



Rhode Island Food Cost Study: July 2023

Overview:

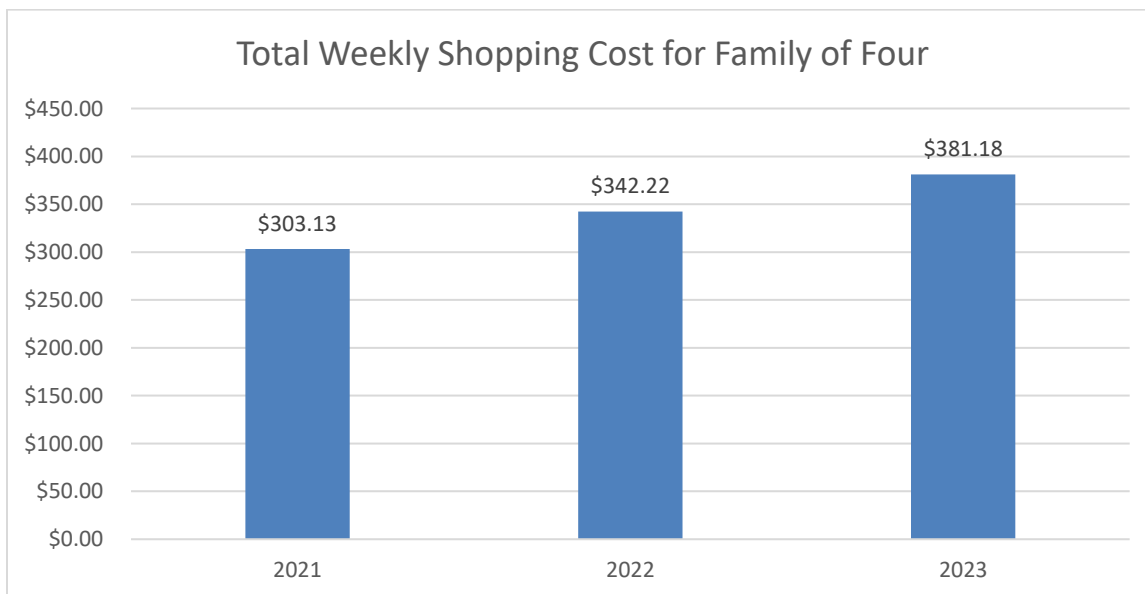
The Rhode Island Community Food Bank conducted this study to measure changes in the cost of food for consumers in the state. A shopping list was created with foods that could be prepared at home to produce a week of meals for a family of four based on the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Items on the shopping list were priced at a local supermarket in July 2021, 2022, and 2023.

Food inflation persisted last year. The cost of a weekly shopping list increased by 11 percent. Over the past two years, the cost of food purchased at a local supermarket grew by 26 percent.

Method:

Menus were created for 21 meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) to feed a family of four for one week (see Appendix A). All menus met the daily food intake recommendations of the USDA's My Plate Food Guidance System. A shopping list was then generated from the menus with the exact amounts of food needed to prepare each meal. During the same month (July) each year, shopping list items were priced at a supermarket in Rhode Island, with sale prices included (see Appendix B).

Results:



Weekly food costs grew by \$38.96 (11%), increasing from \$342.22 in 2022 to \$381.18 in 2023. Increases were found in all categories of food:

Food Category	2022	2023	Price Difference
Grains	\$50.17	\$53.76	+\$3.59
Protein	\$105.37	\$114.91	+\$9.54
Fruit	\$79.32	\$86.82	+\$7.50
Vegetables	\$56.12	\$67.78	+\$11.66
Dairy	\$40.10	\$45.90	+\$5.80
Other Food	\$11.14	\$12.01	+\$0.87
TOTAL	\$342.22	\$381.18	+\$38.96

Most individual items on the shopping list increased in cost. Of 71 items, 43 (61%) were more expensive in 2023 than in 2022. The average price increase for these 43 items was \$1.17.

Conclusion:

Consumers in Rhode Island experienced broad-based food inflation over the past year, with all categories of food costing more. Food costs grew by 11 percent in our study from July 2022 to July 2023, adding to already high food inflation in the previous year. Over a two-year period, from July 2021 to July 2023, food costs rose by 26%.

Limits of the Study:

The main limitation of the study is that it was conducted at one supermarket in Rhode Island. Our local findings are higher than the national Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index for food at home which rose by 3.6 percent over the last twelve months (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index Summary – July 2023).

Appendix A: Weekly Meal Planner

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Sunday	Scrambled Eggs Whole Wheat Toast Low-Fat Cottage Cheese 100% Orange Juice	Chicken Breast Romaine Lettuce Tomatoes Cucumber Low-Fat Mozzarella Cheese Apples Whole Wheat Crackers	Meatloaf Roasted Potatoes Peas Sliced Pears Dinner Rolls Fat-Free Milk
Monday	Whole Wheat O's Cereal Vanilla Fat-Free Yogurt Strawberries Blueberries Almonds	Grilled Cheese on Whole Wheat Bread Steamed Broccoli Grapes Fat-Free Milk	Pasta Sauce Ground Turkey Whole Wheat Spaghetti Romaine Salad with tomatoes
Tuesday	Oatmeal Banana Fat-Free Milk	Peanut Butter Pita Chips Low-Fat Mozzarella Cheese Celery Sticks Apples	Ham Black Beans Brown Rice Low-Fat Cheddar Cheese Steamed Carrot Pineapple
Wednesday	Omelets with broccoli and low-fat cheddar cheese 100% Orange Juice Whole Wheat Toast	Hummus Whole Wheat Crackers Baby Carrots Snow Peas Almonds Raisins Fat-Free Milk	Fish Tacos on Whole Wheat Tortillas Lettuce Tomatoes Low-Fat Cheddar Cheese Corn Mango Slices
Thursday	Bagels Hard Boiled Egg 100% Cranberry Juice Banana	Turkey on Whole Wheat Bread Low-Fat Swiss Cheese Lettuce Tomatoes Cucumber Vanilla Fat-Free Yogurt	Pork Loin Green Beans Applesauce Dinner rolls Fat-Free Milk
Friday	Whole Wheat O's Cereal Fat-Free Milk Blueberries Orange slices	Whole Wheat Tortilla Wrap with tuna salad Low-Fat Swiss Cheese Lettuce Tomatoes Grapes	Beef Tips Mushrooms Egg Noodles Broccoli Fat-Free Milk
Saturday	Whole Wheat Pancakes Turkey Sausage links Strawberries Fat-Free Milk	Low-Fat Cottage Cheese Cantaloupe slices Watermelon slices Celery Sticks Pita Chips	Roasted Chicken Brussel Sprouts Baked Sweet Potato 100% Cranberry Juice Low-Fat Vanilla Frozen Yogurt

Appendix B: Shopping List and Prices

Product	Amount	2022 Cost	2023 Cost	2022 to 2023 Change
Grains				
Brown Rice	1/32oz bag	2.99	2.89	-.10
100% Whole Wheat Bread	2/16oz bags	5.38	3.98	-1.40
100% Whole Wheat Bagels	1/22oz bag (6 count)	5.29	3.99	-1.30
Whole Wheat Crackers	2/8.5oz box	4.99	4.99	0.00
Dinner Rolls	Dozen	3.99	4.99	1.00
Whole Wheat O's Cereal	1/18oz box	6.59	6.99	.40
Rolled Oats/Oatmeal	1/18oz package	2.19	4.49	2.30
Whole Wheat Tortillas	2 packages (20 count)	6.98	7.38	.40
Egg Noodles	1/12oz bag	2.89	2.29	-.60
Whole Wheat Spaghetti	1/13.2oz box	2.29	2.49	.20
Whole Wheat Pancake Mix	1/32oz box	3.59	4.39	.80
Pita Chips	1/8oz box	3.00	4.89	1.89
Protein				
Eggs	2 dozen	8.58	6.98	-1.60
Ham	2/12oz packages	11.98	11.98	0.00
Turkey Sausage Links	1/16oz package	5.04	7.00	1.96
Black Beans	1/16oz bag dry	1.69	2.39	.70
Pork Loin	1lb	7.69	8.39	.70
Chicken Breast	2/1.5lb package	17.98	17.98	0.00
Beef Tips	1lb	6.99	7.99	1.00
Turkey Breast	2/7oz packages	9.58	13.98	4.40
Canned Tuna	2/5oz cans	2.38	3.38	1.00
White Fish	1lb fresh tilapia	7.99	6.99	-1.00
Ground Beef	1lb	6.81	7.19	.38
Ground Turkey	1lb	4.99	6.99	2.00
Almonds	1/9oz bag	6.19	4.99	-1.20
Hummus	1/10oz tub	3.49	4.99	1.50
Peanut Butter	1/16oz jar	3.99	3.69	-.30

Product	Amount	2022 Cost	2023 Cost	2022 to 2023 Change
Fruit				
100% Orange Juice	1/89oz bottle	6.79	7.79	1.00
100% Cranberry Juice	1/60oz bottle	4.29	4.29	0.00
Apples	1/3lb bag	3.99	6.99	3.00
Oranges	1/3lb bag	5.99	5.99	0.00
Bananas	8 count	2.40	2.70	.30
Grapes	4lbs	11.96	11.96	0.00
Strawberries	2/16oz packages	9.98	9.98	0.00
Blueberries	2 pints	9.98	9.98	0.00
Cantaloupe	1 melon	3.99	3.99	0.00
Watermelon	1 quarter melon	5.99	6.99	1.00
Raisins	1/12oz can	2.99	3.99	1.00
Mangos	2 medium	2.50	2.00	-.50
Sliced Pears in 100% Juice	1/4pack	3.29	3.99	.70
Diced Pineapple in 100% Juice	1/20oz can	2.19	2.39	.20
Applesauce	1/23oz jar	2.99	3.79	.80

Product	Amount	2022 Cost	2023 Cost	2022 to 2023 Change
Vegetables				
Lettuce	3 heads romaine	5.97	8.97	3.00
Tomatoes	7 medium	4.20	7.07	2.87
Cucumber	3 medium	2.97	1.50	-1.47
Baby Carrots	1/32oz bag	2.00	3.49	1.49
Sliced Carrots	2/16oz frozen bags	4.38	4.38	0.00
Mushrooms	2/8oz packages	4.00	2.58	-1.42
Bell Pepper	1 red bell pepper	.99	1.25	.26
Potatoes	3 medium white potatoes	3.87	3.78	-.09
Sweet Potatoes	4 medium sweet potatoes	3.16	4.28	1.12
Brussel Sprouts	2/16oz frozen bags	4.38	4.38	0.00
Peas	1/12oz frozen bag	1.59	2.39	.80
Snow Peas	1/8oz bag	3.99	3.99	0.00
Green Beans	1/32oz frozen bag	4.38	4.38	0.00
Corn	1/16oz frozen bag	1.59	1.89	.30
Broccoli	2/16oz frozen bags	2.78	4.38	1.60
Celery	2 bunches	3.98	6.98	3.00
Pasta Sauce	1/24oz can	1.89	2.09	.20
Dairy				
Fat-free Milk	2 gallons	8.98	8.98	0.00
Fat-free Vanilla Yogurt	2/32oz tubs	4.98	8.38	3.40
Low-Fat Vanilla Frozen Yogurt	1.5 qt.	3.59	3.50	-.09
Low-Fat Cottage Cheese	3/24oz tubs	10.77	11.07	.30
Low-Fat Mozzarella Cheese	1/8oz bag	2.00	2.19	.19
Low-Fat Cheddar Cheese	2/8oz bags	7.78	8.78	1.00
Low-Fat Swiss Cheese	1/8oz bag	2.00	3.00	1.00
Other Foods				
Mayonnaise	1/30oz jar	3.59	3.79	.20
Tomato Paste	1/6oz can	.59	1.09	.50
Yellow Mustard	1 container	1.69	1.89	.20
Vegetable Oil	1/24oz bottle	3.99	4.19	.20
Onion	1 small	1.28	1.05	-.23