

# Victorian Healthy Food Basket

## Mornington Peninsula Shire (2022)



### What is VHFB?

The Victorian Healthy Food Basket (VHFB) survey is a tool that assesses the **affordability** of a **healthy diet**<sup>1</sup>. The basket provides both healthy food choices and foods that represent typical purchases of Victorians. The **healthy food component** of the basket provides enough food to meet the **nutritional needs** of four different family types for a fortnight.

### Components of VHFB

#### Core Foods

41 items

Cereal

Fruits

Vegetables

Dairy

Meat & Alternatives

#### Non-core Food

3 items

Polyunsaturated  
margarine

White sugar

Canola oil

#### Discretionary Food\*

10 items

e.g. Mars bar

Coca-cola

Tim Tams

Teddy Bear biscuits

Potato chips

Fish fingers

Ice-cream

\*Not included in the VHFB calculation

### Family Types

#### Family of 4



#### Single Parent



#### Older Female



#### Single Male



### Core Foods

Foods that are important in promoting a quality diet in line with the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating<sup>3</sup> and to meet the revised nutrient reference values.<sup>4</sup>

### Non-core Foods

Foods that may contribute to an individual's nutritional requirements, but are not necessary.

### How was data collected?

**Q:** When was it collected?

**A:** March 2022.

**Q:** Where was it collected?

**A:** In total, data were collected from **35 stores** (including 5 ALDI stores and some independent grocers) across all wards in Mornington Peninsula Shire.

### Average Cost of Food Groups per Fortnight

Food Groups	Cost incl. ALDI	Cost excl. ALDI
 Bread & Cereal	\$69.73	\$72.49
 Fruits	\$100.00	\$101.01
 Vegetables	\$125.33	\$129.40
 Dairy	\$103.64	\$108.55
 Meat & Alt.	\$134.65	\$137.82
 Non-core Food	\$7.55	\$7.77
 Discretionary	\$39.91	\$41.56

Costs were calculated for reference family of 4 in March 2022

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# Affordability of VHFB for each ward



## 9 Stores

Family of 4: **37.8%** | **35.8%**  
 Single Parent: **29.2%** | **27.7%**  
 Older Female: **13.6%** | **13.0%**  
 Single Male: **27.2%** | **25.9%**

## 10 Stores

Family of 4: **37.3%** | **35.3%**  
 Single Parent: **28.7%** | **27.2%**  
 Older Female: **13.5%** | **12.8%**  
 Single Male: **27.2%** | **25.7%**

**> 30%:**  
Unaffordable

**25 - 30%:**  
At risk of food stress

## 5 Stores

Family of 4: **36.6%** | **34.7%**  
 Single Parent: **28.2%** | **26.7%**  
 Older Female: **13.2%** | **12.6%**  
 Single Male: **26.6%** | **25.3%**

## 5 Stores

Family of 4: **37.4%** | **35.3%**  
 Single Parent: **28.9%** | **27.2%**  
 Older Female: **13.5%** | **12.8%**  
 Single Male: **27.1%** | **25.6%**

## 3 Stores

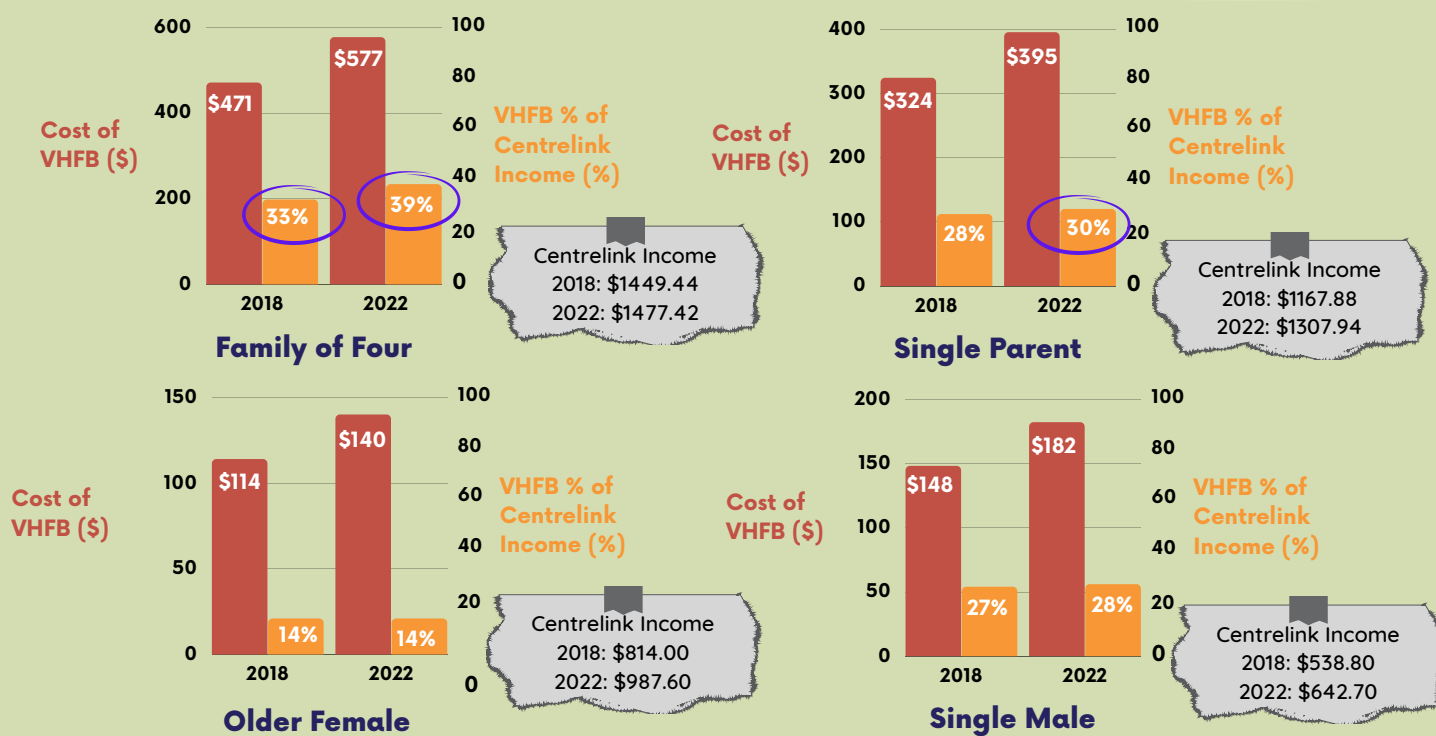
Family of 4: **45.5%** | Nil ALDI  
 Single Parent: **35.2%** | Nil ALDI  
 Older Female: **16.6%** | Nil ALDI  
 Single Male: **32.9%** | Nil ALDI

Affordability:  
 VHFB cost  
 Centrelink Income %



Affordability was calculated based on all income from social security payments. Affordability are presented as **excluding ALDI** | **including ALDI**.

## Cost of VHFB and % of Centrelink Income Comparing 2018 with 2022 Results (ALDI Excluded)



References:

1. Monash University Medicine, Nursing and Health Science. Healthy Food Basket [Internet]. Monash University. 2012. Available from: <https://hfb.its.monash.edu.au/hfb/>
2. Palermo C, Wilson A. Development of a Healthy Food Basket for Victoria. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health. 2007 Aug;31(4):360-3.
3. Department of Health. Australian Guide to Healthy Eating [Internet]. Eat for Health. Australian Government; 2013 [cited 2022 Dec 5]. Available from: <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>
4. National Health and Medical Research Council. Nutrient Reference Values [Internet]. Eat for Health. 2021. Available from: <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/nutrient-reference-values>

# Key Findings

## Mornington Peninsula Shire

1. Overall cost of VHFB has **increased** in 2022.
2. Meat and meat alternatives are the most expensive group among all the VHFB food groups.
3. VHFB is **unaffordable** for **families of four** in all wards.
4. **Older females** have the **lowest risk of food stress** in all wards.
5. Increases in Centrelink income has not matched the inflation of VHFB costs, which has made **VHFB less affordable** compared to 2018.
6. The increase of VHFB costs may due to multiple factors occurred at that period including, but not limited to COVID pandemic, floods and energy crisis.

## Limitations

- The VHFB is a tool to **monitor the cost and access to healthy food**.
- Discount prices and other food providers (e.g. local markets, etc.) were not considered in the VHFB. Hence, it may not reflect the actual overall expenditure on food.
- The affordability is based on people receiving maximum social security income (Centrelink), it does not represent the average income.
- The VHFB does not reflect common shopping habits as some people may shop at multiple stores for discounted prices.

## What does it mean?

1. **Food** is one aspect of the household budget that is increasingly **more expensive**.
2. The increasing cost of healthy foods may lead people to purchase more discretionary foods.
3. This highlights an opportunity to **enhance the local food systems** to improve **availability, accessibility** and **affordability** in order to better meet the needs of the population.
4. Support **alternative sources of healthy food production** (e.g. farmers markets, community gardens, home gardens) to reduce **food stress** and create a more **resilient food environment**.