
Inventory of National Rural Health Research Related Databases

Database name: **Food Expenditure Survey**

Thematic Coverage: This survey collects data on food expenditures and quantities purchased by households. It provides major data components needed for the production of the weights used in the compilation of the Consumer Price Index.

Maintained by: Labour Statistics Division

Availability: A public version of the file is available through the Data Liberation Initiative (DLI). Some variables are suppressed and other are aggregated to protect the anonymity of individual survey respondents. Custom tabulations are available on a cost recovery basis

Start Date: 1938

Release Date: Approximately 14 months after reference period

Frequency of collection: Irregular; Previous national surveys were conducted for 1969, 1982, 1986, 1992 and 1996.

Data Collection: Modified Labour Force Survey design sample of the working-aged population 15 years and older. The sample is drawn for the year and then divided into monthly subsamples to evenly distribute collection over the year. Members of selected households were asked to record expenditures on food and beverages using two one-week diaries. To facilitate coding, respondents are asked to give detailed descriptions of each product including net weight or volume and cost.

Sample size: 10,924 households

Geographic coverage: All provinces and territories

Lowest geographic level collected: Postal Code

Lowest geographic level of release: Data are projected to all standard levels of geography, including Forward Sortation Areas and 1996 Federal Electoral Districts.

Existing rural variable: Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) / Census Agglomeration (CA) and Non-CMA/CA are coded. Prince Edward Island has no CMA and the CMAs of Montreal and Toronto were each separate strata.

Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) / Census Agglomeration (CA) and Non-CMA/CA can be used as an urban / rural variable. CMA/CA and Non-CMA/CA can be used to construct a 5-level rural/urban variable. Urban core, urban fringe and rural fringe distinguish between central and peripheral urban and rural areas within a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). **Urban core** is a large urban area around which a CMA or a CA is delineated. The urban core must have a population (based on the previous census) of at least 100,000 persons in the case of a CMA, or between 10,000 and 99,999 persons in the case of a

CA. The urban core of a CA that has been merged with an adjacent CMA or larger CA is called the **secondary urban core**. **Urban fringe** is the urban area within a CMA or CA that is not contiguous to the urban core. It has a minimum population of 1,000 and a population density of at least 400 per square kilometre, based on the previous census counts. **Rural fringe** is all territory within a CMA or CA not classified as an urban core or an urban fringe. The other levels of geography in this classification are **urban area (small towns) that lie outside of CMA** and **rural area lying outside of CMA**.

Rural definitions that can be constructed from this database include (building block):

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|---|-----------------------------------|
| ✓ Census "rural areas" | (Enumeration Area) |
| ✓ Rural and Small Town definition | (Census Subdivision) |
| ✓ Metropolitan area and census agglomeration Influenced Zones | (Census Subdivision) |
| ✓ OECD "rural communities" definition | (Census Consolidated Subdivision) |
| ✓ OECD "predominantly rural regions" definition | (Census Division) |
| ✓ Ehrensaft's "Beale codes" | (Census Division) |
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Data Elements:

The questionnaire covers selected socioeconomic characteristics, as well as information on the household's purchasing habits and food expenditures while on trips overnight or longer during the previous month.

- Composition of households
- Characteristics of reference person, spouse and dwelling
- Food and beverages while away from home
- Personal income in the last 12 months
- Food and beverages purchased from stores by type of store
- Food and beverages from restaurants by type of restaurant

Notes:

This survey supplements Statistics Canada's Survey of Family Expenditures (FAMEX) by providing a detailed level of food expenditure that was not feasible in the context of the FAMEX methodology.

Comparisons of expenditures are based on current dollars (i.e. not adjusted for inflation).

The LFS uses a rotating panel sample design so that selected dwellings remain in the LFS sample for six consecutive months. One feature is that each of the six rotation groups can be used as a representative sample by itself.