



NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS



# COST OF A HEALTHY DIET

(MAY 2025)



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Data Sources: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)

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# INTRODUCTION

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ The Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) is the least expensive combination of locally available items that meets globally consistent food-based dietary guidelines. It is used as a measure of physical and economic access to healthy diets. This is a lower bound (or floor) of the cost per adult per day excluding the cost of transportation and meal preparation.
- ◆ National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) recently rebased the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is the source for the Cost of Healthy Diet (CoHD) basket. This rebasing replaced the previous 2009 reference period to align the CPI with the current economic landscape. The process involved updating the types of goods and services included, revising their weightings, adding new items to reflect evolving consumption patterns and removing obsolete items.
- ◆ The updated CPI now encompasses 934 product varieties categorized under the COICOP 2018 framework, with over 300 food varieties specifically used to calculate the CoHD. It's important to note that due to these changes in the basket, item specifications, and the addition of new items. The CoHD from January 2025 onwards cannot be compared with previous bulletins.
- ◆ The National average Cost of a Healthy Diet was N1,484 in May 2025. This shows a decrease of 2.02% when compared to the amount recorded in previous month (April 2025 was N1,514).
- ◆ In May 2025, the average CoHD was highest in the South-east at N1,843 per adult per day, compared to N1,184 per adult per day in North-east.
- ◆ The CoHD has risen faster than general inflation and food inflation. However, the CoHD and the food CPI are not directly comparable; the CoHD includes fewer items and is measured in Naira per day, while the food CPI is a weighted index.

Food environments determine a household's physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for an active and healthy life. A suite of indicators known as the Cost and Affordability of a Healthy Diet (CoAHD) have been developed to improve the measurement of food access and are now monitored globally by the United Nations and the World Bank as a metric of food security. The Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) metric uses the availability, price, and nutritional composition of retail food items to identify the **least expensive** combination of items that meet requirements for a healthy diet.

To compute the Cost of a Healthy Diet indicator, the following data are required: (a) retail food prices, (b) food composition data, and (c) a healthy diet standard.

### Retail Food Prices

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) gathers retail food price data every month from 10,534 sources in both urban and rural areas across all Nigerian states. This data helps the NBS track **inflation** and includes prices for over 300 food items. These items are commonly part of a healthy diet, and their price data is used to calculate the Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD).

### Healthy Diet Standard

In Nigeria, CoHD is the minimum cost of foods needed to meet international recommendations defined in the Healthy Diet Basket (HDB), a globally relevant set of criteria that captures similarities across most national Food-Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG) (Table 1). The HDB was created as a comparable standard to calculate and compare the cost and affordability of healthy diets across countries; the HDB is most relevant for countries where there is not yet a quantified national FBDG, like Nigeria.

**Table 1. Description of the Healthy Diet Basket (HDB)**

Food Group	Number of food items selected	Energy content (kilocalories)	Share of total calories (%)	Typical weights of example foods (g)
Starchy Staples	2	1,160	50	322 g dry rice
Oils and Fats	1	300	13	34 g oil
Fruits	2	160	7	230-300 g
Vegetables	3	110	5	270-400 g
Legumes Nuts and Seeds	1	300	13	85 g dry bean
Animal Source Foods	2	300	13	210 g egg
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2,330</b>	<b>100</b>	

## Average Cost of a Healthy Diet (National, State & Zonal Levels)

The National average Cost of a Healthy Diet was N1,484 per adult per day in May 2025. At the State level Bayelsa, Imo, and Ekiti States recorded the highest cost with N2,352, N2,214, and N2,178 respectively. Gombe, Taraba and Katsina accounted for the lowest costs with N985, N1,002 and N1,062 respectively.

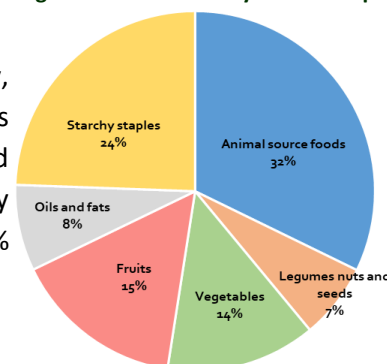
At the Zonal level, the average CoHD was highest in the South-East Zone at N1,843 per day, followed by South-South Zone with N1,687 per day. The lowest average Cost of a Healthy diet was recorded in North East Zone with N1,184 per day.

(Please see Appendix for full graphic representation)

## Cost Share by Food Group

Animal source foods were the most expensive food group recommendations to meet in May, accounting for 32% of the total CoHD to provide 13% of the total calories. Fruits and vegetables were the most expensive food groups in terms of price per calorie; they accounted for 15% and 14%, respectively, of total CoHD while providing only 7% and 5% of total calories in the Healthy Diet Basket. Legumes, nuts, and seeds were the least-expensive food group on average, at 7% of the total cost.

Figure 1 - Cost Share by Food Group



## Trends in the Cost of a Healthy Diet

The Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) reversed its upward trend in May 2025, dropping by 2.02% month-on-month. This pushed the CoHD from N1,518 in April 2025 to N1,484 in May 2025. This decrease was driven by lower prices for Oils and Fats, Starchy Staples, Vegetables, and Fruits. However, this drop was slightly offset by increases in Legumes nuts and seeds and animal source foods

Table 2. Changes in the Cost of a Healthy Diet Over Time

Food Group	Percent Change in CoHD Month-on-month
Starchy staples	-5%
Oils and fats	-9%
Fruits	-1%
Vegetables	-2%
Legumes nuts and seeds	3%
Animal source foods	1%

## General and Food Inflation Relative to the Cost of a Healthy Diet

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of inflation, the average change over time in the prices of goods and services consumed by people for day-to-day living, while the food index is a subset of the CPI which reflects changes in prices that households pay for food. CPI records the development of market prices of agricultural commodities and foodstuffs. Figure 4a compares the general CPI and the food CPI with the nominal Naira value of the Cost of a Healthy Diet, to understand whether the least-cost items needed for a healthy diet are rising in cost at a rate like that of the rest of the goods and services in Nigeria. Food prices and the Cost of a Healthy Diet are both expected to rise over time; here we focus on the relative rate of that inflation.

The food CPI includes a larger number of items, and more packaged and value-added items than the Cost of a Healthy Diet, as least-cost items are often unprocessed.

## Least-Cost Diets and Frequently Selected Least-Cost Items

Table 2, *(Please see Appendix)* showcases the most and least expensive places to buy a healthy diet in May 2025. Bayelsa Urban topped the chart with the highest Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) at N2,435 per adult per day. Conversely, Taraba Rural offered the most affordable option at N925 for CoHD. Interestingly, some of the least-cost food items remained consistent across both locations. These items included Millet whole grain, Palm Oil, Avocado pear and Crayfish white small. However, price variations between these locations resulted in different costs per item. Also, some unique least-cost options emerged. For instance, in Bayelsa Urban Shrimps white dried was the most affordable in Animal Source food group, whereas in Taraba Rural it was Crayfish small white.

Table 3, *(Please see Appendix)* shows frequently selected least-cost items in each food group across all state-sector combinations. This table demonstrates that some items are commonly the least-cost across different locations. For example, in legumes nuts and seeds food group, soya beans was the least expensive item in 41% of state-sectors, and Maize grains white was the least-expensive item in the starchy staple food group in 23% of all the state-sectors. Palm Oil was selected as the least-cost item in the Oils and Fats food source with 70% of state-sectors.

Finally, Table 4 *(Please see Appendix)* offers a granular look at the most budget-friendly food choices consistently found across different Nigerian states, carefully chosen to represent each of the country's geopolitical zones. The analysis within this table illustrates that certain food items repeatedly stand out as the least expensive options, regardless of their geographical location. For instance, Avocado pear consistently proved to be the least expensive items within the Fruits category in states like Lagos (South-West), Rivers (South-South), Anambra (South-East), Bauchi (North-East), and Kano (North-West) while in Federal Capital Territory (North-Central) it was for Desert Date fruit/Aduwa.

# POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Cost of a Healthy Diet provides important information about food access, a key aspect of food security, which is useful for government, civil society and development partners, private sector, and researchers.

For instance, where the Cost of a Healthy Diet is high, it is possible to identify which least-cost items and food groups are driving the high cost. Stakeholders can identify supply challenges in specific foods or food groups to be addressed, for example with improved production, distribution, or market access.

The Cost of a Healthy Diet can also inform:

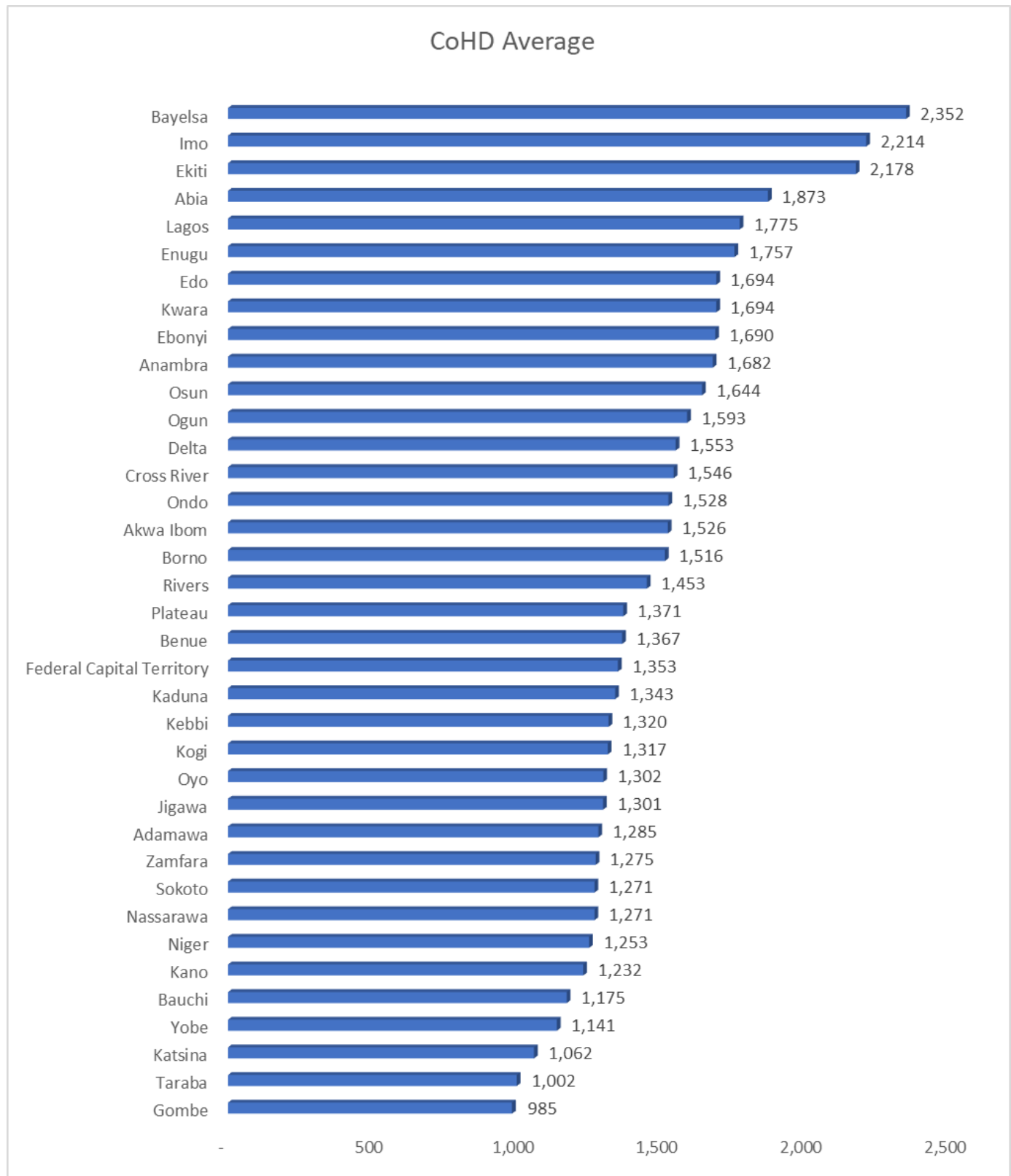
- ◆ The minimum income needed by households to access a healthy diet, and social protection and transfer amounts for vulnerable populations.
- ◆ Prioritization of commodities for agricultural production and trade policy interventions.
- ◆ Targeting interventions, including nutrition education, to populations with the most potential to benefit; nutrition education is only effective when people can afford to comply with the recommendations.
- ◆ Research on the relationship between food access and other food system factors and outcomes.

These results can also foster collaboration among a wide range of stakeholders, such as policymakers, researchers and civil society actors that focus on food security, to devise strategies that tackle access, availability, and affordability of healthy diet effectively. Future research incorporating income can also be used to determine the proportion and number of the population that are unable to afford a healthy diet.

*This bulletin was produced by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Nigeria in collaboration with Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) and technically supported by the Food Prices for Nutrition project, led by the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University, in partnership with International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the World Bank. This bulletin aims to inform decision-makers from government agencies, UN agencies and NGOs to improve access to healthy diets. The bulletin is available online at <https://microdata.nigerianstat.gov.ng/index.php/catalog/146>. Answers to frequently asked questions about the Cost of a Healthy Diet are also available online <https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/elibrary/>*

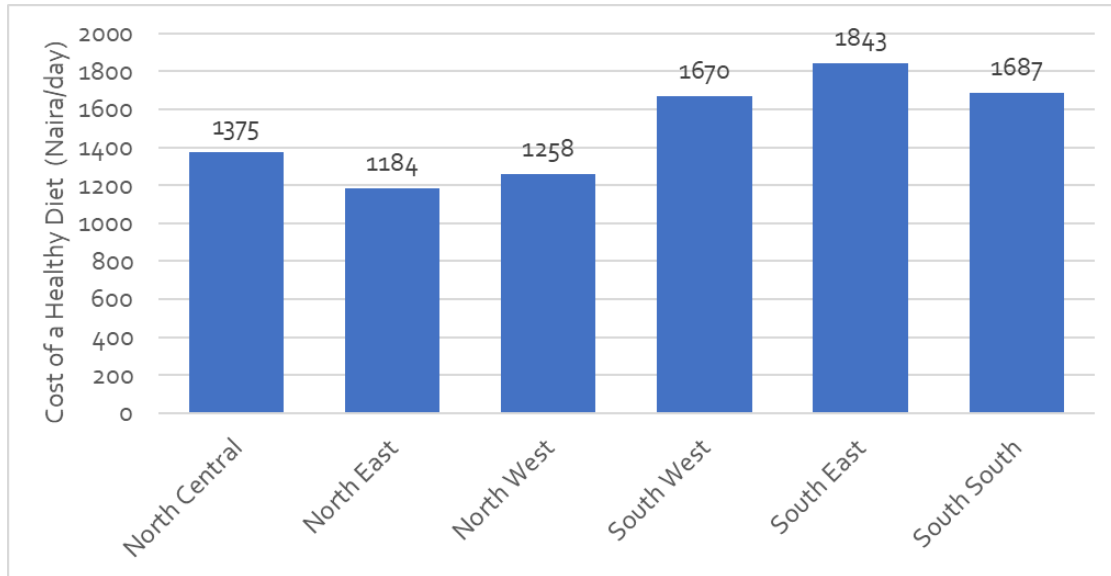
# APPENDIX

Figure 2. Average Cost of a Healthy Diet by State

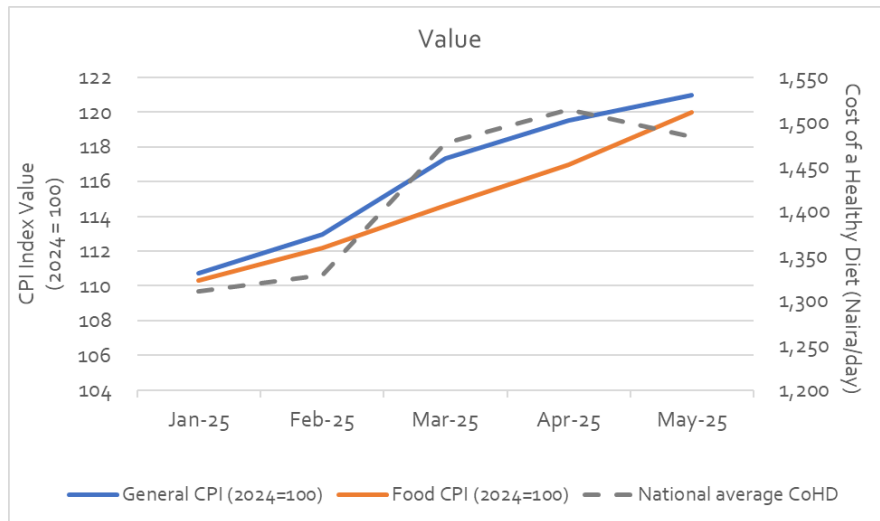


# APPENDIX

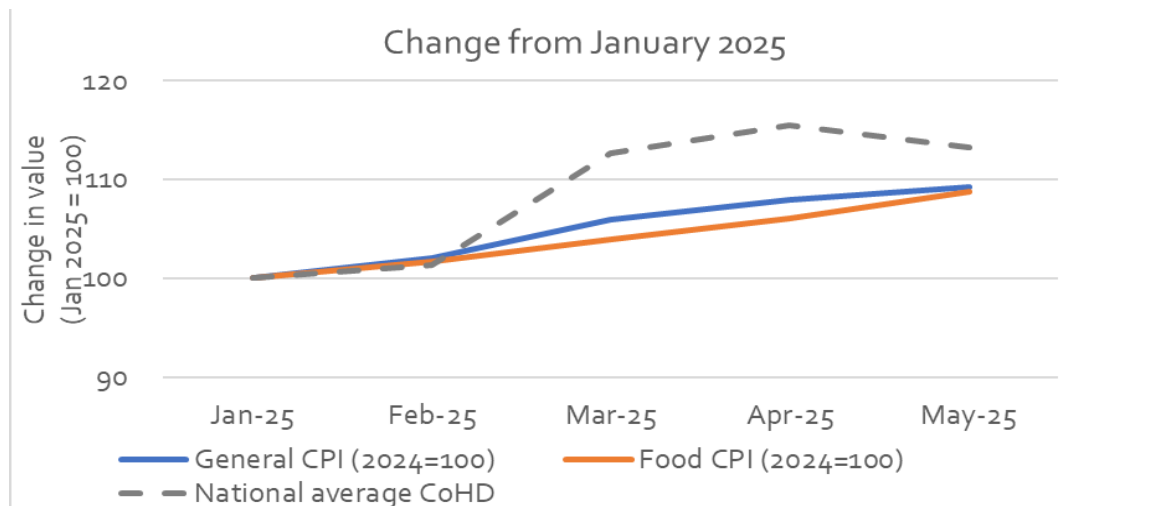
**Figure 3. Zonal Average CoHD**



**Figure 4a. National average CoHD (Naira/day) and Consumer Price Indexes (2024=100)**



**Figure 4b. National average CoHD and Consumer Price Indexes (2024 = 100)**





# APPENDIX

**Table 3. States with Least and Most expensive cost of items**

	Most expensive:		Least expensive:	
May-25	Bayelsa Urban		Taraba Rural	
	Least-cost item	Cost	Least-cost item	Cost
Starchy staples	Garri White	236	Maize in cobs: fresh	110
	Millet Whole grain	269	Millet Whole grain	171
Oils and fats	Palm oil, 75cl	161	Palm oil, 75cl	98
Fruits	Avocado Pear	147	Avocado Pear	62
	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu	107	Desert Date Fruit /Aduwa	20
Vegetables	Carrots, fresh	268	Baobab Leaves Powder /Kuka	10
	Ewedu	287	Okra, Dried	19
	Tomato Puree (GINO),	260	Tomatoes Dried	73
Legumes nuts seeds	Groundnuts, unshelled	132	Kulikuli /Groundnut Cake	56
Animal source foods	Cray fish small white	248	Cheese (local - wara)	101
	Shrimps white dried	320	Cray fish small white	205
<b>Total (CoHD)</b>		<b>2,435</b>		<b>925</b>

**Table 4. Top Three (3) most frequently selected least-cost items by Food Group**

Food Group	Item Name	Selected as least-cost % of possible selection
Starchy staples	Maize Grains White	23%
	Millet Whole grain	22%
	Garri White	13%
Oils and fats	Palm oil, 75cl	70%
	Soya bean oil, 75cl	8%
	Palm Kernel Oil, 75cl	7%
Fruits	Avocado Pear	30%
	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu	24%
	Desert Date Fruit /Aduwa	14%
Vegetables	Tomatoes Dried	25%
	Okra, Dried	23%
	Baobab Leaves Powder /Kuka	15%
Legumes nuts and seeds	Soya Beans	41%
	Kulikuli /Groundnut Cake	20%
	Groundnuts, shelled	14%
Animal source foods	Cheese (local - wara)	24%
	Cray fish small white	21%
	Fresh Milk /Nono, 75cl	14%

# APPENDIX

Table 5: Top most frequently selected least-cost items by food group in some State

Item Name			
Food Group	Lagos	Rivers	Anambra
Starchy staples	Agidi /Eko	Guinea Corn /Sorghum White	Cassava Flour, Sold loose
	Garri White	Guinea corn flour, sold loose	Maize Grains White
Oils and fats	Palm oil, 75cl	Palm oil, 75cl	Palm oil, 75cl
			Soya bean oil, 75cl
Fruits	Avocado Pear	Avocado Pear	Avocado Pear
	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu	Oranges, fresh
Vegetables	Carrots, fresh	Baobab Leaves Powder / Kuka	Cucumbers, fresh
	Oha leaves	Oha leaves	Grean Leaf /tete
Legumes nuts and seeds	Moin-moin, Bean	Groundnuts, shelled	Kulikuli /Groundnut Cake
	Soya Beans	Soya Beans	
Animal source foods	Cray fish small white	Cheese (local - Wara)	Agric hen eggs, (a Crate of 30 pieces)
	Shrimps white dried	Cray fish small white	Liquid Yoghurt, 1 litre
Item Name			
Food Group	Federal Capital Territory	Bauchi	Kano
Starchy staples	Maize Grains White	Garri White	Guinea Corn /Sorghum White
	Millet Whole grain	Millet Whole grain	Rani Masara (CORNFLOUR PRE-PACKED)
Oils and fats	Soya bean oil, 75cl	Palm oil, 75cl	Soya bean oil, 75cl
	Vegetable Oil, 75cl		
Fruits	Desert Date Fruit /Aduwa	Avocado Pear	Avocado Pear
	Guavas, fresh	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu	Dates Palm fruits/ Debinu
Vegetables	Kuka Dried	Baobab Leaves Powder / Kuka	Baobab Leaves Powder /Kuka
	Oha leaves	Okra, Dried	Okra, Dried
Legumes nuts and seeds	Soya Beans	Kulikuli /Groundnut Cake	Green Peas, dried
			Groundnuts, unshelled
Animal source foods	Cray fish small white	Cray fish small white	Cheese (local - Wara)
	Fresh Milk /Nono, 75cl	Fresh Milk /Nono, 75cl	Cray fish small white



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