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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR MARCH 1959

Consumer prices in United States cities remained at their February level in March, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Lower food prices offset increases for most other groups of goods and services. Average prices of goods and services other than food advanced 0.2 percent, with durable commodities and nondurables less food each up 0.3 percent, and services up 0.1 percent. The March Consumer Price Index was 123.7 (1947-49=100), 0.3 percent higher than in March 1958.

FOOD Food prices dropped 0.4 percent between February and March, due largely to lower prices for pork, eggs, and fresh vegetables. The food index at 117.7 was 2.6 percent below a year ago, and 3.3 percent below the July 1958 peak.

Meat, poultry, and fish prices declined 1.2 percent, led by pork products which have fallen in price in each of the past 8 months. Increased pork supplies brought the price of pork chops down 3.7 percent, bacon 2.8 percent, and ham 1.9 percent. Prices of most cuts of beef, veal, and lamb were moderately lower.

Egg prices dropped 3.1 percent. The price of coffee fell 1.0 percent, and fats and oils 1.1 percent. Prices of cola drinks, however, were 3.0 percent higher.

Fruit and vegetable prices declined 0.4 percent on the average, with fresh vegetables down 2.3 percent and fresh fruits up 0.8 percent. Prices of most fresh vegetables were lower because of increased shipments from southern areas. Lettuce prices fell 14.4 percent, green beans 13.0 percent, celery 6.3 percent, and potatoes 3.0 percent. However, onion prices rose sharply as fewer onions were moved to market from storage and the new spring crop from Texas was retarded by adverse weather conditions. The rise in fresh fruit prices was due largely to a 4.6 percent seasonal increase in prices of apples. Citrus fruits and bananas registered moderate price decreases.

Cereal and bakery products increased 0.2 percent mainly because of an 0.4 percent increase in the price of bread, while prices of dairy products declined 0.2 percent as a result of a seasonal drop in the price of fresh milk.

Prices of restaurant meals continued upward with a rise of 0.2 percent.

TRANSPORTATION Transportation costs rose 0.4 percent, mainly as a result of advances of 1.6 percent in prices of used cars and 1.0 percent for gasoline. New car prices were unchanged. Prices of tires were lower, due to sales and increased trade-in allowances. Public transportation costs edged up 0.1 percent because of a rise in transit fares in Philadelphia.

HOUSING The housing group index was up 0.2 percent, with higher prices for household operation, home maintenance costs, and rent. A rise of 0.5 percent in household operation reflected higher water rates, further increases in prices of laundry and dry cleaning services, and higher telephone rates. Prices of home repair and maintenance items rose 0.4 percent, as increases were reported for lumber, plumbing equipment, and painting and repair services. Rents were up 0.1 percent, with small increases in most cities surveyed. The solid fuels and fuel oil group showed a rise of 0.2 percent, while bills for gas and electricity were unchanged on the average.

Housefurnishings prices remained at their February level, as slight reductions in prices of some furniture and appliances offset higher prices for sheets, curtains, and drapery fabrics.

OTHER COMMODITIES Apparel prices rose 0.3 percent, due chiefly to higher prices for
AND SERVICES footwear and women's and girls' apparel. The rise in footwear reflected higher prices for men's, women's, and children's shoes and shoe repair services. Higher prices for women's rayon and cotton dresses were partially offset by reductions in prices of women's spring coats.

Reading and recreation costs were up 0.2 percent, principally because of higher charges for movie admissions.

The medical care index was 0.1 percent higher, with continued advances in fees for professional and hospital services.

Personal care and other goods and services each declined 0.1 percent.

TABLE 1: Consumer Price Index—United States city average
Major group, subgroup, and special group indexes, March 1959
and percent changes from selected dates

(1947-49=100 unless otherwise specified)

Group	Indexes		Percent change to March 1959 from —			
	March 1959	February 1959	February 1959	December 1958	March 1958	Year 1939
All items	123.7	123.7	0	0	0.3	108.2
Food	117.7	118.2	- 0.4	- 0.8	- 2.6	149.9
Food at home	115.5	116.1	- .5	- 1.1	- 3.4	145.2
Cereals and bakery products	134.1	133.8	.2	.1	1.1	134.4
Meats, poultry, and fish	111.3	112.6	- 1.2	- 1.5	- 2.7	167.5
Dairy products	113.8	114.0	- .2	- .4	- .3	128.5
Fruits and vegetables	120.7	121.2	- .4	.5	- 7.7	160.7
Other foods at home	107.3	108.1	- .7	- 3.1	- 5.7	121.7
Food away from home (Jan. 1953=100)	114.3	114.1	.2	.6	2.2	(1/)
Housing 2/	128.7	128.5	.2	.4	.9	69.1
Rent	139.1	139.0	.1	.3	1.5	60.6
Gas and electricity	118.5	118.5	0	.3	2.2	13.0
Solid fuels and fuel oil	140.3	140.0	.2	2.4	2.6	148.8
Housefurnishings	103.8	103.8	0	.2	- .1	94.4
Household operation	133.7	133.1	.5	.7	2.3	95.5
Apparel	107.0	106.7	.3	- .5	.2	103.8
Men's and boys'	107.8	107.8	0	- .6	- 1.0	112.2
Women's and girls'	99.0	98.8	.2	- 1.2	.2	81.7
Footwear	132.0	131.3	.5	1.2	1.9	162.4
Other apparel	91.8	91.7	.1	- .5	- .1	126.1
Transportation	144.9	144.3	.4	.4	4.5	106.4
Private	134.0	133.3	.5	.5	4.7	104.6
Public	192.0	191.8	.1	.1	3.3	136.2
Medical care	148.8	148.6	.1	1.0	4.6	105.0
Personal care	129.7	129.8	- .1	.5	1.1	117.6
Reading and recreation	117.3	117.1	.2	.3	.3	86.2
Other goods and services	127.3	127.4	- .1	0	.1	80.3
Special groups:						
All items less food	126.9	126.7	.2	.3	1.5	83.6
All items less shelter	121.4	121.4	0	- .1	.3	119.1
Commodities	115.9	116.0	- .1	- .3	- .4	124.6
Nondurables	117.4	117.6	- .2	- .3	- 1.2	128.4
Food	117.7	118.2	- .4	- .8	- 2.6	149.9
Nondurables less food	117.4	117.1	.3	.3	.4	100.0
Apparel	106.9	106.7	.2	- .6	.1	105.2
Nondurables less food and apparel	126.4	126.1	.2	.8	.6	91.8
Durables	112.5	112.2	.3	- .4	2.6	96.3
New cars	140.0	140.0	0	- 2.5	5.7	145.6
Used cars (Jan. 1953=100)	90.6	89.2	1.6	1.1	14.1	(1/)
Durables less cars	103.2	103.2	0	0	- .3	80.1
Commodities less food	114.4	114.2	.2	0	1.1	92.6
Services	144.4	144.2	.1	.6	1.9	79.6
Rent	139.1	139.0	.1	.3	1.5	60.6
Services less rent	145.9	145.7	.1	.6	2.0	98.5
Household operation services, gas, and electricity	133.8	133.3	.4	.6	2.5	53.8
Transportation services	178.4	178.2	.1	1.2	2.9	122.7
Medical care services	154.2	154.0	.1	1.2	5.1	118.7
Other services 3/	130.2	130.0	.2	.3	.5	123.3
Purchasing power of the consumer dollar (1947-49=\$1.00)	\$0.808	\$0.808	0	0	- .4	-52.0

1/ Not available.

2/ Includes house purchase, interest, taxes, insurance, and upkeep, not shown separately.

3/ Includes house purchase, interest, taxes, insurance, and upkeep services; shoe repairs, television repairs, barber and beauty shop services, and movies.

TABLE 2: Consumer Price Index—All items indexes and percent changes, selected dates
U.S. city average and 20 large cities

City	Indexes (1947-49=100)				Percent change to current month from --		
	Mar. 1959	Dec. 1958	Mar. 1958	Year 1939	Dec. 1958	Mar. 1958	Year 1939
United States city average-----	123.7	123.7	123.3	59.4	0	0.3	108.2
Cities priced monthly 1/							
Chicago-----	127.2	127.0	126.8	58.6	0.2	.3	117.1
Detroit-----	123.2	123.3	124.2	59.0	-.1	-.8	108.3
Los Angeles-----	126.2	126.2	125.0	60.4	0	1.0	108.9
New York-----	121.7	121.3	121.2	60.1	.3	.4	102.5
Philadelphia-----	123.4	123.5	123.1	59.2	-.1	.2	108.4
Cities priced in March, June, September, December 2/	Mar. 1959	Dec. 1958	Mar. 1958	Year 1939	Dec. 1958	Mar. 1958	Year 1939
Atlanta-----	124.3	124.4	124.9	58.3	-.1	-.5	113.2
Baltimore-----	126.4	125.5	124.1	57.9	.7	1.9	118.3
Cincinnati-----	122.2	122.4	122.3	58.4	-.2	-.1	109.2
St. Louis-----	126.0	125.7	124.5	59.3	.2	1.2	112.5
San Francisco-----	129.0	127.9	126.7	58.6	.9	1.8	120.1
Cities priced in February, May, August, November 2/	Feb. 1959	Nov. 1958	Feb. 1958	Year 1939	Nov. 1958	Feb. 1958	Year 1939
Cleveland-----	124.8	124.5	124.5	59.2	.2	.2	110.3
Houston-----	124.1	124.2	122.3	59.5	-.1	1.5	108.6
Scranton-----	120.3	120.7	119.1	58.5	-.3	1.0	105.6
Seattle-----	126.9	126.0	125.0	59.2	.7	1.5	114.4
Washington, D.C.-----	121.3	121.5	120.3	60.4	-.2	.8	100.8
Cities priced in January, April, July, October 2/	Jan. 1959	Oct. 1958	Jan. 1958	Year 1939	Oct. 1958	Jan. 1958	Year 1939
Boston-----	125.4	125.4	123.4	61.0	0	1.6	105.6
Kansas City-----	124.5	124.9	122.4	61.7	-.3	1.7	101.8
Minneapolis-----	125.3	124.5	123.2	60.7	.6	1.7	106.4
Pittsburgh-----	124.4	124.5	122.6	58.1	-.1	1.5	114.1
Portland, Oregon-----	124.2	124.5	123.3	58.3	-.2	.7	113.0

1/ Rents priced bimonthly.

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

TABLE 3: Consumer Price Index—Percent changes from February 1959 to March 1959
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
United States city average--	0	- 0.4	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.1	- 0.1	0.2	- 0.1
Chicago-----	0.1	.2	0	-.2	.3	.1	.2	-.3	-.2
Detroit-----	-.1	-.6	.3	.1	.7	-.3	-.2	- 1.1	0
Los Angeles-----	-.1	-.3	-.1	.1	0	-.1	.3	.5	0
New York-----	0	-.5	.2	.2	.4	.1	.1	-.2	0
Philadelphia-----	.1	-.3	.2	.5	.5	1.7	-.9	-.2	-.2

TABLE 4: Consumer Price Index--All items and commodity groups
 March 1959 indexes and percent changes, December 1958 to March 1959
 U.S. city average and 10 cities priced in March 1959

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 -----	123.7	124.3	126.4	127.2	122.2	123.2	126.2	121.7	123.4	126.0	129.0
Food -----	117.7	114.9	117.2	115.4	117.8	117.0	123.4	119.3	120.4	118.7	122.8
Food at home -----	115.5	113.4	113.9	112.7	115.0	114.5	119.2	116.9	117.6	114.0	120.9
Cereals and bakery products --	134.1	125.8	128.3	129.6	133.5	124.8	146.0	142.4	138.7	124.8	147.3
Meats, poultry, and fish ----	111.3	113.0	110.8	104.3	110.0	107.0	110.8	114.8	112.4	106.8	115.8
Dairy products -----	113.8	114.0	117.2	113.3	112.5	108.4	110.8	117.7	118.4	105.8	116.9
Fruits and vegetables -----	120.7	121.8	113.6	119.1	120.1	129.6	133.4	113.3	122.1	127.0	131.6
Other foods at home -----	107.3	100.8	106.5	111.9	110.0	107.1	109.3	107.7	105.7	114.3	108.4
Housing -----	128.7	131.6	128.0	138.6	124.7	127.2	135.4	125.7	122.4	127.5	131.1
Rent -----	139.1	138.8	136.3	165.0	143.2	—	146.7	—	128.1	147.6	148.2
Gas and electricity -----	118.5	126.2	109.4	129.3	123.2	117.2	130.7	115.6	103.4	106.2	145.2
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	140.3	134.1	142.7	144.9	151.9	126.9	—	147.4	139.8	162.2	—
Housefurnishings -----	103.8	111.1	99.8	101.1	96.4	109.1	102.1	104.4	107.7	105.7	106.9
Household operation -----	133.7	137.9	134.2	134.5	135.4	122.9	123.5	132.5	133.8	136.9	122.1
Apparel -----	107.0	113.4	109.0	109.7	107.0	104.7	108.2	106.1	105.3	106.6	108.2
Men's and boys' -----	107.8	115.6	107.2	113.2	107.3	108.2	110.6	108.5	108.4	107.8	108.8
Women's and girls' -----	99.0	104.7	103.8	98.9	98.9	94.7	99.8	96.6	95.2	99.7	100.1
Footwear -----	132.0	139.5	132.0	136.0	138.3	128.9	133.5	132.5	132.9	128.0	137.8
Other apparel -----	91.8	93.2	97.6	95.8	89.3	85.2	84.6	95.9	92.7	92.6	90.4
Transportation -----	144.9	144.9	159.4	154.7	141.5	136.7	140.9	145.0	150.9	161.9	165.6
Private -----	134.0	136.9	138.0	136.7	129.6	132.5	137.1	126.1	130.5	138.6	153.0
Public -----	192.0	188.3	215.4	196.9	191.4	157.3	162.1	191.4	193.4	237.1	182.6
Medical care -----	148.8	138.1	157.2	155.9	151.2	157.8	139.1	137.5	152.1	166.8	152.8
Personal care -----	129.7	132.7	126.0	130.2	129.7	133.6	133.6	123.0	134.6	130.4	123.5
Reading and recreation -----	117.3	118.6	131.5	122.8	110.4	112.5	102.7	119.9	119.8	98.1	115.9
Other goods and services -----	127.3	132.8	140.2	121.0	123.5	135.6	124.0	126.9	128.3	132.3	124.4
Percent change from December 1958 to March 1959											
All items -----	0	- 0.1	0.7	0.2	- 0.2	- 0.1	0	0.3	- 0.1	0.2	0.9
Food -----	- 0.8	- .7	- 1.3	.3	- 1.3	- 1.3	- 0.4	.2	- 1.1	- 1.0	0
Food at home -----	- 1.1	- 1.0	- 1.7	.3	- 1.7	- 1.5	- .7	0	- 1.5	- 1.2	- .2
Cereals and bakery products --	.1	.6	- .3	5.2	1.3	- .4	.1	0	- .6	0	0
Meats, poultry, and fish ----	- 1.5	- 2.2	- 1.8	- .7	- 2.4	- 2.5	- .8	1.1	- 1.2	- 3.2	- .6
Dairy products -----	- .4	.4	- .2	.4	- 3.2	- 3.0	.4	- .2	- 2.4	.3	.1
Fruits and vegetables -----	.5	.9	- 2.4	2.3	.3	2.4	- .3	- .4	- .8	1.9	2.9
Other foods at home -----	- 3.1	- 3.0	- 3.1	- 3.1	- 3.4	- 2.9	- 2.3	- 1.2	- 2.3	- 2.7	- 2.5
Housing -----	.4	.1	1.7	- .1	.2	.5	- .3	.6	.7	.6	.8
Rent -----	.3	.1	.4	1/ .1	.3	—	1/ .3	—	1/ .5	.3	.8
Gas and electricity -----	.3	0	.9	.5	.7	.1	.1	0	0	0	0
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	2.4	0	5.4	2.3	0	1.0	—	4.2	3.6	1.9	—
Housefurnishings -----	.2	.8	1.1	- .1	.3	.3	.3	1.2	- .8	1.4	.8
Household operation -----	.7	- .8	2.1	- 1.3	.4	2.3	.3	.1	.1	- .1	.1
Apparel -----	- .5	- .4	2.5	- .2	- .1	- .1	- .1	- .5	- 1.7	- .1	.1
Men's and boys' -----	- .6	- .5	.8	- .4	- .4	- .6	- .5	.3	.2	- .1	- .5
Women's and girls' -----	- 1.2	- .8	3.0	- .7	- .4	- .5	- .2	- 1.3	- 4.6	- .1	.1
Footwear -----	1.2	.9	2.6	1.4	1.3	2.2	1.0	.6	2.5	1.0	1.0
Other apparel -----	- .5	- .2	5.1	- .1	- .9	- 1.5	0	- .2	- 1.1	0	.1
Transportation -----	.4	.3	- .1	- .3	1.2	.3	1.5	.2	.4	1.3	4.7
Private -----	.5	.2	- .1	- .3	1.3	.3	1.8	.2	- .2	1.5	5.4
Public -----	.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.4	0	0
Medical care -----	1.0	.1	.6	2.9	- .7	3.1	.1	1.6	2.0	.2	.6
Personal care -----	.5	1.3	1.2	.5	- .8	- .1	.4	.7	- .1	1.1	0
Reading and recreation -----	.3	- .1	2.0	- .7	.6	- 1.7	.2	.3	1.0	2.0	- .6
Other goods and services -----	0	.1	1.2	- .2	- .1	0	0	- .1	- .2	.1	.2

1/ Change from January 1959 to March 1959.

TABLE 5: Consumer Price Index -- Food and its subgroups
 March 1959 indexes and percent changes, February 1959 to March 1959
 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 ---	117.7	- 0.4	115.5	- 0.5	134.1	0.2	111.3	- 1.2	113.8	- 0.2	120.7	- 0.4	107.3	- 0.7
Atlanta -----	114.9	- .5	113.4	- .4	125.8	.5	113.0	- .7	114.0	.3	121.8	.2	100.8	- 1.7
Baltimore -----	117.2	- .2	113.9	- .2	128.3	0	110.8	- .1	117.2	.1	113.6	- .6	106.5	- .5
Boston -----	118.3	- .4	115.1	- .7	132.2	- .5	113.4	- 1.3	115.6	- .1	117.2	- 1.6	102.3	.1
Chicago -----	115.4	.2	112.7	.1	129.6	5.3	104.3	- .9	113.3	.4	119.1	- .4	111.9	- 1.2
Cincinnati -----	117.8	- 1.1	115.0	- 1.3	133.5	- .2	110.0	- 1.0	112.5	- 3.4	120.1	- 1.2	110.0	- 1.2
Cleveland -----	114.2	- .1	111.7	- .2	129.3	.1	104.3	- 1.7	110.4	.1	114.4	2.7	110.3	- .5
Detroit -----	117.0	- .6	114.5	- .6	124.8	- .2	107.0	- 1.0	108.4	- .6	129.6	- .2	107.1	- 1.2
Houston -----	115.6	- .3	113.8	- .4	125.8	- .2	107.7	- .7	113.7	0	124.8	0	106.2	- .6
Kansas City -----	111.6	- .4	108.8	- .6	127.2	- .2	104.7	- 1.4	108.0	.1	112.8	.6	100.6	- 1.3
Los Angeles -----	123.4	- .3	119.2	- .5	146.0	.1	110.8	- 1.9	110.8	.3	133.4	.5	109.3	- .7
Minneapolis -----	Insufficient data due to work stoppage in food stores.													
New York -----	119.3	- .5	116.9	- .6	142.4	- .1	114.8	- .3	117.7	- .3	113.3	- 3.8	107.7	1.4
Philadelphia -----	120.4	- .3	117.6	- .4	138.7	- .1	112.4	- 1.3	118.4	- .5	122.1	.7	105.7	- .5
Pittsburgh -----	118.8	- .8	117.4	- .9	133.0	- .1	110.5	- 1.8	117.2	0	118.4	- 1.7	116.9	- .5
Portland, Oreg. -----	119.4	- .7	117.4	- .8	140.3	0	114.9	- 1.3	117.3	0	118.9	- .3	107.8	- 1.8
St. Louis -----	118.7	- .4	114.0	- .6	124.8	- .2	106.8	- 1.1	105.8	.2	127.0	- .2	114.3	- .8
San Francisco -----	122.8	.1	120.9	- .2	147.3	.1	115.8	- 1.0	116.9	0	131.6	1.2	108.4	- .6
Scranton -----	114.8	- .9	114.2	- 1.0	136.0	.3	111.4	- 1.9	113.2	- .1	113.3	- 2.1	104.3	- .3
Seattle -----	119.6	- .3	117.9	- 0	145.6	.1	112.4	- 1.0	115.4	0	126.4	.2	105.5	- .5
Washington, D.C. -----	118.9	.1	116.3	0	132.0	- .1	112.6	0	117.7	.1	117.5	.9	108.1	- .7

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

Food and unit	Mar. 1959	Feb. 1959	Food and unit	Mar. 1959	Feb. 1959
Cereals and bakery products:	Cents	Cents	Fresh—Continued	Cents	Cents
Flour, wheat ----- 5 lb.	54.9	54.8	Peaches * ----- 1b.		
Biscuit mix ----- 20 oz.	26.8	26.8	Strawberries * ----- pt.		
Corn meal ----- 1b.	12.9	12.9	Grapes, seedless * ----- 1b.		
Rice ----- 1b.	18.5	18.5	Watermelons * ----- 1b.		
Rolled oats ----- 16 oz.	20.4	20.4	Potatoes ----- 10 lb.	52.8	54.5
Corn flakes ----- 12 oz.	25.6	25.6	Sweetpotatoes ----- 1b.	14.2	14.0
Bread, white ----- 1b.	19.6	19.5	Onions ----- 1b.	15.7	11.7
Soda crackers ----- 1b.	29.3	29.2	Carrots ----- 1b.	14.3	14.4
Vanilla cookies ----- 7 oz.	24.4	24.4	Lettuce ----- head	16.7	19.5
Meats, poultry, and fish:			Celery ----- 1b.	12.9	13.8
Round steak ----- 1b.	107.2	107.1	Cabbage ----- 1b.	9.4	9.9
Chuck roast ----- 1b.	65.2	65.5	Tomatoes ----- 1b.	32.1	32.2
Rib roast ----- 1b.	82.1	82.4	Beans, green ----- 1b.	27.0	31.0
Hamburger ----- 1b.	55.2	55.7	Canned:		
Veal cutlets ----- 1b.	140.6	142.5	Orange juice ----- 46-oz. can	47.4	47.2
Pork chops, center cut ----- 1b.	81.7	84.8	Peaches ----- #2½ can	36.2	35.9
Bacon, sliced ----- 1b.	67.5	69.4	Pineapple ----- #2 can	36.0	35.8
Ham, whole ----- 1b.	63.7	64.9	Fruit cocktail ----- #303 can	27.8	27.7
Lamb, leg ----- 1b.	73.7	73.9	Corn, cream style ----- #303 can	19.1	18.9
Frankfurters ----- 1b.	64.9	65.3	Peas, green ----- #303 can	20.8	20.8
Luncheon meat, canned ----- 12 oz.	51.8	52.0	Tomatoes ----- #303 can	15.8	15.8
Frying chickens, ready-to-cook ----- 1b.	43.6	43.5	Baby foods ----- 4½ to 8 oz.	10.1	10.1
Ocean perch, fillet, frozen ----- 1b.	47.7	47.7	Dried:		
Haddock, fillet, frozen ----- 1b.	59.7	60.2	Prunes ----- 1b.	39.7	39.3
Salmon, pink, canned ----- 16 oz.	60.9	61.0	Beans ----- 1b.	17.2	17.2
Tuna fish, canned ----- 6 to 8½ oz.	33.5	33.6	Other foods at home:		
Dairy products:			Tomato soup ----- 10½ to 11-oz. can	12.5	12.5
Milk, fresh, (grocery) ----- qt.	24.0	24.1	Beans with pork ----- 16-oz. can	15.1	15.1
Milk, fresh, (delivered) ----- qt.	25.2	25.2	Pickles, sliced ----- 15 oz.	26.5	26.5
Ice cream ----- pt.	29.7	29.6	Catsup, tomato ----- 14 oz.	22.7	22.6
Butter ----- 1b.	74.3	74.5	Coffee ----- 1b. can	79.5	80.5
Cheese, American process ----- 1b.	58.0	58.2	Coffee ----- 1b. bag	61.9	62.3
Milk, evaporated ----- 14½-oz. can	15.2	15.2	Tea bags ----- pkg. of 16	24.2	24.1
Fruits and vegetables:			Cola drink, carton ----- 36 oz.	29.2	28.3
Frozen:			Shortening, hydrogenated ----- 3 lb.	89.4	90.0
Strawberries ----- 10 oz.	26.1	26.2	Margarine, colored ----- 1b.	28.3	28.8
Orange juice concentrate ----- 8 oz.	24.9	25.4	Lard ----- 1b.	20.7	21.3
Peas, green ----- 10 oz.	20.0	19.9	Salad dressing ----- pt.	37.8	37.8
Beans, green ----- 9 oz.	22.8	22.9	Peanut butter ----- 1b.	55.9	56.0
Fresh:			Sugar ----- 5 lb.	56.9	56.7
Apples ----- 1b.	13.8	13.2	Corn syrup ----- 24 oz.	26.4	26.4
Bananas ----- 1b.	16.9	17.1	Grape jelly ----- 12 oz.	28.1	28.1
Oranges, size 200 ----- doz.	61.1	61.3	Chocolate bar ----- 1 oz.	5.2	5.2
Lemons ----- 1b.	18.9	19.1	Eggs, Grade A, large ----- doz.	54.1	55.8
Grapefruit * ----- each	11.6	11.8	Gelatin, flavored ----- 3 to 4 oz.	9.2	9.2

* Priced only in season.

Labor D.C. - BLS-8-0332

Brief Explanation of the CPI

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures average changes in prices of goods and services usually 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 1935 to date.

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