

Contact Julie Murphree
480.635.3607
480.276.7444 (cell)
juliemurphree@azfb.org

or

Contact Peggy Jo Goodfellow
480-635-3609
480.390.6708 (cell)
peggyjogoodfellow@azfb.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arizona Food Prices Down 2.5% in the Second Quarter of 2018

Arizona, June 25, 2018 – Arizona retail food prices at the supermarket were down in the second quarter of 2018, according to the latest Arizona Farm Bureau Federation Marketbasket Survey. The informal survey shows the total cost of 16 basic grocery items was \$46.90, down \$1.24 or about 2.5 percent less than the first quarter of 2018 (\$48.14).

Compared to Arizona's June 2017 second quarter survey total of \$46.06, the 2018 second quarter Marketbasket survey shows that Arizona's food prices have increased just under 2 percent year-to-year.

“The overall decrease in Arizona food prices is consistent with overall lower agriculture commodity prices,” said Arizona Farm Bureau's Communication Director, Julie Murphree. “Families should take advantage of meat and cheese prices right now as they have the largest price decreases in the group of 16 items. Chicken was the only meat item up in price. We continue to encourage Arizona families to keep hunting for those bargains in our basics like your meats, fruits, vegetables, dairy and eggs to stretch your food dollars.”

Of the 16 items surveyed in Arizona nine decreased, five increased and two items remained the same compared to the 2018 first quarter survey.

In Arizona, off-the-shelf prices for ground chuck showed the greatest decrease in price down 48 cents to \$2.97 a pound; orange juice down 34 cents to \$2.79 a half gallon; deli ham down 32 cents to \$3.49 a pound; toasted oat cereal down 28 cents to \$3.29 for the 8.9 oz box; milk down 16 cents to \$1.99 a gallon; shredded cheese down 14 cents to \$4.56 a pound; bacon down 12 cents to \$4.39 a pound; potatoes down 6 cents to \$2.24 a 5-pound bag and flour down 1 cent to \$1.82 a 5-pound bag.

“Remember Arizona Farm Bureau's Fillyouplate.org has searchable recipes, farmers' markets and farm products,” said Murphree. “The website is now mobile friendly. So, if you're traveling around the state and want to hunt for a local weekend farmer's market, go to fillyouplate.org using your smart phone or tablet.”

Eggs showed the largest price increase up 19 cents to \$1.88 a dozen. The other items that increased in price were white bread up 16 cents to \$1.30 a 20-oz loaf; chicken breast up 15 cents to \$3.10 a pound; vegetable oil up 12 cents to \$1.71 a 32-oz bottle and salad mix up 5 cents to \$2.73 a pound.

Two items remained the same. Sirloin roast at \$7.39 a pound and apples at \$1.25 a pound.

The year-to-year direction of the quarterly Marketbasket survey tracks with the federal government's Consumer Price Index report for food at home.

“In the mid-1970s, farmers received about one-third of consumer retail food expenditures for food eaten at home and away from home, on average. That figure has decreased steadily and is now just 16 percent, according to the United States Department of Agriculture's revised Food Dollar Series Department statistics,” explains an American Farm Bureau Economist.

Using the “food at home and away from home” percentage across-the-board, the Arizona farmer's share of this quarter's \$46.87 Marketbasket total would be \$7.50.

The Farm Bureau Market Basket Survey is unscientific, but serves as a gauge of actual price trends across the state. Arizona's bargain shoppers statewide should find individual items at prices comparable to the Farm Bureau survey averages and certainly cheaper with discounts and in-store specials. Arizona Farm Bureau seeks to identify the best in-store price, excluding promotional coupons and special deals.

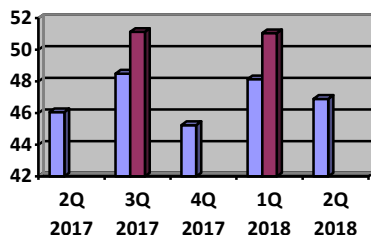
	Arizona - 2018			National-** 2017	
	2nd Qtr	1st Qtr		2nd Qtr No Survey	1st Qtr
Red Delicious apples	\$ 1.25	\$ 1.25	E	\$ 0	\$ 1.53
Russet potatoes, 5 lbs	\$ 2.24	\$ 2.30	D	\$ 0	\$ 2.67
Ground Chuck, lb.	\$ 2.97	\$ 3.45	D	\$ 0	\$ 4.01
Sirloin tip roast, lb.	\$ 7.39	\$ 7.39	E	\$ 0	\$ 5.12
Sliced deli ham, lb.	\$ 3.49	\$ 3.81	D	\$ 0	\$ 5.59
Bacon, lb.	\$ 4.39	\$ 4.51	D	\$ 0	\$ 4.75
Boneless chicken breast, lb.	\$ 3.10	\$ 2.95	U	\$ 0	\$ 3.10
Whole milk, gallon	\$ 1.99	\$ 2.15	D	\$ 0	\$ 3.07
Shredded Mild cheddar cheese, lb.	\$ 4.56	\$ 4.70	D	\$ 0	\$ 4.20
Eggs, one dozen large, Grade A	\$ 1.88	\$ 1.69	U	\$ 0	\$ 1.80
All-purpose flour, 5 lbs.	\$ 1.82	\$ 1.83	D	\$ 0	\$ 2.34
Orange juice, ½ gal.	\$ 2.79	\$ 3.13	D	\$ 0	\$ 3.46
Vegetable oil, 32 oz.	\$ 1.71	\$ 1.59	U	\$ 0	\$ 2.61
American Salad Mix, 1 lb	\$ 2.73	\$ 2.68	U	\$ 0	\$ 2.42
Toasted oat cereal, 8.9-oz. Box	\$ 3.29	\$ 3.57	D	\$ 0	\$ 2.78
White bread, 20-oz. Loaf	\$ 1.30	\$ 1.14	U	\$ 0	\$ 1.60

Change from quarter to quarter

Key: **U** up ; **D** Down; **E** even

** National only conducts two quarterly surveys on these items.

2017 Arizona and American Farm Bureau Market Basket Survey Results



Key to graph: Blue = Arizona Red = American

Arizona Farm Bureau's 18 Money Saving Tips to Stretch Your Food Dollars:

1. **Sort your pantry and organize to clearly know what's available.** This should be a regular effort to make sure you're using everything you have, not buying unnecessary items and can determine what you really need.
2. **Create a week-long menu.** From the planned menu create your shopping list based on local grocery store circulars you receive in the mail or newspaper.
3. **When planning your menu, think of ways to maximize the use of the "Stretch Your Food Dollar" menu as a springboard to create your own menu.** Gather ideas for meals based on the items down in price from Arizona Farm Bureau's "Stretch Your Dollar" menus on fillyourplate.org. Let the Farm Bureau's menus inspire your creativity!
4. **You've created the list; stick to it.** If you can stick to your list, you'll curb impulse spending on items you don't really need.
5. **Don't shop on an empty stomach.** Studies suggest you might spend 10 to 15 percent more on your food bill when you're hungry.
6. **Don't take the kids grocery shopping.** As with an empty stomach, kids can influence your impulse shopping.
7. **Stick to the basics.** While basic food items like dairy, meat, fruits and vegetables can sometimes seem expensive, you're gaining more value per unit and certainly more health benefits. The fewer processed food items you purchase, the more you'll save.
8. **Regularly survey the weekly grocery store circulars.** This will build your knowledge of prices for products you regularly use and give you a sense of which grocery stores tend to have the lowest prices. Take advantage of weekly advertised specials, especially for nonperishable staples.
9. **Be wary of the coupon trap.** Use coupons only for those items you normally buy. Don't let coupons cost you money by buying items you don't really need. A sale has no value to you if it means you're spending beyond your budget. Do take advantage of "ad-matching" since lots of savings can be found here.
10. **Assess the unit price.** This shopping tool lets you compare prices between brands and between sizes. Located on a shelf tag in front of the product, it provides costs in like units for the item. Generally, information is given in cost per ounce, per pound or per count.
11. **Shop the edges of the store, and if items at the ends of the aisles reflect a super deal buy.** As aisle-end items are dramatically marked down, they might be a valuable substitute on your grocery list. But they're budget busters if they become purchased food items you don't use in

your food preparation.

12. **Use grocery store club cards; also compare prices to store brands.** Store club cards can generate great savings. Plus, while you might love a certain brand, also compare a popular brand to the store brand for price comparisons and possible savings.
13. **Peak season is prime time to buy fresh produce.** The peak of the harvest for fresh fruits and vegetables offers you the best prices and the best quality. Take advantage of this and buy often. To always know what's in season, go to fillyourplate.org and select the tab "Arizona Produce in Season."
14. **When not buying fresh, consider buying frozen.** Most frozen vegetables are picked fresh, immediately flash frozen, are less expensive and will keep longer.
15. **Buy in bulk,** but don't buy more than you will use. Bigger is not always better. Larger-sized packages usually cost less on a per-unit basis. But it's not a better buy if it's too large to use before it becomes stale or spoiled.
16. **Move in on "family pack" savings.** Meat departments often have a section that offers larger-sized packages at cents-off-per-pound savings. Repackage these larger sizes into smaller quantities at home and freeze.
17. **Be flexible at the meat and produce counters.** This is one area to be flexible with your list. This allows you to take advantage of unadvertised "in store" specials and switch from one item to another.
18. **Use open dating codes, especially on perishables to maximize shelf life at home.** Open dating is used on perishable and semi-perishable products to let you know at a glance if the product is fresh. Most stores use a "pull date" - the last day the item is offered for sale. This still allows a few days for using at home. For stores that use a "pack date," especially with meats, inquire how long the product will remain fresh at home.

The importance of improving farm practices is not lost on Arizona Farm Bureau farmers and ranchers. "To feed the majority of Americans, crop and livestock agriculture must continually become more efficient, and in many cases, larger to spread energy and labor costs across more acres to help stabilize prices at the grocery store," said John Boelts, vegetable farmer from Yuma, Arizona. Boelts, who said the cost for just one refueling of one large tillage tractor can be more than \$600, explained that labor and energy are the two largest farm operating costs that must be controlled.

About the Arizona Farm Bureau

Arizona Farm Bureau began a quarterly Market Basket starting the fourth quarter of 2006. The Arizona Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization dedicated to preserving and improving the Agriculture industry through member involvement in education, political activities, programs and services. Go to www.azfb.org to learn more. To obtain "Stretch Your Food Dollar" menu and nutrition information go to www.fillyourplate.org. As a member services organization, individuals can become a member by contacting the Farm Bureau. For information on member benefits call 480.635.3609.

