



NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS



COST OF A HEALTHY DIET

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CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	2
Retail Food Prices.....	2
Healthy Diet Standard	2
RESULT	3
Average Cost of a Healthy Diet (National, State & Zonal Levels)	3
Cost Share by Food Group	3
Trends in the Cost of a Healthy Diet	3
General and Food Inflation Relative to the Cost of a Healthy Diet	3
Least-Cost Diets and Frequently Selected Least-Cost Items	4
POLICY IMPLICATIONS	5
APPENDIX	6
Figure:	
Figure 1. Cost Share by Food Group	3
Figure 2. Average Cost of a Healthy Diet by State	6
Figure 3. Zonal Average CoHD	7
Figure 4a. National average CoHD (Naira/day) and Consumer Price Indexes (2024=100)	7
Figure 4b. National average CoHD and Consumer Price Indexes (2024 = 100).....	7
Table:	
Table 1. Description of the Healthy Diet Basket	2
Table 2. Changes in the Cost of a Healthy Diet Over Time	3
Table 3. States with Least and Most expensive cost of items	8
Table 4. Top three (3) most frequently selected least-cost items by Food Group	8
Table 5. Top most frequently selected least-cost items by food group in some State	9
CONTACT.....	10

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 N1,446 in August 2025. This shows a decline of 10.24% when compared to the amount recorded in previous month (July 2025 was N1,611).
- ◆ In August 2025, the average CoHD was highest in the South-east at N1,798 per adult per day, compared to N1,261 per adult per day in North-west.
- ◆ 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
Total	11	2,330	100	

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

The National average Cost of a Healthy Diet was N1,446 per adult per day in August 2025. At the State level Imo, Bayelsa and Abia States recorded the highest cost with N2,121, N2,039, and N1,853 respectively. Gombe, Taraba and Katsina States accounted for the lowest costs with N973, N1,157 and N1,162 respectively.

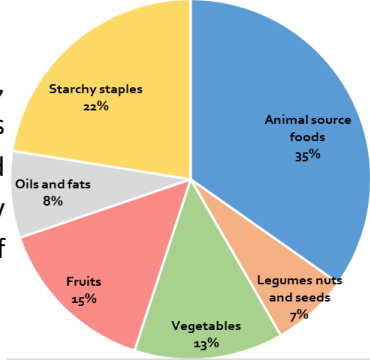
At the Zonal level, the average CoHD was highest in the South-East Zone at N1,798 per day, followed by South-South Zone with N1,574 per day. The lowest average Cost of a Healthy diet was recorded in North-West Zone with N1,261 per day.

(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 August, accounting for 35% 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 13%, 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) in August 2025 recorded a noticeable decline, falling from N1,611 in July 2025 to N1,446. The downward movement was driven by declines across all food groups, indicating an overall easing in the cost of food items required to meet a healthy diet during the period.

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

Food Group	Percent Change in CoHD Month-on-month
Starchy staples	-13%
Oils and fats	-11%
Fruits	-15%
Vegetables	-14%
Legumes nuts and seeds	-13%
Animal source foods	-3%

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 August 2025. Bayelsa Urban topped the chart with the highest Cost of a Healthy Diet (CoHD) at N2,188 per adult per day. Conversely, Gombe (Rural) offered the most affordable option at N964 for CoHD. Interestingly, some of the least-cost food items remained consistent across both locations. These items included Guinea Corn Flour (sold loose), and Palm Oil. However, price variations between these locations resulted in different costs per item. Also, some unique least-cost options emerged. For instance, in Bayelsa (Urban) Millet whole grain was the most affordable in Starchy Staple food item, whereas in Gombe (Rural), it was Guinea Corn Flour (sold loose). In terms of Friuts, Bayelsa (Urban) recorded Pawpaw (medium size) as the most affordable while Gombe (Rural) went for Pears (ube).

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 26% of state-sectors, and Mazie grains (white) was the least-expensive item in the starchy staple food group in 25% of all the state-sectors. Palm Oil was selected as the as the least-cost item in the Oil 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:

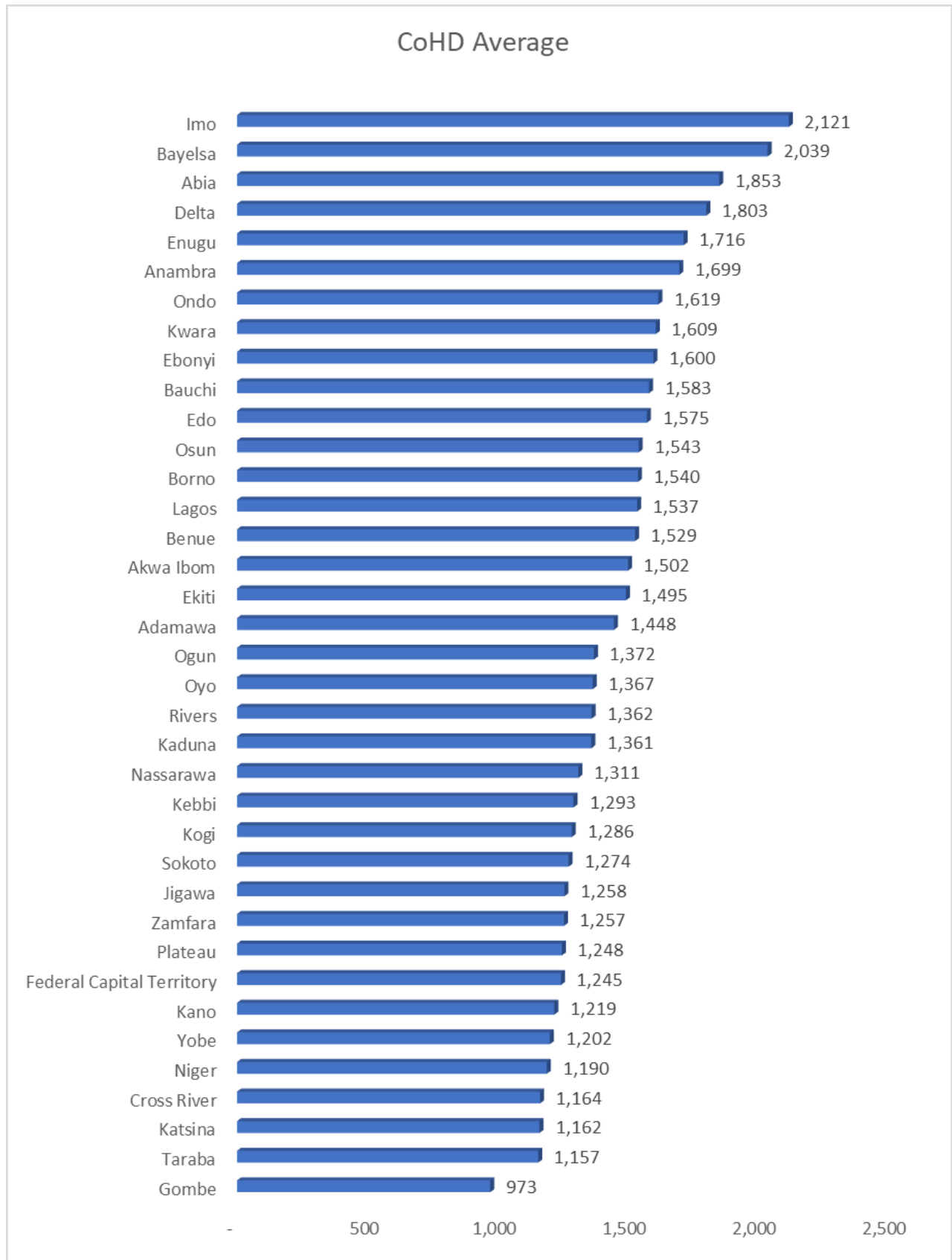
- ◆ The minimum income needed by households to access a healthy diet, and social protection and transfer amounts for vulnerable populations.
- ◆ Prioritization of commodities for agricultural production and trade policy interventions.
- ◆ Targeting interventions, including nutrition education, to populations 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

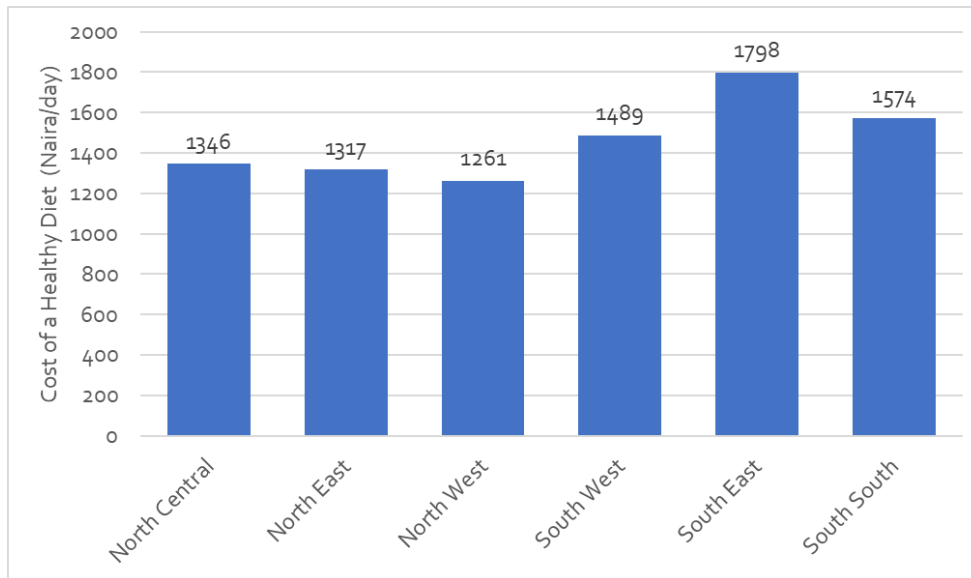


Figure 4a. National average CoHD (Naira/day) and Consumer Price Indexes (2024=100)

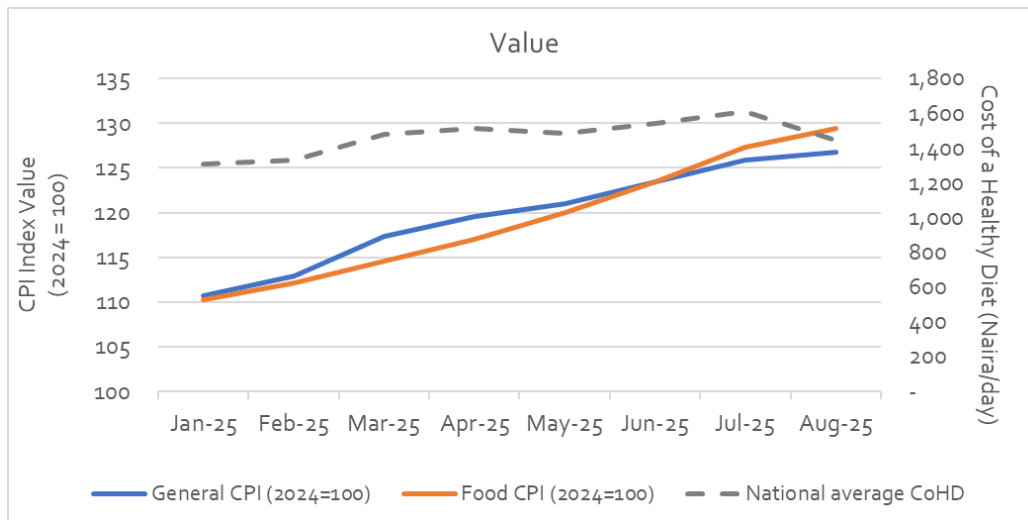
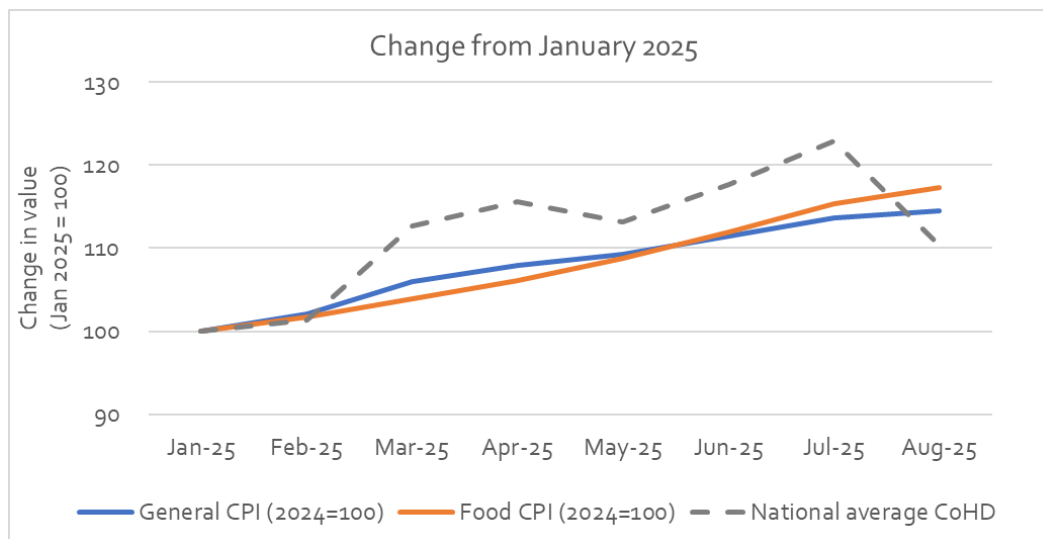


Figure 4b. National average CoHD and Consumer Price Indexes (2024 = 100)



APPENDIX

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

Aug-25	Most expensive: Bayelsa (Urban)		Least expensive: Gombe (Rural)	
	Least-cost item	Cost	Least-cost item	Cost
Starchy staples	Guinea corn flour (sold loose)	211	Guinea corn flour (sold loose)	143
	Millet Whole grain	230	Maize Grains White	118
Oils and fats	Palm oil, 75cl	85	Palm oil, 75cl	98
Fruits	Dates Palm Fruits (Debinu)	121	Desert Date Fruit (Aduwa)	44
	Pawpaw (medium size)	138	Pears (Ube)	92
Vegetables	Carrots (Fresh)	168	Kuka (Dried)	14
	Ewedu	271	Oha leaves	38
	Tomato Puree (GINO, 210g)	262	Tomatoes (Dried)	51
Legumes Nuts Seeds	Groundnuts (Shelled)	128	Soya Beans	107
Animal source foods	Cray Fish (Small, dried)	233	Cheese (local - wara)	23
	Shrimps (white) Dried	340	Chicken Wings	237
Total (CoHD)		2,188		964

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)	25%
	Garri (White)	19%
	Garri (Yellow)	11%
Oils and fats	Palm oil, 75cl	70%
	Soya bean oil, 75cl	11%
	Vegetable Oil, 75cl	8%
Fruits	Avocado Pear	28%
	Dates Palm fruits (Debinu)	22%
	Desert Date Fruit (Aduwa)	14%
Vegetables	Tomatoes (Dried)	24%
	Okra (Dried)	23%
	Baobab Leaves Powder (Kuka)	14%
Legumes nuts and seeds	Soya Beans	26%
	Groundnut Cake (Kulikuli)	16%
	Groundnuts (shelled)	11%
Animal source foods	Cheese (local - wara)	22%
	Powdered Milk (Three Crown, 350g)	18%
	Fresh Milk /Nono, 75cl	14%

APPENDIX

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

Food Group	Item Name		
	Lagos	Rivers	Anambra
Starchy staples	Garri (White)	Garri (Yellow)	Cassava Flour (sold loose)
	Garri (Yellow)	Maize Grains (white)	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
	Pears (Ube)	Dates Palm fruits (Debinu)	Oranges, fresh
Vegetables	Green Leaf (tete)	Baobab Leaves Powder /	Cucumbers, fresh
	Oha leaves	Oha leaves	Green leaf (tete)
Legumes nuts and seeds	Groundnuts (shelled)	Beans (white)	Groundnut Cake (Kulikuli)
	Locust Beans (Dawadawa, Iru)	Soya Beans	
Animal source foods	Dried Fish (Bonga)	Cheese (local - wara)	Liquid Yoghurt, 1 liter
	Stockfish fresh (Panla)	Cray fish small white	Pork Meat
Food Group	Item Name		
	Federal Capital Territory	Bauchi	Kano
Starchy staples	Garri (white)	Garri (white)	Garri (white)
	Maize Grains (white)	Guinea Corn/Sorghum White	Garri (Yellow)
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
	Oranges, Fresh	Dates Palm fruits (Debinu)	Dates Palm fruits (Debinu)
Vegetables	Kuka (Dried)	Baobab Leaves Powder (Kuka)	Baobab Leaves Powder (Kuka)
	Oha leaves	Kuka (Dried)	Okra (Dried)
Legumes nuts and seeds	Beans (white)	Groundnuts (shelled)	Beans (Brown)
			Green Peas, dried
Animal source foods	Cray fish small white	Agric hen eggs, (a Crate of 30 pieces)	Cheese (local - wara)
	Fresh Milk /Nono, 75cl	Powdered Milk (Three	Cray fish small white



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