

SUBMISSION

**Re:- CURRENT FOOD PRICES INQUIRY
(Fruit, Vegetables and everyday foods)**

Submission made by ;
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GENERAL OVERVIEW

From my own personal experience I have seen over the past six months or more, the great escalation of everyday food commodities, from prices being reasonable six to eight months ago, to prices now, March 2008, being totally out of all proportion to the actual quality of the goods, and the actual cost price to the Company selling.

Large stores delight in telling the public that these “high” prices are due to two factors
(a) the drought conditions
and
(b) the floods throughout the growing areas.

This statement is only minimally correct.....whilst there has been a drought, producers have still had water to water their produce.....producers may have lost a small proportion of SOME crops due to excessive sun, but the outcome would DEFINITELY NOT be on the magnitude as these Combines try to get the public to believe

The problem is that Combines are there to fleece the public, knowing full well that the public have to purchase the produce or starve. The combine desires the huge profits to pass onto Shareholders, thus getting those persons who are richer within the public ranks to then look at the Combines profit to shareholders to entice monies to be paid via the Sharemarket to purchase Shares in the Combines Company..... absolutely NO thought being given by the Company as to the actual costs to selling at a REASONABLE profit margin

Through these excessive pricings, the general public has to spend a much greater amount of their weekly income to purchase essentials to thus survive....the public only have a LIMITED amount of money to purchase ..they cannot call on shareholders to put in more cash....if you have no money, you starve, and the Combines could not care less.

Those most effected being the lower paid persons...the pensioners.. those on the dole.. These persons would have to work on an extremely tight budget each week,

does one read of the C.E.O and Directors of these Combines having to count their money, to work out what they can buy, and hope to exist for the next week..???....

NO of course we don't...these person are on a salary and bonus of hundreds of thousands of dollars – or even millions of dollars all of which have been taken from the poor, all via their Companies charging massive prices for massive profits....not value for money as it should be.

It is high time that the Government set up a Price Commission whereby all Companies must apply for a price increase in their goods....the Commission reviews the evidence and gives their verdict. This way the public are then assured of purchasing at the **BEST** price....**NOT** the highest price.

No doubt these Combines would factor into their costs their advertising of food products.....Just look at any daily, weekly papers and what do we see... page after page (**NOT** add after add) of huge adds, stating what specials they have, plus they have their weekly booklet of items they are promoting.....

just **WHY** does Mr or Mrs Householder need to know this..???.
the public are well aware of where to go for food items and what to look for...!!
Why should the public be hit with all this excessive advertising ..???.
If they want to advertise a block 'ad would suffice...
the costs would be Hundreds of millions of dollars less...
the cost price to the purchaser would come down dramatically.....

Massive advertising cannot be justified.

I beg the Commission to check for themselves in Melbourne daily papers... country weekly papers and suchlike to see the waste of money

PACKAGING

In presenting a food product to the public all Companies have the ploy of cutting down the total weigh in the package.....leaving the size of the package at the original size thus enjoying a higher profit from such a ploy, and the general public is none the wiser as the weight content is never checked.

On the other hand the most consistent rake off by these food companies is to

- (a) reduce the contents weight;
- (b) leave the packaging the same size and then
- (c) increase the retail price also

Who is the winner..?....Certainly **NOT** the public but rather

- (a) the manufacturer and
- (b) the food chain.

ADVERTISED SPECIALS

When one checks the advertised specials appearing in the food chain weekly Householders which they send out, one finds that some “specials” are NOT specials at all, but rather when you check them they are the same price as previously.

I have noticed that Coles have become somewhat shrewd re this, and now they take away the “*normal*” price tag and put a “*special*” tag whereas in the past the original tag used to stay there – this is how I found such a sham in the first place when I lifted a “*special*” price to see that it was the same as the “*normal*” price.

Likewise they advertise “specials” and when you look for them on the shelf the rack is empty...you ask at the Cash Register if they are out of the product or not and the reply you receive is “if the rack is empty the special has been sold out and no more is available”.....mind you our grocery shopping is done on the morning on which the weekly catalogue is received, so this indicates that very, very few items are going out on “special” rates.

Being incensed at an item appearing on the shelf at a price some 80 cents higher than what was shown in the weekly special catalogue, I decided to front the Manager and ask the reason why. ...he said that the item was NOT on “*special*” to which I told him I had read it in their weekly special catalogue...his reply being that it was not on special...I then went to the front of the shop...took a catalogue...found the add stating the price which I had quoted and returned to him...I must admit the Manager was dumbfounded as it was clear that he did not know that this item was on the “special” list for the week....The actual item is one which we use three of four per week so imagine the extra I would have paid to Coles had I have not know that this item should have a “*special*” mark on the price...what a rake-off for Coles.....how many were sold at the high price when the person purchasing failed to check the price shown at the time. At 80c per can a nice added profit.

I also checked with the Manager regarding “*specials*” that have been sold out and only an empty shelf is shown. I was told that the public can speak with the cash register person and they will take your name and telephone number and once the goods are in the store you can collect at the advertised price. --- I ask...Just how many of the public would ask or complain to the cash register person in the first place.....secondly why aren't cash register staff advised to inform the public of this service when a query is made.....I certainly wasn't over the past years of Asking

VEGETABLE PRICES

I patronize the following Food Chain Stores – Coles, Safeway, Aldi and I.G.A.....any other Food Chain I would know nothing whatsoever about their pricings.

Coles is our major food store patronized.....Safeway is only to check prices. As we always find them either on a par with Coles or higher.....I.G.A is for their specials only...Aldi being an excellent place to shop as their prices are much lower than the major Combines.

Tomatoes at Coles last week being \$7.99... \$6.99...and \$5.99 per kilo.....
the same \$7.99 Tomatos we purchased from Aldi for \$2.99
and from a Roadside Stall \$2 per kilo....
another example of total daylight robbery by one food chain.

Potatoes were \$1.98 per kilo at Aldi and Roadside Stalls they were \$1.25

As for fruit in season. You require to be a multi millionaire to purchase from Coles Stores....local Apricots were selling for \$14.99 per kilo when they were available at roadside stalls for \$2, per Kilo

No Food chain can argue that their costs are that excessive....

What is excessive is their greed for profits at the public
expense...

it is high time that this was regulated