UNHEALTHY TRENDS:
Adelaide Food Prices 1990 - 2011
Justice, Opportunity and Shared Wealth for All South Australians

SACOSS is the peak body of the community services sector and advocates for the progressive improvement of the quality of life for those most vulnerable in our community.
Began because CPI does not represent the experience of low income households who buy a different ‘basket of goods’

Example: food is:

- 15% of CPI basket of goods
- 19% of ALCI expenditure for other welfare recipients
- 21% of ALCI for pensioners
SACOSS Cost of Living Reports

- Reports focus on 6 key topics:
  - Housing
  - Utilities
  - Food
  - Health
  - Transport
  - Income Support
SACOSS Cost of Living Reports – Food

- No. 6 March Qtr 2011
- Focused on long term trends, not food baskets
- Used disaggregated CPI figures to compare CPI food with the generic CPI
- Since 2001, food has risen 13.2% more than the generic CPI
SACOSS Cost of Living Reports – Food

CPI and Food

Index


- All Food
- CPI - All Groups Index
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- The cost of healthy food
  - CPI food figures for the 4 broadly “healthy” food groups that most closely match NHMRC dietary guidelines
    - Dairy and related products
    - Bread and cereals
    - Meat and seafoods
    - Fruit and vegetables
SACOSS Cost of Living Reports – Food

CPI for Different Food Groups

- All Food
- Dairy
- Bread & Cereals
- Meat & Seafood
- Fruit & Veg
SACOSS Constructed an index of the price of “healthy food”

- CPI for the 4 “healthy food” groups (dairy, bread & cereals, meat & seafood, fruit & veg) weighted by expenditure in a healthy diet (Diet based on Kettings, Sinclair and Voevodin’s 2009 research in *Journal of Public Health*, 33, 6, 566-572).
- Methodology still uses broad categories which create a number of anomalies
- Result is indicative of general price trends rather than an accounting of actual costs of a healthy diet
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CPI - Healthy Foods Prices

- All Food
- CPI - All Groups Index
- Healthy Food Index
Conclusions

- Food prices generally has gone up faster than CPI over a sustained period
- Prices of healthy foods have increased more than the prices of other food

Which means

- Food is becoming increasingly costly, particularly for those whose income is tied to CPI
- There is a market price signal which is contradicting public health messages about eating well
SACOSS Cost of Living Reports – Food