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APPENDIX C

RETAIL FOOD PRICE SURVEYS, NEW YORK CITY

THREE PRICE SURVEYS

Three separate retail food price surveys are being conducted within New York City, as follows:

1. Federal, by the Bureau of Labor Statistics;
2. State, by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets;
3. City, by the Mayor's Council on Consumer Affairs.

Each provides different information and each serves a different purpose. The city survey should complement, not duplicate, the Federal and State efforts.

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics (monthly)

(a) Reports one citywide price for selected individual basic food items and shows the level of prices and the month-to-month movement on prices of individual foods.

(b) Since many cities across the Nation are similarly surveyed each month, the report permits comparison of actual prices of individual food items in New York City with those in Chicago, Los Angeles, and elsewhere.

(c) Translated into the food price index, related to a base period (currently 1957-59 average), the trend in the cost of food can be traced. The index for New York City shows the extent of change from the base period, as it does elsewhere. It also shows which food prices have gone up faster in one city than another. It is possible to compare food price changes in New York City with those of other cities and with the average changes for the United States.

(d) The index does not indicate whether food prices are higher or lower in New York City than elsewhere.

(e) Neither the specific food prices nor the index give any information by boroughs or neighborhoods, nor does the report reflect prices by store size or location.

2. New York State Department of Markets (weekly)

(a) Reports one citywide price, with a range and the "mostly" price for perishable foods. Special sale prices expected for the weekend are indicated.

(b) The report reflects the week-to-week movement of prices of individual foods, making it possible to spot items in good supply as indicated by lower prices.

(c) It does not provide a statistical series but rather guidelines to follow from week to week.

(d) The prices reported are for large markets representing a large volume of trade; they do not represent prices families pay in smaller stores, predominant in lower income neighborhoods.

(e) The report is based on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday morning prices; it is summarized Wednesday afternoon and made available to press and radio on Thursday.

(f) Accompanying the prices in this report are market tips based on wholesale market receipts and prices. This information is helpful in predicting both supplies and retail prices for days and weeks ahead.

3. Mayor's council on consumer affairs (daily)

(a) The retail food price survey of the council offers the opportunity of providing neighborhood information, a function not performed by the Federal and State reports.