	10 lb. 80.9	70.6
Bread, white	lb. 17.7	17.7	Sweetpotatoes	lb. 15.9	15.4
Soda crackers	lb. 27.1	27.0	Onions	lb. 8.5	8.5
Vanilla cookies	7 oz. 23.8	23.8	Carrots	lb. 12.5	12.7
MEATS, POULTRY AND FISH:			Canned		
Round steak	lb. 89.2	90.8	Orange juice	46 oz. can 33.0	32.8
Chuck roast	lb. 49.8	51.6	Peaches	#2 1/2 can 33.7	33.5
Rib roast	lb. 70.7	71.6	Pineapple	#2 can 32.8	32.8
Hamburger	lb. 39.6	39.9	Fruit cocktail	#303 can 26.4	26.5
Veal cutlets	lb. 109.6	110.1	Corn, cream style	#303 can 16.9	17.0
Pork chops, center cut	lb. 82.9	77.8	Peas, green	#303 can 21.5	21.5
Bacon, sliced	lb. 65.5	65.9	Tomatoes	#303 can 15.2	15.1
Ham, whole	lb. 60.4	58.9	Baby foods	4 1/2-5 oz. 9.7	9.7
Lamb, leg	lb. 67.4	68.7	Dried		
Frankfurters	lb. 53.0	53.3	Prunes	lb. 33.4	32.9
Luncheon meat, canned	12 oz. 43.7	44.3	Navy beans	lb. 18.8	18.9
Frying chickens, dressed	lb. 46.0	50.3	OTHER FOODS AT HOME:		
Frying chickens, ready-to-cook	lb. 57.5	61.7	Vegetable soup	11 oz. can 14.1	14.1
Ocean perch, fillet, frozen	lb. 43.0	42.9	Beans with pork	16 oz. can 14.8	14.9
Haddock, fillet, frozen	lb. 47.0	47.3	Pickles, sweet 1/2	7 1/2 oz. 28.1	28.2
Salmon, pink, canned	16 oz. 55.3	54.9	Catsup, tomato	14 oz. 22.4	22.3
Tuna fish, canned	7 oz. 37.6	37.7	Coffee	lb. 92.2	92.5
DAIRY PRODUCTS:			Tea		
Milk, fresh, (grocery)	qt. 21.4	21.6	Cola drink	carton of 6, 6 oz. 32.5	32.6
Milk, fresh, (delivered)	qt. 22.5	22.6	Shortening, hydrogenated	lb. 34.4	35.0
Ice cream	pt. 29.1	29.1	Margarine, colored	lb. 28.8	29.1
Butter	lb. 70.4	70.8	Lard	lb. 21.0	20.8
Cheese, American process	lb. 57.7	57.6	Salad dressing	pt. 35.3	35.4
Milk, evaporated	14 1/2 oz. can 13.7	13.7	Peanut butter	lb. 54.4	54.3
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:			Sugar		
Frozen			Corn syrup		
Strawberries	10 oz. 30.8	30.6	Grape jelly	12 oz. 26.0	25.9
Orange juice concentrate	6 oz. 18.0	17.9	Chocolate bar	7/8 oz. 4.6	4.6
Peas, green	16 oz. 19.5	19.6	Eggs, Grade A, large	doz. 53.2	54.9
Beans, green,	10 oz. 24.2	24.2	Gelatin, flavored	3-4 oz. 8.5	8.5
Fresh					
Apples	lb. 17.2	15.3			
Bananas	lb. 16.9	17.0			
Oranges, size 200	doz. 52.2	49.9			
Lemons	lb. 18.0	18.3			

\* Priced only in season.  
 1/Formerly published as sweet gherkins.

LS55-3525

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.

