

# *Cuba to maintain food subsidies for children and the sick*

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**Minister Betsy Díaz**

Havana, December 15 (RHC)-- Cuban authorities confirmed Tuesday that products destined for children and the sick will keep their current prices, despite the elimination of subsidies as part of the monetary reform starting on January 1.

The Minister of Domestic Trade, Betsy Díaz, assured that the products for minors and persons with special needs distributed through the regulated family basket's ration card would continue to be protected.

In contrast, other products will increase in value.

The increase in prices is one of the consequences of the devaluation resulting from the monetary and exchange rate unification foreseen for next year. This increase will be supported by the transformation of the income of workers, pensioners, and social security recipients.

The minister indicated that food for the more than one million people who receive medical dietary supplements, pregnant women, children with nutritional deficits, among other vulnerable people, will continue to be supported by the State budget, which will allocate 21 million pesos for this purpose.

Diaz stated at the Mesa Redonda program on national television that school uniforms, layettes, and prophylactic shoes will remain at current prices.

The prices of other non-subsidized products of high demand will remain unchanged (chicken, sausages, soft drinks, cookies, dressings, and pasta), while others such as alcoholic beverages, dairy products and canned fruits and vegetables will also see a price increase.

On the other hand, construction materials will be at the same prices as today, as well as cleaning and hygiene products, said the minister, who added how the importation of agricultural inputs, clothing, and furniture will increase their costs in the domestic market.

The minister noted that the so-called Ordering Task entails risks and opportunities. She pointed out how her sector companies, especially those of gastronomy, will have to be more efficient or assume their losses.

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