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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR FEBRUARY 1956

The Consumer Price Index for United States cities remained unchanged at 114.6 (1947-49=100) between January and February 1956, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Although prices of most classes of consumer goods and services rose, the decline of 0.4 percent in food prices was enough to counterbalance the increases. The February index was 0.3 percent higher than a year earlier.

FOOD

The retail food price index was 108.8, 1.8 percent lower than a year ago, and down 0.4 percent from its January level. This marked the fifth consecutive monthly decline, and brought average food prices to their lowest point since December 1950. The average cost of restaurant meals was unchanged between January and February.

The chief factor in the decline in costs of food purchased for consumption at home was a sharp drop in egg prices. Small decreases were also reported for beef, frankfurters, fish, and a few individual items in other categories. The declines were partially offset by advances in prices of pork, poultry, fresh fruits and vegetables, canned and frozen orange juice, bakery products, and coffee.

The 12.3 percent decrease in egg prices was larger than the usual seasonal decline from January to February, with prices lower in all 46 cities surveyed. The decrease in part represents readjustments following the unusual price rise in December and the less than normal decline from December to January.

Beef prices dropped about 2 percent, reflecting ample supplies, but prices of pork chops, ham, and poultry rose. Fresh, frozen, and canned fish prices declined slightly.

Higher prices for apples and bananas led the 1.3 percent increase for fresh fruits. Costs of frozen and canned orange juice also advanced. Fresh vegetable prices averaged slightly higher as increases for potatoes (up 5.5 percent) and green beans (up 4.9 percent), were almost counterbalanced by substantial decreases in carrots, cabbage, and fresh tomatoes, which dropped 10.6 percent, 14.6 percent, and 2.6 percent, respectively.

Prices of bakery products advanced 0.4 percent, led by a fairly general rise averaging 2.3 percent for soda crackers. Coffee prices also rose slightly in a number of cities.

HOUSING

The rise of 0.1 percent in housing costs between January and February resulted primarily from higher prices for housefurnishings, as household textiles returned to regular prices after January sales. Prices of dinnerware and aluminum saucepans also advanced in several cities, but these increases were partially offset by price decreases for living room suites, dinette sets, and vacuum cleaners as January sales were carried over into February. Residential rents edged up 0.1 percent during the month. Household operation costs continued to advance as higher rates were reported for laundry and dry cleaning services in some cities. The gas and electricity subgroup was unchanged on the average, but prices of anthracite advanced 1.4 percent and fuel oil prices rose 0.3 percent.

OTHER COMMODITIES
AND SERVICES

Apparel prices rose 0.5 percent during the month, as price increases were reported for men's wool suits and cotton socks, women's rayon dresses and blouses, girls' cotton dresses, and women's wool and rayon suits. Footwear prices rose 0.7 percent, reflecting increases in costs of manufacturing shoes.

Transportation costs were up 0.1 percent over January, reflecting higher prices for gasoline and automobile repair services. Prices of used cars advanced 0.6 percent during the month, while new car prices declined 0.3 percent.

The medical care index rose 0.2 percent during the month and personal care was up 0.3 percent, as prices of men's haircuts were raised in one city and there were continued increases for toothpaste, face cream, and other toiletries. The rise of 0.2 percent in the reading and recreation component was due primarily to higher prices for movies and newspapers in a few cities.

NOTE: This release marks initial publication of two new subgroups of the Transportation group - Private Transportation and Public Transportation. They will be published regularly for the national index and for each of 20 large cities. The indexes of private transportation are based on prices for automotive items - new and used cars, gasoline and motor oil, automobile repairs, automobile insurance, tires, and state registration (license tag) fees. Public transportation is represented by fares on streetcars, subways, and urban buses, as well as coach class railroad fares. The indexes of public and private transportation have behaved dissimilarly since World War II; private transportation advanced 47.3 percent while the public transportation index rose 95.4 percent from 1946 to 1955. Indexes back to 1935 will be available in June.

TABLE 1: Consumer Price Index -- United States city average, all items and commodity groups
Indexes and percent changes for selected dates

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Group	Indexes (1947-49=100)					
	February 1956	January 1956	December 1955	February 1955	June 1950	Year 1939
	This month	Last month	2 months ago	Last year	Pre-Korea	Pre-World War II
All items -----	114.6	114.6	114.7	114.3	101.8	59.4
Food 1/ -----	108.8	109.2	109.5	110.8	100.5	47.1
Food at home -----	107.1	107.5	107.9	109.6	100.5	47.1
Cereals and bakery products --	124.3	123.9	123.9	123.8	102.7	57.2
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	93.6	93.3	94.6	102.5	106.1	41.6
Dairy products -----	107.3	107.3	107.7	106.1	92.3	49.8
Fruits and vegetables -----	113.3	112.6	110.7	110.7	102.5	46.3
Other foods at home -----	109.6	112.8	113.7	112.1	94.1	48.4
Housing 2/ -----	120.7	120.6	120.8	119.6	104.9	76.1
Rent -----	131.5	131.4	131.1	129.7	108.7	86.6
Gas and electricity -----	111.7	111.7	111.5	109.9	102.7	104.9
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	130.0	129.5	128.0	126.2	107.6	56.4
Housefurnishings -----	102.5	102.0	103.4	104.8	97.4	53.4
Household operation -----	121.4	121.2	120.7	117.7	99.6	68.4
Apparel -----	104.6	104.1	104.7	103.4	96.5	52.5
Men's and boys' -----	106.5	106.0	106.1	105.6	98.1	(4/)
Women's and girls' -----	98.3	97.9	99.1	97.7	93.3	(4/)
Footwear -----	121.3	120.4	119.8	116.6	102.1	(4/)
Other apparel -----	91.0	90.7	91.1	90.6	88.4	(4/)
Transportation -----	126.9	126.8	127.3	127.4	109.9	68.9
Public -----	170.5	170.3	167.8	163.4	117.9	81.3
Private -----	117.0	117.0	117.8	118.4	106.6	65.5
Medical care -----	130.9	130.7	130.2	126.8	105.4	72.6
Personal care -----	118.9	118.5	117.9	113.5	99.2	59.6
Reading and recreation -----	107.5	107.3	106.8	106.4	102.5	63.0
Other goods and services 3/ -----	120.9	120.8	120.6	119.8	103.7	70.6
Percent change to February 1956 from:						
	January 1956	December 1955	February 1955	June 1950	Year 1939	
All items -----	0	- 0.1	0.3	12.6	92.9	
Food 1/ -----	- 0.4	- .6	- 1.8	8.3	131.0	
Food at home -----	- .4	- .7	- 2.3	6.6	127.4	
Cereals and bakery products --	.3	.3	.4	21.0	117.3	
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	.3	- 1.1	- 8.7	-11.8	125.0	
Dairy products -----	0	- .4	1.1	16.3	115.5	
Fruits and vegetables -----	.6	2.3	2.3	10.5	144.7	
Other foods at home -----	- 2.8	- 3.6	- 2.2	16.5	126.4	
Housing 2/ -----	.1	- .1	.9	15.1	58.6	
Rent -----	.1	.3	1.4	21.0	51.8	
Gas and electricity -----	0	.2	1.6	8.8	6.5	
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	.4	1.6	3.0	20.8	130.5	
Housefurnishings -----	.5	- .9	- 2.2	5.2	91.9	
Household operation -----	.2	.6	3.1	21.9	77.5	
Apparel -----	.5	- .1	1.2	8.4	99.2	
Men's and boys' -----	.5	.4	.9	8.6	(4/)	
Women's and girls' -----	.4	- .8	.6	5.4	(4/)	
Footwear -----	.7	1.3	4.0	18.8	(4/)	
Other apparel -----	.3	- .1	.4	2.9	(4/)	
Transportation -----	.1	- .3	- .4	15.5	84.2	
Public -----	.1	1.6	4.3	44.6	109.7	
Private -----	0	- .7	- 1.2	9.8	78.6	
Medical care -----	.2	.5	3.2	24.2	80.3	
Personal care -----	.3	.8	4.8	19.9	99.5	
Reading and recreation -----	.2	.7	1.0	4.9	70.6	
Other goods and services 3/ -----	.1	.2	.9	16.6	71.2	

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	[1947-49=100]					[1935-39=100]
	February 1956	January 1956	February 1955	June 1950	Year 1939	February 1956 ^{1/}
United States city average -----	114.6	114.6	114.3	101.8	59.4	191.6
Cities priced monthly:						
Chicago -----	118.3	118.1	117.1	102.8	58.6	201.5
Detroit -----	116.4	116.3	116.3	102.8	59.0	196.5
Los Angeles -----	115.8	116.0	114.7	101.3	60.4	193.5
New York -----	112.1	112.1	112.5	100.9	60.1	185.5
Philadelphia -----	114.7	114.6	115.7	101.6	59.2	190.9
Cities priced in February, May, August, November ^{2/}	February 1956	November 1955	February 1955	May 1950	Year 1939	February 1956
Cleveland -----	115.7	116.2	114.9	100.4	59.2	197.2
Houston -----	116.6	116.7	115.7	103.5	59.5	197.4
Seranton -----	111.1	110.9	111.7	100.2	58.5	184.6
Seattle -----	116.2	117.4	116.3	102.0	59.2	198.6
Washington, D.C. -----	113.4	113.7	113.2	101.6	60.4	186.2
Cities priced in January, April, July, October ^{2/}	January 1956	October 1955	January 1955	April 1950	Year 1939	January 1956
Boston -----	114.6	114.5	113.0	101.2	61.0	184.5
Kansas City -----	115.5	116.2	115.3	101.4	61.7	186.0
Minneapolis -----	116.1	116.4	116.5	^{3/} 102.1	60.7	192.3
Pittsburgh -----	113.6	113.8	113.8	99.9	58.1	193.1
Portland, Oregon -----	116.3	116.2	114.6	101.5	58.3	201.4
Cities priced in March, June, September, December ^{2/}	December 1955	September 1955	December 1954	June 1950	Year 1939	December 1955
Atlanta -----	117.1	117.2	115.7	^{4/} 101.3	58.3	198.6
Baltimore -----	115.8	115.5	114.8	101.6	57.9	199.1
Cincinnati -----	114.2	113.7	113.3	101.2	58.4	192.3
St. Louis -----	116.1	116.5	115.4	101.1	59.3	193.8
San Francisco -----	115.9	115.6	115.7	100.9	58.6	198.1

^{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 January 1956 to February 1956
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
United States city average ---	0	- 0.4	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1
Chicago -----	0.2	.3	.2	- .1	.2	.1	.1	.3	0
Detroit -----	.1	- .2	.3	.4	- .2	.1	.3	- .1	.1
Los Angeles -----	- .2	- .1	- .1	.5	- .6	0	.5	- 1.5	- .1
New York -----	0	- .5	.1	.9	.7	- .1	0	0	0
Philadelphia -----	.1	- .2	.2	.8	- .4	- .1	.2	.1	0

TABLE 4: Consumer Price Index -- All items and commodity groups
February 1956 indexes and percent changes, November 1955 to February 1956
U.S. city average and 10 cities priced in February 1956

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Group	U.S. City Average	Chicago	Cleveland	Detroit	Houston	Los Angeles	New York	Philadelphia	Scranton	Seattle	Washington, D.C.
Indexes (1947-49=100)											
All items -----	114.6	118.3	115.7	116.4	116.6	115.8	112.1	114.7	111.1	116.2	113.4
Food -----	108.8	106.8	106.6	110.4	106.7	111.4	108.6	110.3	105.4	110.2	109.9
Food at home -----	107.1	104.7	104.4	108.6	105.3	108.2	106.6	108.7	104.5	109.0	107.8
Cereals and bakery products --	124.3	118.9	119.3	119.6	117.4	128.2	129.0	123.5	119.5	131.5	121.8
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	93.6	87.6	91.1	91.9	89.6	94.7	96.3	96.0	91.2	93.5	93.0
Dairy products -----	107.3	107.6	102.2	104.8	109.7	102.8	104.5	110.1	107.7	111.1	113.1
Fruits and vegetables -----	113.3	112.6	107.8	124.8	113.4	115.8	108.4	116.0	107.9	119.8	113.6
Other foods at home -----	109.6	116.0	113.0	111.6	108.9	110.7	109.7	108.5	106.3	106.6	109.1
Housing -----	120.7	131.2	122.5	122.7	125.2	126.2	116.7	114.1	116.4	121.3	115.5
Rent -----	131.5	--	147.3	--	138.0	--	--	117.3	--	138.3	--
Gas and electricity -----	111.7	113.8	109.1	114.4	106.8	116.2	110.1	101.8	119.1	88.8	123.1
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	130.0	134.8	129.4	123.8	--	--	135.8	129.1	134.0	131.8	138.9
Housefurnishings -----	102.5	101.4	101.1	107.5	100.7	101.8	102.2	105.2	97.5	101.6	99.4
Household operation -----	121.4	126.7	111.4	115.0	128.8	124.7	120.8	117.2	109.5	116.0	123.9
Apparel -----	104.6	107.9	105.0	102.0	106.9	104.7	103.8	103.7	106.2	106.2	102.6
Men's and boys' -----	106.5	112.8	108.0	109.2	105.6	108.4	106.5	103.5	108.4	109.5	105.6
Women's and girls' -----	98.3	99.2	97.6	91.8	100.3	97.3	96.5	100.2	99.9	99.0	95.7
Footwear -----	121.3	124.8	121.0	117.0	131.8	122.8	121.1	115.4	124.2	125.0	120.1
Other apparel -----	91.0	94.8	93.1	87.2	90.6	83.2	93.9	91.2	91.1	86.3	91.0
Transportation -----	126.9	131.1	122.3	124.3	125.4	124.6	131.3	135.3	128.6	124.8	130.4
Public -----	170.5	165.3	164.4	142.7	161.7	150.8	186.7	186.0	189.3	175.8	153.3
Private -----	117.0	116.0	113.5	120.6	120.0	120.3	111.5	114.6	114.6	113.3	123.9
Medical care -----	130.9	135.1	138.3	137.5	127.7	126.4	126.6	136.1	120.8	135.0	122.8
Personal care -----	118.9	122.4	128.8	127.6	128.5	119.4	111.4	125.2	121.9	119.3	117.5
Reading and recreation -----	107.5	115.3	115.4	108.9	112.1	95.0	104.7	113.4	120.5	110.4	106.8
Other goods and services -----	120.9	117.5	120.0	124.0	122.3	116.1	121.0	125.2	116.6	128.1	129.9
Percent change from November 1955 to February 1956											
All items -----	- 0.3	- 0.7	- 0.4	- 0.3	- 0.1	- 0.4	- 0.4	- 0.3	0.2	- 1.0	- 0.3
Food -----	- .9	- .9	- .7	- 1.3	- 1.3	0	- 1.2	- 1.0	- .6	- .6	0
Food at home -----	- 1.0	- 1.1	- 1.1	- 1.6	- 1.5	- .1	- 1.7	- 1.3	- .6	- .8	0
Cereals and bakery products --	.3	.1	.2	.4	.3	.2	.2	.6	.6	3.2	.1
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	- 3.6	- 4.6	- 2.6	- 4.3	- 5.7	- 3.0	- 3.2	- 2.6	- 3.2	- 6.0	- 1.3
Dairy products -----	- .5	2.0	- 2.2	- .7	0	- .1	- 2.6	- 2.4	.2	1.1	.3
Fruits and vegetables -----	3.9	3.3	4.4	2.2	2.3	3.7	4.1	5.1	7.9	5.9	7.5
Other foods at home -----	- 3.1	- 2.8	- 3.0	- 3.4	- 1.2	- .4	- 4.3	- 4.5	- 4.4	- 3.2	- 3.9
Housing -----	- .2	- .8	- .6	- .1	.6	- .6	.2	0	.3	- .5	- .8
Rent -----	.5	--	1/1.9	--	1/ .3	--	--	1/ .7	--	1/ .4	--
Gas and electricity -----	.2	3.2	0	.2	.1	0	.3	0	0	0	.3
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.0	--	--	7.3	5.7	1.4	0	4.0
Housefurnishings -----	- 1.9	- 6.0	- .3	- .7	- 1.5	- 2.7	- 2.3	- .6	- 1.2	- 2.1	- 1.2
Household operation -----	.7	2.1	0	.9	.8	- .3	1.1	0	- .2	.6	.8
Apparel -----	- .1	- .8	.6	.4	.2	.5	- .4	- 2.2	.5	- .8	.5
Men's and boys' -----	.5	.4	.3	1.8	2.0	.5	.6	.3	.6	.2	.5
Women's and girls' -----	- 1.0	- 2.0	.3	- 1.3	- 1.2	.3	- 1.9	- 5.0	.1	- 2.2	.1
Footwear -----	1.8	.2	1.9	2.3	.8	1.4	2.4	2.1	1.0	.8	1.9
Other apparel -----	0	- .4	.3	.3	0	.6	- .3	- 1.3	.1	- 1.1	.6
Transportation -----	- 1.2	- 1.7	- 1.7	- .6	- .6	- 2.0	.2	- .1	2.1	- 3.9	- .8
Public -----	1.6	0	0	0	0	0	4.5	6.5	0	0	0
Private -----	- 1.8	- 2.1	- 2.1	- .6	- .7	- 2.4	- 1.2	- 2.1	2.4	- 4.3	- .9
Medical care -----	.8	.9	.1	.1	.2	1.5	.1	.4	.1	- 3.0	.2
Personal care -----	1.2	.4	1.0	.9	.2	1.0	.4	7.0	.2	.4	.8
Reading and recreation -----	.7	.6	.5	.1	1.8	- 1.3	.3	1.4	- .2	.5	.9
Other goods and services -----	.2	- .1	.1	0	0	- .1	- .1	.2	.2	- .2	- .2

1/ Change from August 1955 to February 1956.

TABLE 5: Consumer Price Index -- Food and its subgroups
February 1956 indexes and percent changes, January 1956 to February 1956
U.S. city average and 20 large cities
[1947-49=100]

City	Total food		Total food at home		Cereals and bakery products		Meats, poultry, and fish		Dairy products		Fruits and 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 ---	108.8	- 0.4	107.1	- 0.4	124.3	0.3	93.6	0.3	107.3	0	113.3	0.6	109.6	- 2.8
Atlanta -----	107.9	.3	105.9	.3	118.8	.8	96.2	1.1	108.7	- 0.1	113.9	.3	102.4	- 2.9
Baltimore -----	109.9	.5	107.2	.6	121.3	.1	95.0	.2	108.9	.1	111.4	- 1.0	109.4	- 2.2
Boston -----	107.6	.7	104.8	.9	121.9	- .2	92.5	- 1.4	108.9	0	108.2	1.5	103.2	- 3.4
Chicago -----	106.8	.3	104.7	.3	118.9	0	87.6	.7	107.6	0	112.6	3.7	116.0	- 2.0
Cincinnati -----	109.5	.7	107.7	.8	123.8	0	93.9	.9	110.7	.4	110.2	- 2.3	114.7	- 2.8
Cleveland -----	106.6	.5	104.4	.9	119.3	.3	91.1	.2	102.2	- 2.7	107.8	.7	113.0	- 2.4
Detroit -----	110.4	.2	108.6	.2	119.5	.4	91.9	.4	104.8	- .3	124.8	1.0	111.6	- 2.0
Houston -----	106.7	.3	105.3	.2	117.4	- .2	88.6	.8	109.7	- .2	113.4	.4	108.9	- 1.9
Kansas City -----	104.7	.2	102.7	.2	120.5	.2	88.7	2.1	107.5	0	107.3	- .9	102.8	- 2.4
Los Angeles -----	111.4	.1	108.2	.1	128.2	.2	94.7	.1	102.8	.1	115.8	1.3	110.7	- 1.8
Minneapolis -----	111.2	0	110.4	0	125.9	.4	92.2	1.2	111.2	.5	122.8	1.6	118.2	- 3.0
New York -----	108.6	.5	106.6	.7	129.0	.2	96.3	- .3	104.5	- .1	108.4	.9	109.7	- 3.3
Philadelphia -----	110.3	.2	108.7	.3	123.5	.3	96.0	1.1	110.1	0	116.0	.9	108.5	- 3.5
Pittsburgh -----	109.2	.2	108.0	.3	125.3	.3	91.4	.9	110.0	.5	110.1	.2	118.7	- 2.6
Portland, Oreg. -----	110.2	0	108.8	.1	125.1	.4	93.6	.2	108.9	.3	117.0	1.4	111.4	- 1.8
St. Louis -----	109.7	.5	107.3	.5	119.2	.3	91.4	.9	100.4	- .5	120.6	- .7	118.5	- 2.2
San Francisco -----	111.7	.5	110.3	.6	130.5	- .2	100.7	.6	105.7	.3	120.1	.8	107.0	- 4.0
Scranton -----	105.4	.8	104.5	.8	119.5	.2	91.2	.4	107.7	0	107.9	- .2	106.3	- 3.9
Seattle -----	110.2	.5	109.0	.5	131.5	3.1	93.5	- .4	111.1	.3	119.8	.4	106.6	- 3.7
Washington, D.C. -----	109.9	.5	107.8	.6	121.8	.2	93.0	1.5	113.1	0	113.6	- .9	109.1	- 3.4

TABLE 6: Consumer Price Index -- Average retail prices of selected foods
U.S. city average

Food and unit	February 1956	January 1956	Food and unit	February 1956	January 1956
Cereals and bakery products:	Cents	Cents	Fresh—Continued	Cents	Cents
Flour, wheat ----- 5 lb.	53.0	53.0	Grapefruit * ----- each	9.5	9.8
Biscuit mix ----- 20 oz.	26.9	26.9	Peaches * ----- lb.		
Corn meal ----- lb.	12.5	12.5	Strawberries * ----- pt.		
Rice ----- lb.	17.2	17.2	Grapes, seedless * ----- lb.		
Rolled oats ----- 20 oz.	19.2	19.2	Watermelons * ----- lb.		
Corn flakes ----- 12 oz.	21.8	21.9	Potatoes ----- 10 lb.	54.8	51.9
Bread, white ----- lb.	17.6	17.6	Sweet potatoes ----- lb.	11.8	11.8
Soda crackers ----- lb.	27.5	26.9	Onions ----- lb.	7.9	8.2
Vanilla cookies ----- 7 oz.	23.8	23.6	Carrots ----- lb.	14.1	15.8
Meats, poultry, and fish:			Lettuce ----- head	13.7	13.6
Round steak ----- lb.	83.0	84.9	Celery ----- lb.	13.1	13.1
Chuck roast ----- lb.	45.0	46.4	Cabbage ----- lb.	8.2	9.6
Rib roast ----- lb.	65.9	67.2	Tomatoes ----- lb.	32.6	33.5
Hamburger ----- lb.	37.8	38.5	Beans, green ----- lb.	32.8	31.3
Veal cutlets ----- lb.	112.4	110.5	Canned:		
Pork chops, center cut ----- lb.	69.2	64.8	Orange juice ----- 40-oz. can	35.5	35.0
Bacon, sliced ----- lb.	53.9	54.4	Peaches ----- #2 can	34.9	34.9
Ham, whole ----- lb.	55.9	55.5	Pineapple ----- #2 can	33.4	33.4
Lamb, leg ----- lb.	64.4	64.1	Fruit cocktail ----- #303 can	26.2	26.4
Frankfurters ----- lb.	51.3	51.9	Corn, cream style ----- #303 can	17.8	17.8
Luncheon meat, canned ----- 12 oz.	40.7	41.1	Peas, green ----- #303 can	21.6	21.6
Frying chickens, ready-to-cook ----- lb.	50.3	49.5	Tomatoes ----- #303 can	15.2	15.1
Ocean perch, fillet, frozen ----- lb.	41.8	41.9	Baby foods ----- 4 to 5 oz.	9.7	9.6
Haddock, fillet, frozen ----- lb.	46.3	46.1	Dried:		
Salmon, pink, canned ----- 16 oz.	58.9	58.9	Prunes ----- lb.	35.5	35.1
Tuna fish, canned ----- 6 to 8 oz.	34.0	34.3	Beans ----- lb.	16.4	16.6
Dairy products:			Other foods at home:		
Milk, fresh, (grocery) ----- qt.	22.2	22.2	Vegetable soup ----- 11-oz. can	14.0	14.1
Milk, fresh, (delivered) ----- qt.	23.6	23.7	Beans with pork ----- 10-oz. can	14.6	14.6
Ice cream ----- pt.	28.8	28.7	Pickles, sweet ----- 7 oz.	26.9	27.0
Butter ----- lb.	70.8	70.9	Catsup, tomato ----- 14 oz.	22.7	22.7
Cheese, American process ----- lb.	57.0	57.0	Coffee ----- lb. can	96.2	95.8
Milk, evaporated ----- 14-oz. can	13.8	13.8	Tea bags ----- pkg. of 10	23.1	23.7
Fruits and vegetables:			Cola drink, carton ----- 36 oz.	32.3	32.2
Frozen:			Shortening, hydrogenated ----- 3 lb.	88.6	88.5
Strawberries ----- 10 oz.	30.2	30.4	Margarine, colored ----- lb.	28.0	28.0
Orange juice concentrate ----- 6 oz.	19.4	18.9	Lard ----- lb.	18.7	18.7
Peas, green ----- 10 oz.	21.0	21.2	Salad dressing ----- pt.	34.6	34.6
Beans, green ----- 10 oz.	23.4	23.5	Peanut butter ----- lb.	53.6	53.9
Fresh:			Sugar ----- 5 lb.	52.4	52.4
Apples ----- lb.	13.7	13.3	Corn syrup ----- 24 oz.	23.5	23.6
Bananas ----- lb.	17.2	16.8	Grape jelly ----- 12 oz.	26.1	26.0
Oranges, size 200 ----- doz.	50.1	49.8	Chocolate bar ----- 1 oz.	4.5	4.5
Lemons ----- lb.	18.4	19.5	Eggs, Grade A, large ----- doz.	59.2	67.5
			Gelatin, flavored ----- 3 to 4 oz.	8.5	8.5

* Priced only in season.

NOTE: Prices for January 1956 and subsequent dates are not comparable with prices previously published because of a revision in weights for chain and independent stores. See "Retail Food Prices by Cities, February 1956," for a description of the revision.

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.

