

The Farmers' Share

From Grocery Store Back to the Farm Gate

Winnipeg - Manitobans are getting back to school, back to work, and back into grocery stores to re-establish their regular meal routines. We're all talking more about the price of food, and Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) wants people to know how much of their food dollar goes back to the farms that have produced it.

In a research project conducted this summer, KAP found that an average of only 27% of the cost of an entire week's worth of groceries for a family of four goes back to the farm gate. Depending on the food group, that percentage ranged from 4% for grain products like bagels and rice to 35% for dairy products like yogurt and cheese.

"Manitobans have access to some of the most affordable food in the world, but only a relatively small portion goes back to the farmers that grow and raise it," says KAP President Ian Wishart. "We're hoping this information helps people to understand where their money is going, and to help them think critically when media is saturated with stories that put the blame on rising food costs straight back to the farm gate."

Wishart noted that the vast majority of the farmers' share is simply the cost of doing business: Farmers' expenses and inputs account for about 86% of their revenue, according to figures from Statistics Canada.

The menu selections were based on Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating for two adults, a teenager, and a child. The total food cost (before taxes) was \$186.22, with 89% of the foods listed as being produced in Canada.

The farmers' share ranges widely between food products, often depending on the number of steps in the chain between the farm and the grocery store. Less-processed foods, like meat or vegetables, often showed a greater return to the farmer. In the case of bread or other grain products, the actual return to the farm gate is extremely small.

"Just by their food-buying decisions, Manitobans can decide what portion of their dollar is going back to support farm families," says Wishart.

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For more information, please contact:

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The Farmers' Share

Background Information about the Project

Our Menu

Canada's Food Guide is the basis for the menu. We've focused on a family of four (one adult male, one adult female, one teenage female, and one child) for one week. Where possible, a preference was given to foods that were labeled as being produced in Canada.

The Prices

Farm prices were sourced in April & May, 2008. Groceries were priced in Winnipeg on May 10, 2008. The total grocery bill (before taxes) was \$186.22.

The Calculations

The Farmers' Share required extensive calculations. KAP's researcher had to consider how many cranberries or apples would be in a litre of juice. Similarly, the ratio of wheat to bread, and milk to cheese had to be established. The meat yield and other processes had to be considered in determining the farmers' share of these purchases.

Where The Grocery Money Goes

Based on this shopping trip, the majority of the money (41%) was spent on Vegetables & Fruit. The balance was spent relatively equally between Grain Products (18%), Milk & Alternatives (16%), and Meat & Alternatives (25%).

The Farmers' Share

The average Farmers' Share in this project is 27%. The share does vary significantly depending on the specific food, and even between food groups:

Vegetables & Fruit	29% Farmers' Share
Milk & Alternatives	44% Farmers' Share
Meat & Alternatives	28% Farmers' Share
Grain Products	4% Farmers' Share

Where The Farmers' Share Goes

According to Statistics Canada, farmers' expenses account for 86% of their revenue. This means that for every dollar received, farmers only keep 14 cents to re-invest into their farms. The rising cost of inputs like fuel and fertilizer, as well as utilities, wages, and other services all put a strain on the farmer's bottom line.

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Some Farmers' Share Comparisons

Wednesday's Breakfast	Total Cost	Farmers' Share	Percentage
Oatmeal	\$2.35	\$0.08	3.4%
Milk	\$1.00	\$0.67	67%
Strawberries	\$7.98	\$1.64	20.6%

Monday's Lunch	Total Cost	Farmers' Share	Percentage
Pitas	\$0.83	\$0.09	10.8%
Turkey	\$5.63	\$0.87	15.5%
Vegetable puree soup	\$2.56	\$0.20	7.8%

Monday's Supper	Total Cost	Farmers' Share	Percentage
Pork chops	\$4.88	\$1.92	39.3%
Sweet potatoes	\$1.49	\$0.57	38.2%
Apple juice (for sauce)	\$0.45	\$0.15	33%
Couscous	\$4.32	\$0.04	1%

Featured Products & The Farmers' Share

	Total Cost	Farmers' Share	Percentage
2 Loaves of Bread	\$5.74	\$0.26	4.5%
900 g Cheese	\$16.11	\$7.38	45%
2 cups of Red Pepper	\$3.99	\$0.40	10%
600 g Turkey	\$11.25	\$1.74	15.4%
600 g Sirloin Tip Beef	\$4.61	\$2.05	44.4%
1.2 kg Strawberries	\$7.98	\$1.64	20.6%
1.5 L Yogurt	\$5.77	\$1.34	23.2%
700 g Oatmeal	\$2.35	\$0.08	3.4%



The Farmers' Share

Our Week-Long Menu

Sunday

Breakfast Bagel, yogurt & cranberry juice
Lunch Beef sandwich, hot apple crisp with milk
Supper Roast turkey dinner

Monday

Breakfast Cereal and peaches
Lunch Pita with turkey, lettuce & tomato, and vegetable puree soup
Supper Eastern pork chops

Tuesday

Breakfast Egg, ham & cheese omelet with an English muffin
Lunch Peanut butter & honey sandwich, with apples and yogurt
Supper Chicken cacciatore and salad

Wednesday

Breakfast Oatmeal with milk and strawberries
Lunch Grilled chicken sandwiches filled with vegetables
Supper Hamburgers and three-bean salad

Thursday

Breakfast Bran muffin and apple juice
Lunch Tomato and cheese sandwich, apple, and milkshake
Supper Home-made macaroni and cheese with chopped tomatoes, and whole wheat garlic toast

Friday

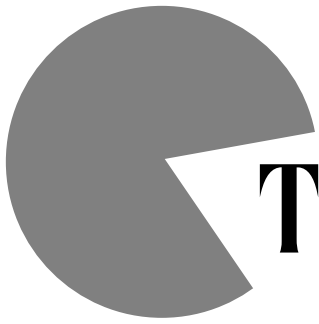
Breakfast Blueberry pancakes with milk or a café au lait
Lunch Macaroni and cheese with apple juice
Supper Fish dinner

Saturday

Breakfast Cereal and apple juice
Lunch Vegetable stir fry with rice
Supper Beef and vegetable fajitas



August 26, 2008



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About Keystone Agricultural Producers

Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) is Manitoba's largest farm policy organization, and our role is to represent & promote the interests of the province's farm families.

We are a grassroots organization wholly run and funded by our members, with all policy set by producers throughout Manitoba. In 2009, we will be celebrating 25 years as "The Voice of Manitoba Farmers".

Our policies and priorities are set by delegates and directors that are elected from twelve districts across the province, as well as our commodity group members. Close to twenty committees, comprised of members and the President (ex officio), research relevant issues and report back to the executive and our General Council, where policy is debated and voted upon. Both the elected executive and management team are responsible for implementing policy in the best interests of the members.

KAP deals with a diverse range of issues that affect farmers, farm families, the agriculture industry, and the rural landscape. These include transportation, the environment, renewable energy, taxation issues, workplace health and safety, input costs, consumer awareness, and farm incomes and risk management.

Information about KAP and our work on behalf of Manitoba farmers is available online at www.kap.mb.ca

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