



**20 September 2024**

**PRESS RELEASE**

### **Unjustified Price Surge in Ghee Adds Burden on Consumers**

At a time when many households are already reeling from the pressures of rising living costs, consumers now face an unjustifiable and sudden price surge in the cost of ghee, a daily household necessity for many Fijians. Recent snap surveillance of some major supermarkets in the Suva-Nausori corridor has revealed a staggering increase in the price of a 750ml bottle of ghee, rising from an average of \$24.02 in August to \$31.24 this week. This shocking price hike of more than \$7 in just a few weeks has placed an unnecessary financial burden on consumers.

This spike comes at a crucial time, as the festive season approaches when ghee is in high demand for religious ceremonies, traditional cooking, and family gatherings. Ghee, though not price-controlled, is a vital commodity during this period, making the sudden and significant price increase both alarming and unacceptable. The timing leaves consumers with limited alternatives for an essential item that will play a central role in many households during the celebrations.

While suppliers have cited rising raw material costs as a reason for the price jump, the Council strongly questions the magnitude of the increase. “This steep hike cannot be justified solely by external factors such as production costs. Businesses have a responsibility to ensure that their pricing decisions are reasonable and do not exploit the current economic conditions to make excessive profits at the expense of consumers,” stated the CEO of the Consumer Council of Fiji Seema Shandil.

The Council has initiated dialogue with ghee suppliers and supermarkets to get to the bottom of this sudden surge. However, traders are reminded that they must prioritize consumers' needs and operate in a fair and transparent manner. Exploiting vulnerable consumers with drastic and unanticipated price hikes is unacceptable.

“We also call on traders to practice restraint, especially as the upcoming festive season will see heightened demand for ghee. Such price hikes during critical times, when families are under increased financial pressure, can not be tolerated,” adds Ms Shandil.

While the Council will continue to monitor this situation closely and hold traders accountable for any practices that harm consumers, Fijians are urged to remain vigilant and report any further instances of unjustified price increases to the Council.

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Mobile App

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For more information, consumers can call the toll-free National Consumer Helpline on 155, or email your queries to [complaints@consumersfiji.org](mailto:complaints@consumersfiji.org).

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