



**CONSUMERS
FEDERATION
OF AUSTRALIA**

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the consumer interest

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Grocery shoppers urged to use unit prices to get better value for money during the COVID-19 economic crisis

Grocery shoppers wanting to get value for money during the current economic crisis should be using the unit price information (price per unit of measure) provided for prepackaged products by all large supermarkets.

Gerard Brody, chair of the peak consumer body the Consumers' Federation of Australia (CFA), says "The unit price information shown on shelf labels and online selling sites allows grocery shoppers to easily and quickly compare values."

This can result in significant savings, or getting more or better quality for the same expenditure".

Due to the COVID-19 economic crisis, many people now have substantially lower incomes and many household grocery bills have increased substantially due to more time being spent at home.

So the need to get the best value for expenditure on groceries has never been so great for many households.

The value comparisons possible by using unit pricing include between:

- package sizes
- brands
- prepackaged and unpackaged products
- types of packaging
- fresh, frozen, canned and dried products
- special offers and regular prices
- substitute/alternative products
- retailers.

The savings, and other benefits, obtained from using unit prices to compare values will vary greatly between shoppers reflecting differences in habits, preferences, amount spent, etc.

However, differences in unit prices can large and the savings substantial.

For example, research by the Queensland Consumers Association, a member of CFA, has shown that savings of over 40% are possible by switching from national to generic brands for a range of grocery products.

National compulsory provision of unit pricing for prepackaged grocery products only started in 2009 – soon after the Global Financial Crisis.

This decision was in recognition of the very positive benefits from the provision of unit pricing for use by consumers suffering from economic crises.

Since then many consumers have used unit pricing regularly to make better informed decisions about what grocery products to buy and where.

However, during this economic crisis there is still great scope and a clear need for more grocery shoppers to start using unit pricing and for current users to increase usage.

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