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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR DECEMBER 1956  
AND YEAR-END SUMMARY

Consumer prices in United States cities advanced 0.2 percent between November and December 1956, according to the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Higher housing costs were chiefly responsible for the increase. Prices of food and apparel were unchanged on the average, while transportation costs declined slightly. The December Consumer Price Index reached a new high of 118.0 (1947-49=100), 2.9 percent above a year ago.

**FOOD** The food index remained at 112.9 percent of the 1947-49 average, 3.1 percent higher than a year earlier, but 3.2 percent below the August 1952 peak. Between November and December food prices generally reflected their usual seasonal movement, with increases reported for fresh vegetables and decreases for beef and eggs.

Prices of fresh tomatoes rose 29.9 percent and green beans were up 17.2 percent as unfavorable weather conditions retarded or damaged Florida crops. Most other fresh vegetables were also higher, but lettuce prices dropped 13.3 percent. Prices of fresh fruit were down 0.2 percent as seasonally lower prices for oranges and grapefruit offset higher prices for apples. The index for frozen and canned fruits and vegetables declined, due primarily to lower prices for orange juice.

Prices of all cuts of beef declined in response to large supplies: round steak, 3.8 percent; chuck roast, 3.3 percent; rib roast, 2.7 percent; and hamburger, 1.0 percent. Pork prices advanced 0.4 percent on the average, with higher prices for bacon and ham more than offsetting a decline of 2.0 percent for pork chops.

Egg prices decreased 4.4 percent to an average of 58 cents a dozen. Lower prices for coffee were reported for the first time since January 1956.

**HOUSING** All components of the housing index advanced. Rent increases were reported in most cities surveyed and home maintenance and repair costs continued to advance. Prices of anthracite coal rose over 5 percent and fuel oil prices were up 1 percent. Bills for gas and electricity averaged 0.2 percent higher. Increased prices for wool carpeting, mattresses, kitchenware, and some appliances were reflected in an advance of 0.3 percent in the housefurnishings index. Charges for laundry, dry cleaning, and domestic service continued to increase.

**OTHER COMMODITIES AND SERVICES** The reading and recreation index rose 0.3 percent, due primarily to higher charges for movie admissions. Prices of television sets and repair services also advanced. Rates for group hospitalization insurance, and hospital and other medical care services continued upward. Higher prices were recorded for men's haircuts and some cosmetics and toiletries.

Moderately lower prices for new and used cars, and for gasoline (due to competitive price cutting in widely scattered cities) more than offset advances for automobile repair services and tires, resulting in a decline of 0.2 percent for private transportation. The public transportation index, however, rose 0.4 percent as transit fares were increased in Kansas City.

YEAR-END  
SUMMARY

In the early months of 1956, consumer prices continued to show the stability which had characterized their movement for the past two years. Prices of food and other commodities generally declined during this 2-year period, while rents and other consumer services continued their long upward movement. In March 1956, however, food prices reversed their trend and by July had advanced 5.5 percent as the usual seasonal rise in prices of fresh fruits and vegetables was accentuated by unfavorable growing weather in this country and heavy demand for exports stimulated by severe European crop damage. Reflecting this increase in food prices and the continuing advance in the costs of services the Consumer Price Index rose 2.1 percent between February and July to reach new record high levels. In August, food prices dropped 1.5 percent as supplies of fresh produce improved and the food index thereafter remained virtually unchanged through December.

During the latter part of 1956, after food prices had leveled off, prices of all other major groups of goods and services rose every month almost without exception. In September the most important upward pressure was in the apparel group as fall and winter clothing came back on the market at prices substantially higher than at the end of the previous season. In October and November, new model automobiles were introduced at higher cost to the consumer and at the end of the year were 6.5 percent higher than a year earlier.

At the year's end the Consumer Price Index was 2.9 percent higher than in December 1955. Food prices had advanced 3.1 percent; housing, 2.2 percent; apparel, 2.2 percent; transportation, 4.6 percent; medical care, 3.5 percent; personal care, 3.3 percent; reading and recreation, 2.3 percent; and other goods and services, 2.2 percent.

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

Group	Indexes (1947-49=100)					
	December 1956	November 1956	October 1956	December 1955	June 1950	Year 1939
	This month	Last month	2 months ago	Last year	Pre-Korea	Pre-World War II
All items -----	118.0	117.8	117.7	114.7	101.8	59.4
Food <sup>1/</sup> -----	112.9	112.9	113.1	109.5	100.5	47.1
Food at home -----	111.2	111.3	111.7	107.9	100.5	47.1
Cereals and bakery products --	127.4	127.0	126.8	123.9	102.7	57.2
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	98.0	98.8	100.8	94.6	106.1	41.6
Dairy products -----	111.3	111.1	110.7	107.7	92.3	49.8
Fruits and vegetables -----	117.4	115.8	113.9	110.7	102.5	46.3
Other foods at home -----	114.2	115.2	115.8	113.7	94.1	48.4
Housing <sup>2/</sup> -----	123.5	123.0	122.8	120.8	104.9	76.1
Rent -----	134.2	133.8	133.4	131.1	108.7	86.6
Gas and electricity -----	112.0	111.8	112.0	111.5	102.7	104.9
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	136.1	134.3	132.9	128.0	107.6	56.4
Housefurnishings -----	104.1	103.8	103.6	103.4	97.4	53.4
Household operation -----	124.8	124.5	124.2	120.7	99.6	68.4
Apparel -----	107.0	107.0	106.8	104.7	96.5	52.5
Men's and boys' -----	108.6	108.4	108.2	106.1	98.1	50.8
Women's and girls' -----	100.3	100.4	100.1	99.1	93.3	54.5
Footwear -----	126.4	126.2	126.2	119.8	102.1	50.3
Other apparel -----	92.2	92.1	92.1	91.1	88.4	40.6
Transportation -----	133.1	133.2	132.6	127.3	109.9	70.2
Public -----	174.1	173.4	173.0	167.8	117.9	81.3
Private -----	123.3	123.5	122.9	117.8	106.6	65.5
Medical care -----	134.7	134.5	134.1	130.2	105.4	72.6
Personal care -----	121.8	121.4	120.8	117.9	99.2	59.6
Reading and recreation -----	109.3	109.0	108.5	106.8	102.5	63.0
Other goods and services <sup>3/</sup> -----	123.3	123.2	123.0	120.6	103.7	70.6

  

Group	Percent change to December 1956 from:					
	November 1956	October 1956	December 1955	June 1950	Year 1939	
All items -----	0.2	0.3	2.9	15.9	98.7	
Food <sup>1/</sup> -----	0	-.2	3.1	12.3	139.7	
Food at home -----	-.1	-.4	3.1	10.6	136.1	
Cereals and bakery products --	.3	.5	2.8	24.1	122.7	
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	-.8	-2.8	3.6	-7.6	135.6	
Dairy products -----	.2	.5	3.3	20.6	123.5	
Fruits and vegetables -----	1.4	3.1	6.1	14.5	153.6	
Other foods at home -----	-.9	-1.4	.4	21.4	136.0	
Housing <sup>2/</sup> -----	.4	.6	2.2	17.7	62.3	
Rent -----	.3	.6	2.4	23.5	55.0	
Gas and electricity -----	.2	0	.4	9.1	6.8	
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	1.3	2.4	6.3	26.5	141.3	
Housefurnishings -----	.3	.5	.7	6.9	94.9	
Household operation -----	.2	.5	3.4	25.3	82.5	
Apparel -----	0	.2	2.2	10.9	103.8	
Men's and boys' -----	.2	.4	2.4	10.7	113.8	
Women's and girls' -----	-.1	.2	1.2	7.5	84.0	
Footwear -----	.2	.2	5.5	23.8	151.3	
Other apparel -----	.1	.1	1.2	4.3	127.1	
Transportation -----	-.1	.4	4.6	21.1	89.6	
Public -----	.4	.6	3.8	47.7	114.1	
Private -----	-.2	.3	4.7	15.7	88.2	
Medical care -----	.1	.4	3.5	27.8	85.5	
Personal care -----	.3	.8	3.3	22.8	104.4	
Reading and recreation -----	.3	.7	2.3	6.6	73.5	
Other goods and services <sup>3/</sup> -----	.1	.2	2.2	18.9	74.6	

<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.).

TABLE 2: Consumer Price Index — All items indexes for selected dates  
U.S. city average and 20 large cities  
(1947-49=100)

City	December 1956	November 1956	December 1955	June 1950	Year 1939
United States city average	1/ 118.0	117.8	114.7	101.8	59.4
Cities priced monthly: 2/					
Chicago	121.0	121.0	118.5	102.8	58.6
Detroit	120.2	120.6	116.7	102.8	59.0
Los Angeles	119.4	119.1	116.3	101.3	60.4
New York	115.5	115.6	112.0	100.9	60.1
Philadelphia	118.6	118.2	114.8	101.6	59.2
Cities priced in March, June, September, December 3/	December 1956	September 1956	December 1955	June 1950	Year 1939
Atlanta	119.5	118.9	117.1	4/ 101.3	58.3
Baltimore	119.5	117.5	115.8	101.6	57.9
Cincinnati	117.5	117.1	114.2	101.2	58.4
St. Louis	119.1	118.1	116.1	101.1	59.3
San Francisco	121.6	119.0	115.9	100.9	58.6
Cities priced in February, May, August, November 3/	November 1956	August 1956	November 1955	May 1950	Year 1939
Cleveland	120.0	119.1	116.2	100.4	59.2
Houston	119.7	118.2	116.7	103.5	59.5
Scranton	114.9	113.5	110.9	100.2	58.5
Seattle	120.2	118.8	117.4	102.0	59.2
Washington, D.C.	115.9	115.7	113.7	101.6	60.4
Cities priced in January, April, July, October 3/	October 1956	July 1956	October 1955	April 1950	Year 1939
Boston	119.3	117.8	114.5	101.2	61.0
Kansas City	118.9	117.6	116.2	101.4	61.7
Minneapolis	117.4	117.7	116.4	5/ 102.1	60.7
Pittsburgh	118.2	117.3	113.8	99.9	58.1
Portland, Oregon	119.5	118.6	116.2	101.5	58.3

1/ This index on the base of 1935-39=100 is 197.3.

2/ Rents priced bimonthly.

3/ Foods, fuels, and a few other items priced monthly; rents and other commodities and services priced quarterly.

4/ May 1950.

5/ June 1950.

TABLE 3: Consumer Price Index — Percent changes from November 1956 to December 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	0.2	0	0.4	0	- 0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.1
Chicago	0	- 0.5	.4	0.1	- .4	.1	.3	1.3	0
Detroit	- .3	- 1.0	.2	- .8	- .2	.1	.1	.5	- .1
Los Angeles	.3	.3	.2	.2	.2	- .2	.2	.4	.4
New York	- .1	- .6	.2	- .1	0	0	.1	.2	- .1
Philadelphia	.3	.3	.7	.2	.1	0	0	- .1	.1

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

Group	U.S. City Average	Atlanta	Balti- more	Chicago	Cincin- nati	Detroit	Los Angeles	New York	Phila- delphia	St. Louis	San Francisco
	Indexes (1947-49=100)										
All items -----	118.0	119.5	119.5	121.0	117.5	120.2	119.4	115.5	118.6	119.1	121.6
Food -----	112.9	111.1	114.8	109.8	113.9	114.7	116.0	112.6	115.2	114.5	116.3
Food at home -----	111.2	109.8	111.0	107.6	112.1	112.7	112.6	111.0	113.4	110.4	114.9
Cereals and bakery products --	127.4	119.2	126.6	121.3	124.8	120.2	131.4	131.1	130.6	122.7	138.2
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	98.0	99.7	99.3	90.8	99.8	95.1	100.5	100.6	100.6	94.6	103.5
Dairy products -----	111.3	112.5	112.5	111.2	114.2	112.8	105.4	109.7	116.1	102.4	113.2
Fruits and vegetables -----	117.4	119.8	112.1	114.1	114.3	128.1	122.1	113.7	118.2	122.8	121.4
Other foods at home -----	114.2	107.4	114.2	119.2	119.6	116.4	114.0	113.6	112.8	122.9	112.7
Housing -----	123.5	128.5	120.2	132.7	122.7	127.1	128.7	119.6	118.0	122.4	124.1
Rent -----	134.2	135.5	129.8	—	138.6	146.0	—	121.9	—	140.9	137.2
Gas and electricity -----	112.0	119.4	100.0	113.8	116.8	111.6	118.0	110.8	103.4	103.8	136.3
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	136.1	127.0	137.9	137.5	141.0	127.2	—	145.9	138.7	147.5	—
Housefurnishings -----	104.1	108.8	100.2	101.8	99.1	109.2	104.0	104.0	107.6	102.4	108.5
Household operation -----	124.8	133.7	117.9	130.8	131.6	117.3	128.1	124.7	122.5	128.3	118.9
Apparel -----	107.0	111.9	105.9	110.0	105.5	103.6	107.2	106.1	107.8	104.6	106.9
Men's and boys' -----	108.6	113.1	103.9	114.8	105.7	110.5	111.5	107.9	105.5	107.9	107.9
Women's and girls' -----	100.3	105.3	101.3	100.1	98.4	92.6	98.7	99.0	104.8	95.6	100.7
Footwear -----	126.4	132.1	126.8	130.6	133.4	122.4	128.0	125.4	122.0	125.4	129.0
Other apparel -----	92.2	92.7	96.3	96.0	88.7	87.3	84.4	95.5	94.3	96.2	89.4
Transportation -----	133.1	130.7	145.3	139.3	128.6	130.0	130.7	136.8	140.8	139.2	148.7
Public -----	174.1	163.1	186.6	166.5	163.9	144.3	152.9	187.9	186.7	187.9	180.6
Private -----	123.3	124.4	127.4	124.9	119.0	126.9	126.9	117.5	120.6	121.6	135.5
Medical care -----	134.7	129.7	144.0	138.6	137.6	144.0	127.8	128.0	138.1	152.4	135.9
Personal care -----	121.8	127.0	120.1	124.6	124.8	129.0	120.4	114.4	127.8	119.2	117.9
Reading and recreation -----	109.3	109.8	118.9	117.0	100.3	110.2	97.6	107.5	115.0	94.3	112.3
Other goods and services -----	123.3	128.9	128.6	119.7	121.1	124.7	120.6	123.5	125.6	124.5	119.9
	Percent change from September 1956 to December 1956										
All items -----	0.8	0.5	1.7	0.6	0.3	0.4	1.4	0.3	0.2	0.8	2.2
Food -----	-.2	-.7	.3	-.9	-1.4	-.9	2.0	-.7	-.6	-.2	.9
Food at home -----	-.4	-1.0	-.8	-1.3	-1.6	-1.5	2.2	-.8	-.8	-1.0	.7
Cereals and bakery products --	.6	1.4	3.6	.6	0	0	.3	.5	.5	1.7	.6
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	-3.3	-3.7	-3.3	-4.8	-3.5	-5.1	-.2	-3.5	-2.5	-3.6	-1.5
Dairy products -----	1.4	-.1	2.8	.9	.3	.5	0	2.4	3.8	-3.5	2.4
Fruits and vegetables -----	2.3	-1.4	-2.9	2.1	-.2	2.8	9.2	1.5	-.4	3.4	3.1
Other foods at home -----	-1.0	.4	-1.0	-1.8	-2.3	-2.3	1.8	-2.7	-3.1	-.9	.2
Housing -----	.8	1.2	3.5	.6	.8	.8	.6	.8	.2	.3	2.2
Rent -----	.6	.2	.4	—	1.5	1/ .2	—	1/ .4	—	.5	1.0
Gas and electricity -----	-.2	0	0	0	.2	-1.3	1.5	.5	0	0	0
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	4.3	5.7	6.1	1.6	3.7	2.7	—	7.1	9.9	2.1	—
Housefurnishings -----	.8	.6	2.0	-.5	2/ .3	2.0	1.0	.8	-.2	1.3	2.6
Household operation -----	.9	.1	.6	1.2	.8	.2	.3	1.1	2.1	.6	6.7
Apparel -----	.5	-.4	-.6	.1	-.2	-1.1	0	-.3	0	-.1	.9
Men's and boys' -----	.3	.1	.2	.6	-.7	-.3	0	-.4	-.3	-.6	.8
Women's and girls' -----	.7	-1.2	-1.7	-.7	-.2	-2.4	0	-.8	.1	-.9	.9
Footwear -----	.3	.7	.9	1.0	.7	.9	.2	.2	.2	.6	1.6
Other apparel -----	.2	-.3	0	0	-.1	-.6	0	-.1	.3	.2	.4
Transportation -----	3.5	1.4	3.8	4.1	3.5	2.8	3.5	2.9	2.8	3.6	5.4
Public -----	.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private -----	3.9	1.6	4.7	5.1	4.1	3.3	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.6	6.2
Medical care -----	.5	.4	.7	1.3	.1	.5	.1	.1	0	6.1	.3
Personal care -----	1.1	1.2	3.0	.5	4.6	.6	.9	1.6	0	.1	1.2
Reading and recreation -----	.8	.1	-1.1	1.2	.1	1.9	.5	.7	.1	1.8	4.5
Other goods and services -----	.5	2.1	1.3	1.7	-.2	.1	.7	-.1	.2	.2	1.3

1/ Change from October 1956 to December 1956.  
 2/ Based on corrected index for September, 98.8.

TABLE 5: Consumer Price Index -- Food and its subgroups  
December 1956 indexes and percent changes, November 1956 to December 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 ---	112.9	0	111.2	- 0.1	127.4	0.3	98.0	- 0.8	111.3	0.2	117.4	1.4	114.2	- 0.9
Atlanta -----	111.1	.6	109.8	-.8	119.2	1.1	99.7	.2	112.5	.4	119.8	3.4	107.4	-.2
Baltimore -----	114.8	.8	111.0	-.2	126.6	-.2	99.3	-.1	112.5	2.4	112.1	- 1.1	114.2	-.9
Boston -----	111.9	0	109.3	0	126.3	1.8	97.0	-.3	116.5	.2	111.8	.2	105.8	- 1.1
Chicago -----	109.8	-.5	107.6	-.8	121.3	.7	90.8	- 1.1	111.2	-.7	114.1	-.1	119.2	- 1.9
Cincinnati -----	113.9	-.4	112.1	-.5	124.8	.1	99.8	- 1.0	114.2	0	114.3	1.2	119.6	- 1.7
Cleveland -----	110.8	-.1	108.7	-.2	121.7	-.1	95.7	-.7	108.3	.1	110.0	2.2	118.2	- 1.0
Detroit -----	114.7	- 1.0	112.7	- 1.3	120.2	.9	95.1	- 3.2	112.8	.1	128.1	-.9	116.4	- 1.5
Houston -----	111.4	.7	109.6	.8	119.8	.1	93.3	.1	112.4	.2	120.9	3.8	113.7	.1
Kansas City -----	109.2	-.3	107.1	-.3	123.8	0	93.8	-.6	108.2	-.1	114.5	.8	107.0	- 1.3
Los Angeles -----	116.0	.3	112.6	.6	131.4	.2	100.5	.5	105.4	-.1	122.1	3.0	114.0	-.2
Minneapolis -----	112.3	-.5	111.1	-.6	129.2	.2	93.2	-.9	108.5	-.1	120.9	-.6	121.5	- 1.4
New York -----	112.6	-.6	111.0	-.6	131.1	0	100.6	- 2.5	109.7	.2	113.7	2.2	113.6	- 1.6
Philadelphia -----	115.2	.3	113.4	.4	130.6	0	100.6	.7	116.1	1.3	118.2	2.0	112.8	- 2.1
Pittsburgh -----	114.6	-.3	112.9	-.4	125.0	-.3	97.4	- 1.3	113.8	1.9	118.6	.3	123.0	- 1.4
Portland, Oreg. ----	115.4	.3	113.5	.4	130.1	-.2	98.3	-.8	114.1	.3	118.8	2.9	117.3	.3
St. Louis -----	114.5	.3	110.4	-.5	122.7	1.4	94.6	- 1.3	102.4	- 3.7	122.8	1.8	122.9	-.2
San Francisco -----	116.3	.5	114.9	.3	138.2	.2	103.5	1.0	113.2	0	121.4	1.2	112.7	- 1.1
Scranton -----	110.0	-.3	109.2	-.4	124.9	.2	97.7	.2	108.8	.3	112.3	.4	111.1	- 2.4
Seattle -----	115.5	.3	114.3	.4	136.7	.3	97.7	- 1.1	116.4	.2	123.5	3.2	114.5	.4
Washington, D.C. ----	113.1	.3	111.1	.4	127.7	3.8	96.5	-.4	116.0	.1	111.9	1.2	114.3	- 1.3

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

Food and unit	Dec. 1956	Nov. 1956	Food and unit	Dec. 1956	Nov. 1956
<b>Cereals and bakery products:</b>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<b>Fresh—Continued</b>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>
Flour, wheat ----- 5 lb.	53.5	53.3	Grapefruit * ----- each	11.5	12.2
Biscuit mix ----- 20 oz.	26.8	26.8	Peaches * ----- lb.		
Corn meal ----- 1b.	12.6	12.6	Strawberries * ----- pt.		
Rice ----- 1b.	17.2	17.2	Grapes, seedless * ----- lb.		
Rolled oats ----- 20 oz.	19.5	19.4	Watermelons * ----- lb.		
Corn flakes ----- 12 oz.	22.6	22.2	Potatoes ----- 10 lb.	53.6	52.7
Bread, white ----- 1b.	18.3	18.3	Sweetpotatoes ----- lb.	12.7	11.8
Soda crackers ----- 1b.	28.0	27.9	Onions ----- lb.	7.6	7.1
Vanilla cookies ----- 7 oz.	24.3	24.2	Carrots ----- 1b.	13.9	13.8
<b>Meats, poultry, and fish:</b>			Lettuce ----- head	20.8	24.0
Round steak ----- 1b.	89.9	93.5	Celery ----- 1b.	14.8	13.4
Chuck roast ----- 1b.	51.6	53.4	Cabbage ----- 1b.	7.4	6.7
Rib roast ----- 1b.	73.7	75.8	Tomatoes ----- 1b.	34.4	26.5
Hamburger ----- 1b.	39.2	39.5	Beans, green ----- 1b.	27.4	23.4
Veal cutlets ----- 1b.	112.2	112.3	<b>Canned:</b>		
Pork chops, center cut ----- 1b.	77.6	79.3	Orange juice ----- 48-oz. can	39.1	39.5
Bacon, sliced ----- 1b.	61.3	60.6	Peaches ----- #2½ can	34.4	34.5
Ham, whole ----- 1b.	61.0	59.4	Pineapple ----- #2 can	34.0	33.8
Lamb, leg ----- 1b.	68.0	70.4	Fruit cocktail ----- #303 can	26.0	26.1
Frankfurters ----- 1b.	52.1	52.2	Corn, cream style ----- #303 can	17.4	17.7
Luncheon meat, canned ----- 12 oz.	42.0	41.5	Peas, green ----- #303 can	21.4	21.4
Frying chickens, ready-to-cook -- 1b.	44.5	44.9	Tomatoes ----- #303 can	15.1	15.2
Ocean perch, fillet, frozen ----- 1b.	42.4	42.3	Baby foods ----- 4½ to 8 oz.	10.0	10.0
Haddock, fillet, frozen ----- 1b.	45.8	45.1	<b>Dried:</b>		
Salmon, pink, canned ----- 16 oz.	61.9	61.7	Prunes ----- 1b.	34.7	35.0
Tuna fish, canned ----- 6 to 8½ oz.	31.8	31.6	Beans ----- 1b.	16.1	16.2
<b>Dairy products:</b>			<b>Other foods at home:</b>		
Milk, fresh, (grocery) ----- qt.	23.3	23.3	Tomato soup ----- 10½ to 11-oz. can	12.2	12.2
Milk, fresh, (delivered) ----- qt.	24.8	24.8	Beans with pork ----- 16-oz. can	14.6	14.5
Ice cream ----- pt.	29.1	29.1	Pickles, sweet ----- 7½ oz.	27.0	26.9
Butter ----- 1b.	74.8	74.5	Catsup, tomato ----- 14 oz.	23.2	23.2
Cheese, American process ----- 1b.	57.3	57.2	Coffee ----- 1b. can	108.9	109.3
Milk, evaporated ----- 14½-oz. can	14.3	14.3	Tea bags ----- pkg. of 16	23.4	23.2
<b>Fruits and vegetables:</b>			Cola drink, carton ----- 36 oz.	33.1	33.0
<b>Frozen:</b>			Shortening, hydrogenated ----- 3 lb.	97.5	97.1
Strawberries ----- 10 oz.	28.7	28.7	Margarine, colored ----- 1b.	29.5	29.2
Orange juice concentrate ----- 6 oz.	19.2	19.5	Lard ----- 1b.	21.4	20.8
Peas, green ----- 10 oz.	20.2	20.3	Salad dressing ----- pt.	36.1	35.8
Beans, green ----- 10 oz.	22.8	22.7	Peanut butter ----- 1b.	53.6	53.6
<b>Fresh:</b>			Sugar ----- 5 lb.	53.6	53.3
Apples ----- 1b.	14.6	13.4	Corn syrup ----- 24 oz.	24.3	24.2
Bananas ----- 1b.	17.3	17.4	Grape jelly ----- 12 oz.	27.0	27.1
Oranges, size 200 ----- doz.	56.4	59.9	Chocolate bar ----- 1 oz.	4.5	4.5
Lemons ----- 1b.	20.5	20.4	Eggs, Grade A, large ----- doz.	58.5	61.2
			Gelatin, flavored ----- 3 to 4 oz.	8.6	8.6

\* Priced only in season.

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

Group	U.S. City Average	Atlanta	Balti- more	Chicago	Cincin- nati	Detroit	Los Angeles	New York	Phila- delphia	St. Louis	San Francisco
Indexes (1947-49=100)											
All items -----	116.2	118.1	116.9	119.5	116.0	118.7	117.4	113.9	117.0	117.2	118.4
Food -----	111.7	110.2	112.9	109.3	113.2	114.2	113.5	111.5	113.8	112.8	114.1
Food at home -----	110.2	108.7	110.2	107.4	111.8	112.7	110.2	109.9	112.2	110.1	112.9
Cereals and bakery products --	125.6	118.1	122.5	120.1	124.5	119.7	129.9	129.8	126.7	120.1	133.7
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	97.1	99.1	98.1	90.5	98.2	95.6	97.8	99.9	99.4	94.6	102.8
Dairy products -----	108.7	110.7	109.4	109.8	112.8	109.3	103.9	105.7	111.1	102.7	107.9
Fruits and vegetables -----	119.0	120.4	117.3	115.8	118.0	132.6	118.5	114.5	121.9	124.5	122.5
Other foods at home -----	112.8	105.3	112.8	119.1	118.8	115.2	111.7	113.2	112.6	121.4	110.4
Housing -----	121.7	127.0	117.1	131.2	121.1	124.6	127.4	117.9	116.4	121.4	120.8
Rent -----	132.7	135.1	128.2	—	135.8	144.8	—	120.5	—	139.5	135.3
Gas and electricity -----	111.8	119.4	99.9	113.8	117.8	113.5	116.4	110.3	103.0	103.8	136.3
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	130.7	122.2	131.6	134.7	135.0	124.6	—	137.2	128.4	142.5	—
Housefurnishings -----	103.0	108.1	98.0	101.6	98.2	107.3	102.3	102.9	107.1	101.7	105.5
Household operation -----	122.9	132.7	116.6	128.0	130.2	116.2	126.2	122.4	119.3	126.6	112.3
Apparel -----	105.5	111.3	104.9	108.9	105.0	103.1	105.9	104.6	105.1	104.3	105.7
Men's and boys' -----	107.4	112.4	103.3	113.7	105.0	110.0	109.8	106.9	104.4	106.9	106.7
Women's and girls' -----	98.7	105.2	100.7	99.5	98.7	92.7	97.7	97.2	101.1	96.2	100.1
Footwear -----	123.9	130.1	123.5	127.8	130.9	119.6	126.4	123.0	118.9	123.9	125.3
Other apparel -----	91.4	92.2	95.5	95.4	88.5	87.3	83.6	94.5	92.5	95.8	89.0
Transportation -----	128.7	126.6	139.0	134.0	123.5	126.4	126.8	133.1	136.5	134.4	141.6
Public -----	172.2	157.9	184.9	166.1	163.5	143.8	152.2	187.5	186.5	186.1	179.9
Private -----	118.8	120.5	120.9	119.0	113.6	122.8	122.6	113.4	115.8	116.7	128.2
Medical care -----	132.6	129.3	140.8	136.6	137.4	142.1	127.1	127.2	137.6	143.3	131.1
Personal care -----	120.0	125.3	116.8	123.5	119.7	128.0	119.6	112.1	127.2	118.9	116.2
Reading and recreation -----	108.1	109.7	118.1	115.5	100.1	109.0	96.8	105.9	114.7	91.9	107.6
Other goods and services -----	122.0	126.5	125.3	118.0	120.0	124.4	118.0	122.0	125.3	122.6	118.3
Percent change from 1955 to 1956											
All items -----	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	2.0	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.0	2.4
Food -----	.7	0	1.1	.2	1.1	.9	1.5	.6	.7	.4	1.1
Food at home -----	.5	.2	.1	-.1	.8	.8	.8	.2	.4	.1	.8
Cereals and bakery products --	1.4	.6	.5	.8	0	.1	1.6	1.0	4.0	1.0	2.3
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	- 4.4	- 5.6	- 4.2	- 5.8	- 4.1	- 4.5	- 3.4	- 3.8	- 4.8	- 6.3	- 2.9
Dairy products -----	2.6	2.2	.7	3.7	4.6	3.9	.9	1.0	1.8	7.2	2.8
Fruits and vegetables -----	4.8	6.5	4.4	3.0	4.8	5.3	5.2	6.5	4.7	2.6	4.6
Other foods at home -----	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.5	-.1	.5	1.8	.1
Housing -----	1.4	1.5	.4	1.0	2.6	1.9	1.4	1.9	1.8	.8	3.7
Rent -----	1.8	1.2	1.8	—	2.7	2.6	—	2.1	—	2.2	2.3
Gas and electricity -----	1.0	1.2	0	3.6	- 1.1	2.7	1.0	1.2	.8	0	1.0
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	4.4	3.2	5.6	5.2	5.1	4.1	—	7.7	6.1	3.1	—
Housefurnishings -----	- 1.1	.6	-.2	- 4.4	-.6	0	- 2.8	- 1.3	1.4	-.4	1.4
Household operation -----	3.2	2.0	3.9	4.3	4.5	3.3	5.8	2.6	3.9	4.4	2.2
Apparel -----	1.7	1.6	2.3	2.9	1.4	1.1	1.9	2.1	.2	.5	2.1
Men's and boys' -----	1.6	1.1	2.1	2.6	1.4	2.5	2.0	1.0	.4	.1	1.8
Women's and girls' -----	.7	1.1	1.8	2.6	.3	- 1.7	.5	1.9	- 2.1	-.2	1.2
Footwear -----	5.3	4.5	5.2	4.8	5.1	5.5	6.1	5.1	6.2	3.5	5.6
Other apparel -----	.9	.8	1.3	2.0	1.4	.2	1.1	1.3	.5	.1	1.0
Transportation -----	1.8	2.4	1.8	1.9	.7	3.4	1.7	3.3	.1	.8	1.5
Public -----	3.9	4.7	10.9	.5	.4	.8	1.8	5.0	8.6	2.5	.8
Private -----	1.5	2.0	0	2.2	.9	4.0	1.7	2.8	- 2.2	.5	1.7
Medical care -----	3.6	3.5	4.5	5.8	6.5	6.9	3.1	1.0	1.9	2.3	5.4
Personal care -----	4.1	5.8	6.8	5.0	5.6	3.6	1.5	2.5	7.9	2.1	4.8
Reading and recreation -----	1.4	1.5	2.2	1.8	.2	.5	0	1.4	1.9	-.2	.7
Other goods and services -----	1.5	4.4	2.0	.2	3.2	-.2	2.3	.8	1.1	5.5	1.9

1/ This index on the base of 1935-39=100 is 194.3.

Brief Explanation of the CPI

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the average changes in prices of goods and services typically bought by city families of wage earners and clerical workers. It is based on prices of about 300 items which were selected so that their price changes would represent the movement of prices of all goods and services purchased by wage and clerical families; they include all of the important items in family spending. Prices for these items are obtained in 46 cities which were chosen to represent all urban places in the United States; they are collected from grocery and department stores, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments which wage-earner and clerical-worker families patronize.

Prices of foods, fuels, and a few other items are obtained every month in all 46 cities. Prices of most other commodities and services are collected every month in the 5 largest cities and every 3 months in other cities. Almost all prices are obtained by personal visits of the Bureau's trained representatives.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each city are averaged together with weights which represent their importance in family spending. City data are then combined in the total index with weights based on the 1950 populations of cities they represent. Index numbers are computed on the base 1947-49 = 100.

The national index (the United States city average) includes prices from the 20 large cities for which separate indexes are published in this report, as well as from the following 26 medium-sized and small cities:

Anna, Illinois	Huntington, W. Virginia	Fulaski, 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	

Comparisons of city indexes show only that prices in one city changed more or less than in another. The city indexes cannot be used to measure differences in price levels or in living costs between cities.

A description of the index is contained in BLS Bulletin 1140, "The Consumer Price Index: A Layman's Guide," which may be purchased for 20 cents at any Bureau of Labor Statistics regional office (addresses below) or from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. A more technical description of the index appears in BLS Bulletin 1168, "Techniques of Preparing Major BLS Statistical Series." Reprints of chapter 9, pertaining to the CPI, are available on request to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington or at any of its regional offices.

Historical series of index numbers for the United States city average and for 20 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.

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