

**Study on the Food Mail Program
delivered by
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada**

**Prepared by the
Kativik Regional Government**



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December 2009

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
STUDY CONDUCTED AT KUUJJUAQ, JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2009	4
Nunavik and Transportation Challenges	5
1. Geographical and Social Background	5
2. Food Transportation	5
3. Rates	6
4. Food Mail Program: Eligible and Ineligible Goods	6
Methodology	8
1. Revised Northern Food Basket	8
2. Data Compilation	8
3. Steps	9
4. Food Baskets	10
5. Contents of the Revised Northern Food Basket	10
6. Limitations	12
Results	13
1. Price of the Food Basket	13
2. KRG–Makivik Food Program	14
3. Scenarios	15
Conclusion	17
 COMPLEMENTARY STUDY CONDUCTED AT KUUJJUAQ, INUKJUAQ, SALLUIT AND KANGIQUJUAQ, OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2009	 18
Introduction	19
Methodology Issues	19
Results	20
Conclusion	21

Introduction

This study examines the Food Mail Program delivered by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). It measures the cost of food baskets purchased directly in Nunavik communities with the cost of food baskets purchased in Montreal and transported north via or separate from the Food Mail Program. The study consists of two components. The first component presents analysis carried out between June and September 2009 at Kuujjuaq. The second component presents complementary analysis carried out between October and December 2009 at Kuujjuaq, Inukjuak, Kangiqsujuaq and Salluit.

The residents of Nunavik (Nunavimmiut) face a high cost of living, due mainly to the cost of transportation. Since the region is not connected to the rest of Québec by road, consumer goods are either transported by ship during the summer months or by aircraft year-round. The Food Mail Program offers concessionary postal rates to transport food to Nunavik. The Program's goal is to improve access to healthy, nutritious food.

The purpose of this study is to illustrate the cost of food baskets purchased in three different manners. The food basket employed is the revised Northern food basket established by INAC. Food baskets were purchased according to the three avenues open to Nunavimmiut: at a local store, at Montreal and transported via the Food Mail Program, or at Montreal and transported separate from the Food Mail Program (which is to say via air cargo). Scenarios are also presented to compare the cost of the same food basket based on different Food Mail Program rates.

**Study Conducted at Kuujjuaq
from June to September 2009**

Nunavik and Transportation Challenges

1. Geographical and Social Background

Nunavik has a population of roughly 11,000, of which 91% are Inuit. The region covers two thirds of Québec. Due to its harsh climatic conditions and its remoteness from large urban centres, the day-to-day living of Nunavimmiut in the region's 14 communities is governed by food supply. Not only do residents not always have access to necessary consumer goods, but they pay higher prices due to transportation costs.

In this region where personal disposable income is \$22,655, 35% of households are single-parent families; 40% of the population is aged less than 15; and 21 to 30% of households live in poverty. A study completed by *Université Laval* in 2006 demonstrated that, for a list of identified products, prices were 57% higher in Nunavik than in Quebec City.

2. Food Transportation

Between June and September, ships deliver consumer goods to all 14 communities. Year-round, these consumer goods as well as perishable and non-perishable goods are transported by aircraft. Moreover, Nunavimmiut living the furthest north often pay more for these goods and, in particular, the quality of perishable goods is often poorer. In the region's northern-most communities, selection is also limited. The Food Mail Program offers concessionary postal rates for remote regions like Nunavik. Notwithstanding, only one flight per week ensures the transportation of eligible goods. On the other hand, air cargo permits the delivery of all kinds of goods daily for the most part, although at a very high cost.

3. Rates

Price per kilogram to transport food via air cargo and the Food Mail Program to different communities, 2009.
(\$)

Community	Air cargo		Food Mail
	Air Inuit	First Air	
Kuujuaq	5.72	2.76*	0.80 for perishable food goods 1.00 for non-perishable food goods + 0.75 per box + 0.75 for the transportation of each box
Inukjuak	6.00	n/a	
Salluit	10.50	n/a	
Kangiqsujaq	10.00	n/a	0.30 for priority perishable food goods 0.80 for perishable food goods 1.00 for non-perishable food goods

Source: • KRG, 2009

Notes: • * Additional fees of 37% must be added, and First Air offers no flights to the region's other communities.
• For Air Inuit, taxes are included.
• Special rates are currently applicable at Kangiqsujaq under a Food Mail Program pilot project, otherwise the same rates would apply to all the communities.

All priority perishable, perishable and non-perishable food goods are listed on the INAC website¹. The list contains 67 products.

4. Food Mail Program: Eligible and Ineligible Goods

The list of eligible and ineligible goods under the Food Mail Program and the list of priority perishable food goods under the Kangiqsujaq pilot project are listed on the following page.

¹ INAC website concerning the Food Mail Program, consulted on August 6, 2009: <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nth/fon/fm/index-fra.asp>.

Nutritious perishable food eligible under the Food Mail Program, 2009.

Nutritious Perishable Food

- Dairy products (e.g. fresh milk, UHT milk, buttermilk, chocolate milk, cheese, processed cheese, processed cheese spreads, cottage cheese, butter, cream, ice cream, ice milk, sherbet, yogurt, frozen yogurt, yogurt drinks, powdered milk), excluding canned milk.
- Margarine.
- Meat, fish and poultry products (fresh or frozen, including cured and smoked products, fish sticks and fish cakes).
- Fruits and vegetables (fresh or frozen).
- Fresh juice (pure or reconstituted), frozen juice concentrate, juice in Tetra Paks and similar containers, all of which must be without sugar added.
- Bread and bread products without sweetened filling or coating (e.g. bagels, English muffins, croissants, bread rolls, raisin bread, garlic bread, hamburger buns, hot dog buns, pizza crusts, frozen bread dough, tortillas).
- Eggs and egg substitutes.
- Selected semi-perishable food products (unsweetened seeds and nuts, cook-type cereals, whole wheat and rye flour, peanut butter, salad dressing, mayonnaise, yeast).
- Tofu, vegetable patties, similar vegetable-based meat substitutes, soybean-based milk substitutes.
- Infant formula, infant cereals, other foods prepared specifically for infants.
- Water (excluding carbonated and flavoured water).
- Combinations of the above products (e.g., pizza, frozen dinners).
- Prescription and non-prescription drugs.

Source: • INAC website, consulted on September 15, 2009: <http://inac-ainc.org/nth/fon/fm/pubs/eig/eig-fra.asp>.

Note: • The following convenience perishable foods are not included: sandwiches, hamburgers, hot dogs, prepared salads and other prepared foods for immediate consumption which are subject to GST; fresh or frozen products consisting of meat, poultry, fish, vegetables or eggs which are breaded or battered or in pastry; as well as combinations containing any of the products described above.

Non-perishable food eligible under the Food Mail Program, 2009.

Non-Perishable Food

- Canned products such as milk, unsweetened juice, fruit, vegetables, soup, meat, fish, poultry and stew.
- Unsweetened juice in bottles or cans.
- Dry beans, peas and lentils.
- Dried fruit and vegetables, dried soup mixes.
- Crackers, crispbread, hard bread, Pilot biscuits, melba toast.
- Arrowroot and social tea cookies.
- All purpose flour, cake and pastry flour.
- Rice, other grains, popping corn (unpopped).
- Pasta (macaroni, spaghetti, noodles, macaroni and cheese dinners).
- Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals.
- Cake mixes, pancake mixes, muffin mixes, bread and roll mixes, bannock mixes, pizza mixes, jelly powders, pudding mixes, puddings (canned or ready-to-eat).
- Lard, shortening, cooking oils.
- Sugar, salt, baking powder, cornstarch.
- Spreads, syrups, sauces, condiments, toppings (excluding artificial cream products), ketchup, vinegar, relish, pickles, jam, honey.
- Coffee, tea.
- Fruit drink crystals with vitamin C added.

Source: • INAC website, consulted on September 15, 2009: <http://inac-ainc.org/nth/fon/fm/pubs/eig/eig-fra.asp>.

Priority perishable food eligible under the Food Mail Program, 2009.

Priority Perishable Food

- Fresh milk (excluding chocolate milk), UHT milk, buttermilk, processed cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, yogurt drinks, powdered milk.
- Fresh vegetables.
- Frozen vegetables, excluding French fries and similar potato products.
- Fresh fruit.
- Frozen fruit.
- Frozen juice concentrate.
- Eggs.

Source: • INAC website, consulted on September 15, 2009: <http://inac-ainc.org/nth/fon/fm/pubs/eig/eig-fra.asp>.

Methodology

1. Revised Northern Food Basket

The revised Northern food basket (RNFB) is a measuring tool established by INAC. It represents a nutritious diet for a family of four² for one week. The Northern food basket was revised in 2007 to become the RNFB. It considers the eating habits identified in nutrition surveys conducted by INAC in isolated communities and information from surveys on the eating habits of Inuit and First Nations. It furthermore meets the recommendations contained in the document *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (2007). For these reasons, the RNFB represents an adequate tool in this study for comparison.

2. Data Compilation

The RNFB represents nutritional values, not the formats sold by different suppliers. It was therefore necessary to convert the quantities purchased in standard formats into values that matched the RNFB.

It was decided to purchase one unit of each product regardless of the format and then to convert the data by multiplying the price by the desired quantity.

² Family: two adults aged between 31 and 50, plus one boy and one girl aged between 9 and 13.

Whenever possible, the quantity purchased was as close as possible to the quantity established in the RNFB. Notwithstanding, for consistency purposes, the three food baskets were the same to within a few grams.

3. Steps

The first food basket was purchased at the Kuujjuaq store Newviq'vi on August 12, 2009, with the assistance of an Inuk resource person. Brands were selected according to their popularity, price and finally format (in order to match the values established in the RNFB, if possible). Average prices were selected and several products were distributor brands. On-sale products were excluded.

Given that selection is limited in Nunavik, it was easy to find the same brands of products at Montreal. For each product, the brand and the format were recorded. The food basket to be purchased at Montreal was therefore based on this first list.

In order to obtain a more accurate portrait of cost realities at Kuujjuaq, product prices for the same food basket were recorded from a second store, namely the Northern, and an average Kuujjuaq price was calculated.

The two other food baskets were ordered from *Marché Daoust* at Montreal. This store not only accepts to send orders to Nunavimmiut via air cargo, but it is affiliated with the Food Mail Program.

The orders for the two food baskets were transmitted on August 13, 2009. The supplier was informed that the orders were part of a study and was asked insofar as possible to provide the indicated formats and brands. Where a brand was not available, the supplier was asked to substitute a similar brand.

The food basket shipped via air cargo arrived at Kuujjuaq on August 14, 2009, which is to say the very next day. Regarding the food basket ordered under the Food Mail Program, it was shipped on August 19, 2009; the perishable food arrived on August 22; and the non-perishable food arrived on August 24, 2009. By way of explanation, Food Mail Program orders are now only shipped once a week, every Wednesday.

4. Food Baskets

With the assistance of an Inuk resource person employed by the KRG to work with elders, each food basket was distributed to a household that includes elders. This age group is the most affected by poverty.

5. Contents of the Revised Northern Food Basket

Tables showing the weight of each food group, as well as the contents of the RNFB and the products actually purchased, are reproduced below. The contents of the RNFB were slightly modified since some products were not available at Kuujjuaq for the first food basket.

Revised Northern Food Basket, weight by food group.
(kg)

Food group	Weight
Milk and substitutes (15.35 L)	9.2 kg
Eggs, meat, poultry, fish	6.7 kg
Meat substitutes and meat-based preparations	1 kg
Grain products	5.5 kg
Citrus fruit and tomatoes	4.4 kg
Other fruit	9.95 kg
Potatoes	3.7 kg
Other vegetables	8.7 kg
Fats and oils	1.05 kg
Sugar	0.6 kg
Total weight	50.8 kg

Source: • RNFB, Food Mail Program, INAC, 2007.

PERISHABLE FOOD

Dairy products and eggs		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Milk	Milk 2%		X	
	Milk 3.25%	4.76 L	X	
	Milk UHT		X	X
Cheese				
	Mozzarella	485 g	X	
	Processed slices	385 g	X	
Yogurt				
	Yogurt	1.67 kg	X	
Eggs				
	Large white	8 units	X	X

Fats and oils		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Margarine	Non-hydrogenated	715 g		
Butter	Butter	65 g		X

Meats, poultry, fish and substitutes		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Chicken	Drumsticks	2.68 kg		
Pork	Pork chops	1.21 kg		
	Cooked ham	135 g		
Beef				
	Ground beef	1.34 kg		
	T-bone steak	470 g		
Deli meats				
	Bologna	60 g		
	Smoked sausages	100 g		
Fish				
	Frozen fish sticks	135 g		

Breads and bread products		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Bread	Enriched white	660 g		X
	Sliced brown	660 g		

Fruit and juices		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Fruit	Oranges	1.23 kg	X	X
	Red apples	4.38 kg	X	X
	Bananas	3.58 kg	X	
	Grapes	500 g	X	
Juices				
	Apple concentrate	130 mL	X	
	Orange concentrate	1.13 L	X	

Vegetables		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Vegetables	Red potatoes	3 kg	X	X
	Carrots	2 kg	X	
	Yellow onions	695 g	X	X
	Cabbage	520 g	X	
	Turnip	350 g	X	
Frozen veg.				
	Green vegetables	695 g	X	
	Mixed vegetables	1.74 kg	X	
	Whole corn kernels	260 g	X	
	Carrots	260 g	X	
	French fries	480 g		

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD

Dairy products		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Milk	Canned evaporated 2%	1.58 L		
	Skimmed powder	90 g	X	

Fats and oils		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Oils	Canola	185 mL		X
	Lard	105 g		

Meats, poultry and fish		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Fish	Canned pink salmon	270 g		
	Sardines in soya oil	270 g		
Meats				
	Canned ham	200 g		
	Canned pork meatloaf	50 g		
	Canned salted beef	40 g		

Meat and vegetable preparations		Qty	PP	Nunavik
	Canned beans	290 mL		
	Canned beef stew	180 g		
	Can. spaghetti sauce/meat	155 mL		

Grain products		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Flour	All purpose	1.92 kg		X
Pasta	Spaghetti	385 g		X
	Macaroni and cheese	550 g		
Potato				
	Mashed potato mix	220 g		
Rice				
	Long-grained white	330 g		X
Cereal				
	Oatmeal	275 g		
	Cornflakes	440 g		X
Cookies				
	Social tea biscuits	275 g		

Canned fruit		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Fruit	Fruit salad	855 mL		
	Peaches	285 mL		
	Pears	285 mL		
Juices				
	Tetra Paks – apple	880 mL		
	Tetra Paks – orange	375 mL		

Canned vegetables		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Vegetables	Green peas	900 mL		
	Whole corn kernels	1.09 L		
	Green beans	315 mL		
	Carrots	325 mL		
	Mixed vegetables	545 mL		
	Whole tomatoes	215 mL		
	Tomato sauce	300 mL		

Condiments, sauces and spreads		Qty	PP	Nunavik
Sugar	White sugar	600 g		X
Spread	Peanut butter	90 g		

Source: • KRG, August 2009, based on the RNFB.

Note: • This list corresponds to the RNFB. A few products were replaced due to unavailability.

- "PP" denotes priority perishables under the Kangiqsujuaq pilot project being conducted by INAC. For these products, the cost per kilogram is \$0.30 plus \$0.75 per box, instead of \$0.80/kg plus \$0.75 per box.
- "Nunavik" denotes products that are eligible for a 20% discount under the KRG–Makivik Food Program.

6. Limitations

Since this study is based mainly on the RNFB established by INAC, it is important to make a few clarifications.

- The RNFB is based on food studies that examine average consumer data. For this reason, it does not take into account household preferences.
- Established in accordance with a nutritious diet for a family of four for one week, the RNFB does not take into account prepared meals, convenience food or food of little nutritional value. The RNFB does not therefore reflect the consumer habits of Nunavik households.
- The cost of the RNFB varies according to the brands selected, with distributor brands often being less expensive. In the food basket used in this study, several products are distributor brands.
- Products purchased in bulk are often less expensive. In this study, formats that matched as closely as possible the quantities provided for in the RNFB were selected.
- According to INAC, the RNFB represents a nutritious diet for a family of four for one week. However, according to the KRG, the RNFB falls far below the food consumption level of a family with two children.
- The RNFB corresponds only to the food item in a household budget because it excludes personal hygiene products (which cost on average 40% more in Nunavik) and household cleaning products (which cost on average 96% more) according to a 2006 study conducted by *Université Laval*.

Notwithstanding, the RNFB remains an adequate measuring tool, a model food basket, that permits comparisons to be made. Finally, the many conversions

needed to prepare the data analyzed in this study may produce a margin of error as great as a few dollars. All these variants result in a food basket price that is approximate. This study could be followed up by others that analyze the consumer habits of Nunavimmiut.

The food basket is used in this study as a benchmark to determine the difference between the cost of purchasing the food basket in one manner or another, in accordance with effective transportation rates and the community.

Results

1. Price of the Food Basket

Table 1 Weekly and monthly costs of the Revised Northern Food Basket, August 2009.
(\$)

Food basket cost	Per week	Per month
Purchased at Kuujjuaq in a local store	335	1,452
Purchased from a Montreal supplier and transported via air cargo	455	1,972
Food basket at Montreal	235	
Taxes, handling, delivery and air cargo	220	
Purchased from a Montreal supplier and transported via the Food Mail Program	346	1,499
Food basket at Montreal	231	
Taxes, handling and delivery	115	

Source: • KRG, August 2009.

Notes: • The cost of the Kuujjuaq food basket is an average of the prices at the stores Northern and Newviq'vi. In-store discounts (\$1 for every \$30 spent) are not applied.
• A \$5 margin of error applies to the cost of the food baskets.
• For monthly costs, the weekly totals are multiplied by 52 weeks and divided by 12 months.

Considering that local stores (which is to say Newviq'vi and Northern) use the Food Mail Program, there is no significant difference between the price of a food basket purchased locally and the same food basket ordered individually from Montreal via the Food Mail Program. Nonetheless, since the number of Food Mail Program flights has been reduced to one per week, an order placed with a Montreal Food Mail Program supplier may arrive in Kuujjuaq one week later. It

should be pointed out that, given the regular turnover of goods in local stores, the most popular, fresh food goods are always available. Failing this, a last-minute order by air cargo, although more expensive, can be made to meet consumer demand.

It can also sometimes cost slightly less to make purchases at local stores since promotional sales or other subsidies may be applicable.

On the other hand, if all the contents of the food basket were transported by air cargo (which is to say at the rate of \$2.76/kg), it would cost \$520 more per month for a family of four people at Kuujuaq, and still more expensive for a family in another community since air cargo rates are even higher.

2. KRG–Makivik Food Program

The Makivik Corporation and the KRG began implementing the Food Program on December 1, 2008. The subsidy for the Food Program is paid to the KRG pursuant to an agreement with the *ministère des Transports du Québec* (transportation) negotiated following the Katimajit Conference held in August 2007. Administered by the KRG, the Food Program is one of six measures aimed at reducing the high cost of living that have been created since the Katimajit Conference. The Food Program provides a 20% discount on 19 essential food and non-food goods. Among the contents of the RNFB listed on page 11, the X's in the Nunavik column identify the goods also covered under the Food Program. In all, there are 14. Table 2 below shows the cost of the food basket purchased in a local store with and without the 20% discount. The difference is \$71 per month. Other products (such as tea, toilet paper, baking powder, washing detergent and baby diapers) are subsidized under the Food Program but do not appear in the RNFB. Nonetheless, these products represent a significant portion of household spending.

Table 2 Weekly and monthly costs of the Revised Northern Food Basket at a Kuujjuaq store with and without the KRG–Makivik Food Program.
(\$)

Food basket cost	Per week	Per month
With the KRG–Makivik Food Program	335	1,453
Without the KRG–Makivik Food Program	352	1,524

Source: • KRG, August 2009.

Notes: • The KRG–Makivik Food Program provides a 20% discount on certain food products, such as milk, eggs, oranges, apples, potatoes, onions, canola oil, white bread, flour, pasta, rice, grain products and sugar.
• For monthly costs, the weekly totals are multiplied by 52 weeks and divided by 12 months.

3. Scenarios

Table 3 below illustrates different rate scenarios under the Food Mail Program for a family of four.

- If the rate for the transportation of non-perishable food were to more than double from (\$1 to \$2.15/kg), the RNFB would cost \$220 more per month.
- If the rate for the transportation of non-perishable food were to more than double (from \$1 to \$2.15/kg) and if the rate for the transportation of perishable food were to increase by 10% (to 0.88/kg), the RNFB would cost \$234 more per month.
- If the Kangiqsujuaq pilot project (which has a rate of \$0.30/kg for priority perishable food goods; among the contents of the RNFB listed on page 11, the X's in the PP column identify these goods) were to be applied at Kuujjuaq, the RNFB would cost \$73 less per month.
- If the rate for the transportation of perishable food were to be set at \$0.30/kg and the rate for non-perishable food at \$1.00/kg, the RNFB would cost \$93 less per month.

Table 3 Weekly and monthly simulated costs of the Revised Northern Food Basket with different transportation rates.
(\$)

Food basket cost	Per week	Per month
RNFB, current (\$0.80/kg for perishables and \$1.00/kg for non-perishables)	346	1,499
RNFB, if the rate were \$2.15/kg for non-perishables (\$0.80/kg for perishables and \$2.15/kg for non-perishables)	397	1,719
RNFB, if the rate were \$2.15/kg for non-perishables and the rate for perishables was increased by 10% (\$0.88/kg for perishables and \$2.15/kg for non-perishables)	400	1,733
RNFB, if the rate were \$0.30/kg for priority perishables ¹ (\$0.30/kg for priority food, \$0.80/kg for perishables and \$1.00/kg for non-perishables)	329	1,426
RNFB, if the rate were \$0.30/kg for perishables (\$0.30/kg for perishables and \$1.00/kg for non-perishables)	325	1,406

Source: • KRG, August 2009.

Notes: • For monthly costs, the weekly totals are multiplied by 52 weeks and divided by 12 months.

• ¹ This rate is currently being applied under the Kangiqsujuaq pilot project.

The total weight of the contents of the RNFB is roughly 51 kg. The proportion of perishable food goods in the RNFB is very significant. These goods weigh roughly 37 kg. Moreover, priority perishable goods represent roughly 28 of the 37 kg. Non-perishable goods for their part represent only 14 kg.

Conclusion

- Table 3 demonstrates that a postal rate increase for priority perishable, perishable and non-perishable goods under the Food Mail Program would have serious consequences for Nunavik consumers. Not only do priority perishables represent the greatest part of the weight of the RNFB, they include the most nutritious elements (milk, cheese, yogurt, fruit, vegetables, eggs).
- According to the Food Mail Program rate-increase scenarios presented in Table 3, a family of four pays between \$1,426 and \$1,733 per month for its essential food needs. Given that a large number of Nunavimmiut live in poverty, an increase of \$300 per month for food would have significant adverse effects.
- It should be recalled that the RNFB does not include personal hygiene, household cleaning and baby products, which are extremely expensive in Nunavik. (These products are covered under the KRG–Makivik Food Program.)
- Finally, the data analyzed in this study is not representative of all Nunavik communities. Prices in Kuujjuaq are in fact lower than in the region's other communities.

In light of the results obtained at Kuujjuaq in this study, the KRG decided to conduct complementary research in three other communities between September and December 2009. The results of this research appear hereafter in the *Complementary Study Conducted at Kuujjuaq, Inukjuak, Salluit and Kangiqsujuaq from October to December 2009*.

**Complementary Study Conducted at
Kuujjuaq, Inukjuak, Salluit and Kangiqsujaq
from October to December 2009**

Introduction

The conclusions of the *Study Conducted at Kuujjuaq from June to September 2009* lead the KRG to repeat its study of the Food Mail Program in other Nunavik communities.

With the assistance of resource people identified by the Makivik Corporation, data was compiled between October and December 2009 at Salluit, Kangiqsujaq, Inukjuak and Kuujjuaq. (New measurements were taken at Kuujjuaq for methodological purposes.)

For each community, the list of products purchased is shown on page 11 of this document. The food baskets were purchased and the prices compiled by the identified local resource people. For Kangiqsujaq, the food baskets were purchased on October 29; for Salluit, on November 5 and 6; and for Inukjuak, on October 27. In each community two food baskets were purchased, one at the Northern and the other at the cooperative store. In total, six food baskets were purchased and then offered to families in need. A simple price check was carried out at Kuujjuaq on November 26. It was also necessary to convert the data recorded into the values established for the RNFB.

Methodology Issues

In one of the three communities, the food basket could not be purchased on the planned date because the store shelves were not well stocked. The purchase could not be carried out for a whole week.

As well, on receipt of the recorded information, it was noted that a good deal of data was missing because certain products were not available at that time.

For five of the eight food baskets, information on more than nine products was missing. In most cases, the missing information was for priority perishable products. For six of the eight food baskets, information was missing for at least one of the milk products.

Results

Table 4 below shows the cost of the food baskets purchased at Montreal and transported via air cargo, and the food baskets purchased in local stores.

Table 4 Weekly and monthly costs of the Revised Northern Food Basket purchased at Montreal (and transported via air cargo) and purchased at a local store in the different communities.
(\$)

Community	RNFB purchased locally ³		RNFB purchased at Montreal / transported air cargo ¹			
	Weekly	Monthly	Weekly ²	Air cargo	Total weekly	Total Monthly
Inukjuak	368	1,595	268	306	574	2,487
Kangiqsujuaq	361	1,564	268	510	778	3,371
Salluit	373	1,616	268	536	804	3,484
Kuujuaq	355	1,538	268	292	560	2,427

Source:

Notes:

- KRG, 2009.
- ¹ All these food baskets were transported by Air Inuit. Air Inuit's cargo rates are: \$6.00/kg for Inukjuak, \$10.00/kg for Kangiqsujuaq, \$10.50/kg for Salluit and \$5.73/kg for Kuujuaq.
- ² The cost of the RNFB is based on prices recorded at *Marché Daoust* at Montreal on October 26, 2009.
- ³ The cost of the food basket is an average of the prices at two stores (Northern and Newviq'vi at Kuujuaq, and the cooperative store and Northern at the three other villages).
- For monthly costs, the weekly totals are multiplied by 52 weeks and divided by 12 months.

It should be noted that the different retailers make use of the Food Mail Program insofar as possible. Consequently, the price of the RNFB purchased locally should reflect the lower prices made possible under the Food Mail Program, as well as the discount provided under the KRG–Makivik Food Program.

Notwithstanding, whenever the number of weekly flights to a community does not meet local demand, orders can be transported via air cargo and residents are obliged to pay higher prices for their products, according to the community. This problem affects priority perishable products more often since they are more fragile and quality is more dependent on transportation delays under the Food Mail Program.

At Kuujjuaq, air cargo rates are lowest. This community is the largest; it is located in the southerly part of the region; and it is one of the best served by First Air and Air Inuit. Air cargo rates are lower because of the shorter distance.

At Kangiqsujuaq, despite the rates applicable under the Food Mail Program pilot project (which are lower for certain food goods), the monthly cost of the RNFB is \$26 higher than at Kuujjuaq, but \$31 lower than at Inukjuak. It is also noteworthy that the cost of the RNFB, which was \$335 at Kuujjuaq in August 2009 (refer to the *Study Conducted at Kuujjuaq from June to September 2009*, had grown to \$355 by November of the same year. The food basket purchased at Kangiqsujuaq cost \$93 more than the food basket purchased at Montreal. Following transportation via air cargo, the Montreal food basket however cost a total of \$778, or three times its original cost.

At Salluit, the monthly cost of RNFB was nearly 44% more than at Kuujjuaq and 200% more than at Montreal.

Conclusion

According to Table 4, it can cost twice as much to purchase the RNFB at Salluit and Kangiqsujuaq compared with Kuujjuaq. Kuujjuaq is therefore not necessarily representative of all of Nunavik communities. Air cargo rates are in fact lower.

In light of the results obtained, it may be concluded that, if all food goods had to be transported by air cargo, it would cost \$2,487 to feed a family of four at Inukjuak, \$3,371 at Kangiqsujaq, \$3,484 at Salluit and \$2,427 at Kuujjuaq.

It is obvious, therefore, that any drastic changes in the rates applied under the Food Mail Program would have very serious consequences on most Nunavik households.