

MEDIA RELEASE



An initiative by the
Consumer Education Project of Milk SA

UNBEATABLE DAIRY:

nutrient-rich AND
value for money

Cost of living isn't getting any easier and South African consumers are stretched to get the best value possible for their shrinking household budgets. One of the biggest concerns is maintaining a healthy lifestyle and optimal nutrition for our families as we are pushed by continuing high inflation to prioritise deals above all else.



Many households are getting granular with their food budgets to find cutbacks and savings. This means not only looking for cheaper substitutions and introducing more meat-free meals, but also considering the nutritional value of foods to ensure that your family is getting sufficient macro- and micro-nutrients. It's not just about full for longer carbs and cheaper good quality protein, you want to make sure that children and adults are meeting the Recommended Daily Intake (RDIs) of essential minerals such as calcium and potassium, as well as the spectrum of crucial vitamins.

Why dairy tops the charts as nutritional value-for-money foods

She says, "When we considered a selection of protein-rich foods such as meat, fish, poultry, dairy and baked beans, various dairy products are priced between 49 and 53 cents per gram of protein which is more affordable per gram of protein than red meat, most fish and even, baked beans."

It's during tough economic times that the dairy food group comes to the fore. Affordable and versatile, dairy also offers an extraordinary and unique profile of nutrients, working together to provide various health benefits. According to Dr Hester Vermeulen, a specialist in consumer economics at the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) dairy foods ranked in the top three options as nutritional value-for-money foods. In a recent analysis for Rediscover Dairy, Dr Vermeulen combined nutrient-richness and current prices to draw a comparison including protein, calcium, potassium, and Vitamin B12 content of some foods.



Table 1:

The table below shows how dairy ranks in the top options in a similar analysis for value-for money foods containing calcium, potassium and Vitamin B12:

Cost per mg of calcium

Maas and full-cream milk Slice of brown bread ¹	R0.01/mg of calcium
Plain yoghurt Cheddar cheese	R0.02/mg of calcium
Canned pilchards Flavoured yoghurt	R0.03/mg of calcium
Baked beans	R0.08/mg calcium
Chicken	R 1.15 mg of calcium

Cost per mg of potassium

Full-cream milk Canned baked beans Maas	R0.01/mg of potassium
Plain yoghurt Flavoured yoghurt Canned pilchards	R0.02/mg of potassium
Chicken portion	R0.04/mg of potassium
Beef mince	R0.07/mg of potassium

Cost per microgram of Vitamin B12

Canned pilchards	R0.50/microgram of Vitamin B12
Full-cream milk	R1.87/microgram of Vitamin B12
Maas milk	R4.13/microgram of Vitamin B12
Beef mince	R7.25/microgram of Vitamin B12

¹ The cost per mg of calcium in brown bread is the same as for milk and maas. However, bread is not a natural source of calcium. Brown bread in South Africa is fortified and the bioavailability of calcium from brown bread is not the same as dietary calcium in dairy products. One slice of brown bread (40g) provides 75 mg of calcium. You will therefore have to eat four slices of bread to provide you with the same amount of calcium as in 250 ml of milk.





Maretha Vermaak, Registered Dietitian at Rediscover Dairy says, "This analysis shows consumers how dairy can contribute to provide your family with important nutrients that is often not consumed in sufficient amounts, in a cost-effective way. Dairy foods provide a wide range of nutrients that make a significant contribution to your daily requirements, providing nine important nutrients to help keep you healthy. That is good quality protein, calcium, potassium, vitamin A, B2, B12, magnesium, phosphorus and zinc.



Milk for instance, is a natural, whole food that nourishes growing children, replenishes and maintain adult bodies, and protects those who are ageing. As we tighten our belts, we need to focus on good quality protein and nutrient-richness that is affordable. What's more, some may be looking for ways to cut back on expensive monthly nutritional supplements and rather meet the same nutrient needs through consuming affordable, nutrient rich foods. Just one 250ml glass of milk meets one third (300 mg) of the adult calcium RDI (1000 mg). But there are many more ways to enjoy dairy each day, so it is easy to help meet your daily requirements of calcium by consuming just two to three dairy servings."



Table 2:

Table 2 compares the cost per portion and lists the dairy products and nutrients that were investigated.

Nutrient	Fresh full-cream milk 250ml	Maas 200ml	Plain double-cream yoghurt 200ml	Flavoured low-fat yoghurt* 200ml	Cheese 40g
Cost	R4.37	R3.30	R8.46	R7.34	R6.43
Protein g	8.3	6.6	8.6	8.4	10
Calcium mg	300	320	380	280	283
Vit B12 mg	2.3	0.8	0.6	0.6	1.28
Potassium mg	393	380	552	408	30.4

*containing added sugars

*dairy provides nine important nutrients

Having 3 servings of dairy a day (e.g. 1 cup (250ml) of milk, 200ml of yoghurt or maas and 40g of cheese) will provide you will almost all the calcium you need per day (900g), more than 100% of the vitamin B12, and more than half of your daily recommendations for potassium at R14 to R18 per day. At the same time it provides half of an average adult's protein needs for one day and many other nutrients helping you to stay fuller for longer. Combining dairy with nutritious whole wheat bread or a fruit will give you a complete meal and a punch of nutrients to keep you going.



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