



# NEWS RELEASE

## Defense Commissary Agency

Office of Communication

1300 E Avenue □ Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

Tel: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8524 DSN: 687-8000, Ext. 4-8524

FAX: (804) 734-8248 DSN: 687-8248

[www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com)

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**Contact:** Kay Blakley, DeCA Office of Communication  
**Tel.:** (804) 734-8000, Ext. 8-6243  
**E-mail:** [kay.blakley@deca.mil](mailto:kay.blakley@deca.mil)

## **‘Apples to apples’ – new calculations reveal even higher savings for commissary customers**

*By Kay Blakley,  
DeCA Office of Communication*

**FORT LEE, Va.** – Could you use an extra \$369 a month in your pocket? Here’s how – shop your commissary! “Delivering substantial savings to the brave men and women of our armed forces is now, and always has been, our top priority,” said Acting DeCA Director and COO Thomas E. Milks. “Recent changes in the way savings levels are computed have shown the actual dollar value of the commissary benefit is even higher than previously reported, That is excellent news!”

Savings rates have traditionally been based on comparisons between commissary sales figures and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s moderate-cost food plan statistics, which is a continuous survey measuring household grocery store purchases. The USDA figures are based on food purchases only, while the commissary data included both food and nonfood items. The food savings percentage is based on savings for the following edible categories: grocery (food), dairy, frozen food, meat and produce. The non-food savings percentage is based on savings for health and beauty care items along with grocery (non-food) which includes pet products, cleaning and laundry, paper products and other household items.

“This year, for the first time, we have broken out the nonfood items, so we’re comparing apples to apples, so to speak,” said Greg Kochuba, special projects chief for DeCA’s sales directorate. “It’s a more valid comparison of commissary prices vs. retail grocery prices and should be a more meaningful tool for our shoppers.”

The overall savings percentage reported earlier this year remains at 31.7 percent. However, worldwide savings for the food-only category now stands at 32 percent, and for the nonfood category at 30.5 percent. “Translating the percentages into dollar savings is where the difference really shows,” Kochuba said. Savings for a typical family of four increased from almost \$3,300 per year to more than \$4,400 per year when you include savings on nonfood items.

“That’s a \$369 a month boost to the family budget. So now, more than ever, our customers can see that shopping the commissary really is worth the trip!” Milks said.

The chart below lists annual savings amounts for household sizes indicated.

Household Definition	Household size	Food Savings	Nonfood Savings	Food & Nonfood Savings
Single	1	\$1,158.08	\$372.18	\$1,530.26
Single w/1 child	2	\$1,843.17	\$592.36	\$2,435.53
Married	2	\$2,123.13	\$682.33	\$2,805.46
Married w/1 child	3	\$2,619.67	\$841.91	\$3,461.59
Married w/2 children	4	\$3,351.22	\$1,077.02	\$4,428.24
Married w/3 children	5	\$3,720.22	\$1,195.61	\$4,915.82
Married w/4 children	6	\$4,533.70	\$1,457.05	\$5,990.74
Married w/5 children	7	\$4,803.40	\$1,543.72	\$6,347.12

**-DeCA-**

**About DeCA:** *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth more than \$4,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America’s military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*