

Ministry Of Legal Affairs
Consumer Affairs Division

**Monthly Price Movements Of
Basic Supermarket Items, Market Items and Poultry
January 2011**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Report analyses and presents data on the average price movements of food and other selected basic items over the period December 2010 to January 2011. For comparative and analytical purposes, food items available at Supermarkets are classified into thirteen categories – Meat, Fish, Dairy Products, Non Alcoholic Beverages, Oils and Fats, Cereals, Legumes, Condiments and Sauces, Sweeteners, Tuber and Similar Produce, Juices and Preparations for Infant Use, Dried Fruits, and Toiletries and Cleaning Products.

2.0 GENERAL PRICE MOVEMENTS – DECEMBER 2010 to JANUARY 2011

2.1 Selected Food and other Items available at Supermarkets

Overall, there was a decrease of 0.02% in the average price of selected food and other items available at Supermarkets throughout Trinidad during the period under review.

When compared to the previous reporting period of November to December 2010, this decrease in prices of 0.02% was in actuality 0.31 percentage points less. The following price movements were recorded:

2.1.1 Price Increases

Item Group	% change
Cereals	1.56
Dried Fruits	1.37
Sweeteners	1.37
Non Alcoholic Beverages	0.95
Toiletries and Cleaning Products	0.75
Legumes	0.47
Juices and Preparations for Infant Use	0.42

2.1.2 Price Decreases

Item Group	% change
Tuber and Similar Produce	2.83
Meat	1.47
Oils and Fats	1.36
Fish	0.82
Sauces and Condiments	0.43
Dairy Products	0.22

2.2 Selected Fruits, Vegetables, Fish and Meat available at Municipal Markets

The month of January witnessed an overall decrease of 2.07% in the prices of Fruits, Vegetables, Fish and Meat available at Municipal Markets. This decrease was 11.25 percentage points less when compared to the previous month, December 2010.

2.3 Fresh Chicken available at Poultry Depots

Live chicken prices showed some noticeable movement for the period, decreasing by 19.96% from \$5.21 in December 2010 to \$4.17 in January 2011. The pluck and gut fee, however, increased by 3.05%. This fee now averages \$9.81.

3.0 OUTLOOK AND RECOMMENDATION FEBRUARY 2011

Given the current and emerging trends in food prices, it is recommended that the RPMU continue to closely monitor price movements on both the local and international markets and this information should be made available to the wider public.

The Corporate Communications Unit (CCU) of the Ministry of Legal Affairs can embark upon an educational campaign which should involve publishing the prices of food items from the various local geographical areas made available by the RPMU. This would enable consumers to make more informed decisions when making purchases.

On a wider scale however, and, given the significant impact of fluctuations in the prices of fruits, vegetables and fresh produce on food price inflation, a system for monitoring and sharing information on local production of these items should be developed. This would assist in the development of proactive strategies to address forecasted shortages and preempt price volatility. The development of such a system may require collaboration among the MLA/CAD, the Central Statistical Office, the Ministry of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs and the various stakeholder organizations in the agriculture sector.