

The Cost of a 2023 Thanksgiving Dinner in Arkansas

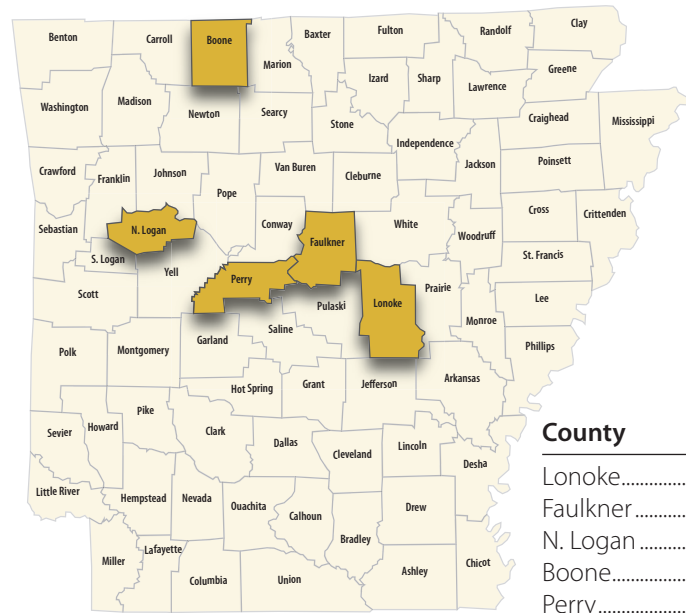
The Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation works with members of our Women’s Leadership Committee to shop for a Thanksgiving dinner at grocery stores across the state. The insights gathered by committee volunteers gives a statewide perspective on the changing cost of Thanksgiving dinner each year. American Farm Bureau also releases its own data for a national perspective. The American Farm Bureau (AFBF) survey results for 2023 are available [here](#).

For the Arkansas data shown in this report, all shopping was done in November 2023 and, according to the annual Arkansas Farm Bureau survey, the average cost of the traditional Thanksgiving feast for a family of 10 is \$68.31, or \$6.83 per person. This marks a 13% increase from the 2022 average of \$60.48, which follows the trend of a decreased cost one year and an increased cost the next with each passing year. Notably, the miscellaneous category has been excluded this year to provide a clear year-over-year comparison.

The cost per pound for turkeys this year stands at \$1.42, which is a 10-cent increase from 2022 resulting in an 8% increase from last year. However, it’s interesting to note that the USDA reports average turkey prices in October of 2023 at \$1.27 per pound, representing a substantial 22% decrease from the previous year on average for U.S. shoppers. In retrospect, the turkey supply had been impacted by Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) last year, which raised concerns about turkey availability. The USDA’s annual Turkeys Raised report indicates that 219 million turkeys were raised in 2023, marking a 4% increase from 2022 and surpassing pre-HPAI outbreak levels in 2021 by 1%. This increase in turkey production has contributed to better prices for consumers.

Although the turkey traditionally takes center stage on Thanksgiving tables, it is not the primary contributor to the overall price increase. Prices for dinner rolls surged by 67% compared to last year, while fresh celery and fresh carrots

Individual Surveys in Arkansas



Total Average Cost

2022	2023
\$60.48 (\$6.04 Per Person)	\$68.31 (\$6.83 Per Person)

saw increases of 57% and 41%, respectively. Out of all the surveyed items, only four price reductions were seen compared to last year: sweet potatoes (-6%), frozen green peas (-12%), cube stuffing (-20%), and whole milk (-5%).

The cost variance for statewide vs. nationwide shopping may be attributed to various factors, such as grocers special pricing, coupons and the availability of grocer options. Rural areas of the state may be especially vulnerable to higher prices at the grocery store, largely based on lack of price competition seen in more urban areas. Typically, Arkansas food prices remain relatively affordable compared to other states. However, price variations can be observed across the state and among different stores. For Arkansas shoppers, it's worth keeping an eye out for special deals, as we observed such promotions in the state last year.

2022 – 2023 Thanksgiving Dinner Survey

Items & Average Prices

Meal Items	2022	2023	% of Change
16 lb. Young Tom Turkey	\$21.09/1.32 lb	\$22.70/1.42 lb	8%
4 lb. Half Bone-in Ham	\$8.93/2.23 lb	\$10.87/2.72 lb	22%
Sweet Potatoes (3 lbs)	\$2.52/.84 lb	\$2.37/ .79 lb	-6%
Russet Potatoes (5 lb bag)	\$2.95/.59 lb	\$3.39/ .68 lb	15%
Fresh Cranberries (12 oz pkg)	\$1.86	\$1.90	2%
Fresh Carrots (lb)	\$0.98	\$1.38	41%
Fresh Celery (bunch)	\$1.10	\$1.73	57%
Frozen Green Peas (16 oz pkg)	\$1.27	\$1.12	-12%
Frozen Green Beans (16 oz pkg)	\$1.26	\$1.44	14%
9" Frozen Pie Shells (2 per pkg)	\$2.61	\$2.88	10%
Cube Stuffing, Herb Seasoning (14 oz pkg)	\$3.83	\$3.05	-20%
Dinner Rolls (12 count pkg)	\$2.26	\$3.77	67%
Pumpkin Pie Mix (30 oz can)	\$3.44	\$4.47	30%
Whole Milk (gallon)	\$3.88	\$3.69	-5%
Whipping Cream (½ pint carton)	\$2.50	\$3.54	42%

The price survey was conducted using statewide averages from members of the Arkansas Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee. These members surveyed food prices at grocery stores and supermarkets across the state and reported the "best in-store price" for 15 items, taking advantage of advertised specials, excluding discount coupons and purchase requirements. While not a scientific study, the survey aims to provide a snapshot of actual prices across Arkansas, with data collected during the survey period from Oct. 25 to Nov. 8.



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