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DLCA Implements Price List Reporting Changes for Wholesalers, Supermarkets and Retail Establishments in Effort to Market Basket Survey Compliance

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The V.I. government is tweaking the data collection process in hopes that more retailers in the territory will comply with monthly price list requirements.

Retailer price lists enable the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA) to publish the monthly Market Basket Survey, where pricing from the traditional food basket are made public. Through the Market Basket Survey, consumers can compare prices at wholesalers, supermarkets and retail establishments on St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John.

Beginning February 28, DLCA will launch a process to extract data and produce public information in a more efficient and less time-consuming manner.

The changes include:

- Wholesalers, Supermarkets and Retail Establishments will be required to submit prices on specified basic food items electronically on a bi-weekly basis.
- Transmission via hardcopy, email, fax, or other electronic medium shall be accepted. The pricing data must be addressed to K'wanda Daniels, Special Assistant to the Office of the Commissioner. Email information must be sent to kwanda.daniels@dlca.vi.gov. By fax, information must be sent to Ms. Daniels at (340) 718-8250.
- The Consumer Protection Service and Weights and Measures Unit will monitor the establishments at least once weekly to ensure that the information submitted is accurate.

By law, basic food commodities in the price lists must include all milk, bread, rice, flour, potatoes, cereal, juice, including canned, bottle and frozen juice and juice packs, bottled water, dried beans, fruits, vegetables, meats and poultry offered for sale.

The DCLA regularly publishes all relevant information collected in the Market Basket Survey process.

Any business required that fails to produce invoices or documents required by DLCA shall be fined not more than \$200 per violation under 11 Virgin Islands Code § 1071.

Consumers or Merchants with questions may contact Office of the Commissioner on St. Croix at (340) 713-3522; St. Thomas at (340) 714-3522; or on St. John at (340) 693-8036.

For consumer related issues you may also contact the DCLA by email at consumerawareness@dlca.vi.gov.