

# FOOD COST GOES UP 25 PER CENT. IN YEAR

Comparison of 1911 and 1912  
Prices of 17 Table Necessities  
Gives Surprising Results.

## THE ADVANCE WAS GRADUAL

Butter, Eggs, and Cheaper Vegetables  
Show Largest Increases, According  
to Improvement Association.

The cost of many essential family table foods, when bought in small quantities, has gone up nearly 25 per cent. in the last year in this city, according to a statement issued yesterday by the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor.

Here are two sample grocery bills for poor people which the association has compiled from its records of purchases made by its visitors for the city's poor people in 1911 and 1912.

	Jan., 1911.	Jan., 1912.	In- crease.
Bread .....	.08	.08	..
1/2 pound butter.....	.16	.20	.04
1/4 pound tea.....	.10	.10	..
1/2 pound coffee.....	.13	.15	.02
2 pounds sugar.....	.12	.14	.02
1 dozen eggs.....	.30	.40	.10
1 can tomatoes.....	.09	.12	.03
Potatoes .....	.10	.20	.10
1 can corn.....	.10	.12	.02
1 pound codfish.....	.10	.12	.02
Oatmeal .....	.10	.10	..
1 pound beans.....	.08	.08	..
1 pound rice.....	.05	.05	..
1 cabbage.....	.05	.08	.03
1/4 pound cheese.....	.04	.05	.01
Flour .....	.13	.15	.02
1 pound onions.....	.03	.05	.02
	<u>\$1.74</u>	<u>\$2.17</u>	<u>.43</u>

"The advance in cost of many so-called food necessities during the last year has been so gradual as to be unobserved, but many of these necessities have reached a prohibitive figure for families whose incomes have not increased proportionately," said General Agent Kingsbury of the association yesterday.

"Wholesale and retail grocers agree that last month made history as a period of inflated prices. Wholesale costs of commodities have increased more than 100 per cent. Produce merchants are paying more than twice as much for potatoes, cabbage, and carrots than was asked in the market a year ago. Retail grocers are paying 26 per cent. more for butter and 33 per cent. more for eggs. Canned goods have gone up at a bound, such articles as salmon and tomatoes showing an increase of from 20 to 22 1/2 per cent.

"Tea has remained at a fixed price, but coffee has jumped between 5 and 6 cents a pound, the inferior grades showing a more conspicuous increase than the more expensive brands. Sugar shows a slight increase and flour has been advanced to from 50 to 75 cents a barrel.

"The following table shows the amount of increase of various foodstuffs from February, 1911, to February, 1912:

Coffee .....	6c. a pound
Potatoes .....	\$1.75 a barrel
Eggs .....	10c. a dozen
Sugar .....	1c. a pound
Tomatoes .....	2c. and 3c. a can
Corn .....	2c. a can
Cheese .....	3c. a pound
Onions .....	2c. a pound
Flour .....	50c. to 75c. a barrel
Milk .....	1c. a quart

"Second in importance and significance to the rise in the cost of potatoes and other vegetables is the phenomenal increase in the price of eggs and butter. Milk purchased by the association has also been increased one cent a quart since the first of the year.

"The advance in the cost of vegetables in a year has been almost incredible. Only the importation of large quantities of potatoes from Holland and Ireland has prevented the price of this essential necessity of life from soaring even higher. A large number of vegetables have more than doubled in value during the last year. Only apples and fruits more popular in the Summer have displayed any downward tendencies. These figures show the tremendous contrast between the prices of January, 1912, and those of January, 1911:

Product.	Price in Jan., '11.	Price in Jan., '12.
183 pounds potatoes .....	\$2.00	\$4.13
100 pounds cabbage .....	.80	2.00
100 pounds onions .....	2.50	4.00
1 barrel apples .....	6.50	8.50

Mr. Kingsbury recently came to the conclusion, in a similar investigation of the cost of living in this city, that a family of five persons could not maintain a normal standard of living in this city on less than an income of \$1,200 a year.

## SCENE AT FOOD COST INQUIRY.

The investigation which is going on before Magistrate Daniel Murphy in the Criminal Courts Building as to whether there is any evidence that members of the New York Mercantile Exchange have been conspiring to increase the prices here of butter, eggs, and cheese took an unexpected turn yesterday afternoon when Magistrate Murphy directed Assistant District Attorney De Ford to call the attention of District Attorney Whitman and the Bar Association to the action of Franklin Taylor, counsel for the Mercantile Exchange.

Mr. Taylor on Tuesday afternoon gave out a carefully typewritten statement to all the newspaper men at the hearing, implying strongly that Magistrate Murphy was going to bring out only a misleading part of the truth in his investigation and stating that the Mercantile Exchange "doesn't propose to be thrown, bound and gagged, into the arena for the sport of the Roman populace."

Magistrate Murphy, after asking Mr. Taylor whether he really had given out such a statement yesterday, not only threatened him with the Bar Association and the District Attorney, but gave him such a scolding as to cause Mr. Taylor actually to turn pale.

Mr. Taylor, whose persistent demands that he be allowed to represent the Mercantile Exchange at the hearing had already been denied by Magistrate Murphy, occupied the first hour of yesterday's proceedings by delivering an elaborate and carefully studied argument to show that his client had a right to be represented at the hearing. Mr. Taylor seemed to think that his client ought to have been summoned to appear at the proceedings. He argued that, if his client had been summoned, then he would have had a right legally to represent it at the proceedings.

Magistrate Murphy and Assistant District Attorney De Ford repeated to Mr. Taylor an explanation which they had given him many times before, namely, that no one was on trial in the present proceedings, and that all the District Attorney's office was trying to do was to find out what individuals or corporations were responsible for the high price of butter, eggs, and cheese and if there had been anything like a conspiracy in the way in which the prices have been elevated.