

When food expenditure is considered, the poorest 20 percent of households in Sri Lanka share 10 percent of total food expenditure and the richest 20 percent of households share 31 percent of total food expenditure. When non food expenditure is considered, the corresponding figures for the poorest 20 percent of households and the richest 20 percent of households are reported as 4 percent and 59 percent respectively.

6.4 Consumption of food

Rice, wheat flour and bread are favourite food items consumed in Sri Lanka. Thus cereals (rice, wheat flour etc.) and prepared food (bread, buns, hoppers etc.) are the two major groups, which are consumed in large quantities , rather than other major groups in Sri Lanka.

Table 6.11: Average monthly household expenditure on major food group by sector – 2006

Major food group	Sri Lanka (Rs.)	Urban (Rs.)	Rural (Rs.)	Estate (Rs.)
All food items	8106	10604	7753	6790
Cereals	1216	1086	1195	1891
Prepared foods	993	1902	871	421
Pluses	276	265	276	307
Vegetables	674	720	671	594
Meat	305	584	262	206
Fish	695	1098	654	233
Dried fish	334	254	358	183
Coconuts	402	419	404	327
Condiments	734	884	711	679
Milk & milk foods	767	1077	723	613
Fats & oils	163	212	153	180
Sugar, jaggery, Treacle	339	366	337	283
Fruits	310	485	292	124
Other food items	897	1250	844	750

Table 6.12 shows the percentage distribution of average monthly household expenditure on major food groups given in Table 6.11. According to the Table 6.12 households in estate sector have spent nearly 28 percent of total expenditure for cereals. Households in both rural and estate sectors consume large quantity of cereals, which records the highest percentage in those sectors. But, when urban sector is considered, it shows the highest percentage (17.9 percent of total expenditure) for prepared foods.