

18 May 2009

MEDIA RELEASE

CASE FOUND MORE THAN 50% VENDORS SURVEYED NOT DISPLAYING PRICES UPFRONT

In the latest round of 'Beverage Price Survey' (2nd round) conducted by the Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) in end March / early April, we found that more than 50% of the vendors surveyed did not display prices upfront. Other than that, when CASE compared the findings from the 1st round of the survey (conducted in February 2009), it was found that most prices of the beverages remained the same. We are heartened to find that generally prices did not increase during the recession period. However, we also feel that drink stall vendors could be more transparent in helping consumers to make the informed choices by displaying prices upfront.

From the survey, CASE seeks to fulfil 2 objectives

- 1) To find out whether clear pricing of the beverages is displayed upfront
- 2) To find out the price of common beverages available in coffee shops, hawkers centres and food courts islandwide.

A total of 151 drink stalls from 80 non air-conditioned and air-conditioned coffee shops, food courts and hawker centres were surveyed. The stalls surveyed were randomly

picked from all 4 regions around Singapore. For the survey, the beverage surveyed was based on the lowest available price for one-person consumption.

For this round of survey, it was focused specifically on the following beverages

1. Coffee with condensed milk or otherwise known as '*Kopi*'
2. Tea with condensed milk or other known as '*Teh*'
3. A regular can of *Pepsi*[™] or *Coke*[™]
4. A regular can of green tea
5. A regular can of chrysanthemum tea
6. A regular can of soya bean drink
7. A regular can of *100-Plus*[™] or *H2O*[™]
8. A regular can of *Aisina*[™] China Apple Drink

From our checks, CASE found that there were 2 vendors which charged differently from what was stated on the sign. For Ban Lee which is located in Golden Mile Food Centre, it was found that the price of coffee and tea were displayed as \$0.60 to \$0.70, but in actual sold at \$0.80. The other vendor was Aik Hua located in Blk 205 Bedok North Street 1. The vendor displayed canned drinks prices to be \$1.10 to \$1.20, however it was found that canned drinks were sold at \$1.30.

Based on the survey, it was found that the modal prices for coffee with condensed milk, tea with condensed milk and the surveyed canned drinks were \$0.80, \$0.80 and \$1.20 respectively. This implies that most vendors are selling the beverages at these prices. Coffee with condensed milk and tea with condensed milk were usually sold at the same price if bought from the same stall.

In addition, other types of Coffee like *Kopi O* and *Kopi C* usually cost 10 cents less than and more than the price of *kopi*, respectively. Therefore, by just capturing the price of *Kopi*, we would be able to know the cost of both *Kopi O* and *Kopi C*. The same applies for tea.

Referring to table 1 below, the price range for the beverages surveyed has been calculated. As seen in the table, the difference in prices for the different types of canned drinks is minimal. 100-Plus, H2O or Aisina™ China Apple Drink usually costs more when compared to other canned drinks.

Table 1: Range of price for all beverages in air-conditioned and non air-conditioned premises (2nd Round)

Items	Price Range (Non-Aircon)	Price Range (Aircon)
Coffee or Tea (with condensed milk)	\$0.60 - \$1.00	\$0.90 - \$1.60
Pepsi™ or Coke™	\$0.90 - \$1.40	\$1.30 - \$1.60
Green Tea	\$1.00 - \$1.40	\$1.30 - \$1.60
Chrysanthemum Tea	\$0.90 - \$1.40	\$1.30 - \$1.60
Soya Bean Drink	\$0.90 - \$1.40	\$1.30 - \$1.60
100-Plus™ or H2O™	\$1.00 - \$1.50	\$1.40 - \$1.60
Aisina™ China Apple Drink	\$1.00 - \$1.50	\$1.30 - \$1.60

Table 2: Mean Price of all beverages in air-conditioned and non air-conditioned premises (2nd Round)

Items	Mean Price (Non-Aircon)	Mean Price (Aircon)
Coffee or Tea (with condensed milk)	\$0.82	\$1.18
Pepsi™ or Coke™	\$1.19	\$1.46
Green Tea	\$1.20	\$1.46
Chrysanthemum Tea	\$1.19	\$1.46
Soya Bean Drink	\$1.19	\$1.44
100-Plus™ or H2O™	\$1.22	\$1.54
Aisina™ China Apple Drink	\$1.23	\$1.47

By comparing the mean prices of the 6 different canned beverages in Table 2 above, we also observed that on average, 100-Plus™ or H2O™ and Aisina™ China Apple Drink cost the highest among other canned drinks.

For the 1st round of survey conducted in February 2009, CASE only surveyed 3 items, namely Coffee with condensed milk or otherwise known as '*Kopi*', Tea with condensed milk or other known as '*Teh*' or a regular can of *Pepsi*[™] or *Coke*[™]. A price comparison of the findings from the 1st round of survey and 2nd round of survey shows that most of the vendors kept their prices constant. Less than 10% of the vendors increased the price of the beverages over the period.

From the survey, we also found a few vendors who price the beverage higher than others. Please refer to table below.

Table 3: Vendors which price beverages higher than the rest surveyed

Location	Type of eatery	Type of beverage	Price of beverage
Food Junction @ Century Square - 2 Tampines Central 5	Airconditioned	Coffee / tea	\$1.60
Food Mall @ North Point - 930 Yishun Ave 2	Airconditioned	Canned drinks	\$1.60
Kopitiam @ Tampines Mall - 4 Tampines Central 5	Airconditioned	Canned drinks	\$1.60
Wang Wei Li Food Centre - Blk 721 Ang Mo Kio Ave 8	Non-airconditioned	Coffee / tea	\$1.00

CASE is also pleased to highlight that *Jin Cheng Hao Yin Pin Bing Shi*, a drink stall located in Maxwell Road Food Centre, offers the lowest priced *Kopi* and *Teh* and canned Coca-cola and Pepsi-cola, at \$0.60, \$0.60 and \$0.90 respectively.

Through conducting the survey, CASE hopes to generate greater awareness of the range of prices and would strongly urge vendors to list their prices clearly for consumers

to make an informed choice. Consumer can exercise their rights and vote with their wallet if they find prices too expensive.

We have also written to the respective coffee shops associations to facilitate better transparency in urging their members to display prices upfront. Moving forward, we will continue to monitor the beverage prices and update consumers of the trends. We would also carry on with other price surveys relating to consumer products.

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