

Conceptual illustration. See source and provenance notes.

Even if inflation slows, the bill can stay high.

A Thanksgiving basket tool for distinguishing slower price growth, genuine savings and household affordability.

01

Track the level

A smaller increase does not undo an earlier rise.

02

Fix the basket

Compare the same quantities and conditions.

03

Count usable savings

Time, transport and storage can change the answer.

A slower rise is still a rise

An illustrative calculation, not measured historical grocery data. Keep the price level separate from its rate of change.



Returning $122.40 to $100 needs a fall of about 18.3%, not 22.4%. The percentage base has changed.

TWO MEASURES, TWO QUESTIONS

$58.63

Thanksgiving basket for ten

About $5.86 each | Up 6.3% from 2025

Down 8.5% from the 2022 high of $64.05

16 lb frozen turkey: $23.68

+0.4%

October food-at-home CPI

Monthly, seasonally adjusted | BLS

No October year-over-year comparison

Broad grocery index, not a holiday basket

AFBF: early-November volunteer survey. Local prices and promotions vary.

Build a basket that can be compared

Start with the meal you intend to serve, the number of guests and accessible stores. Then record quantities before comparing totals.

GUESTS _____ SHOP / DATE _____ SPENDING LIMIT _____

Item / quantity	Pack / unit price	Cash needed	Conditions / substitutions

WHOLE-MEAL VALUE _____ CASH NEEDED FOR THIS SHOP _____

Check the hidden differences

Quantity	Smaller packs can lower the ticket price without lowering the unit price.
Conditions	Include membership, minimum spend, coupons, delivery and transport where relevant.
Substitution	A cheaper alternative meal is useful, but it is not a price fall for an unchanged basket.
Access	Storage, dietary needs, time and shared labour affect which saving is usable.

Why this matters

A usable decision begins with a clear account of what is known, what is inferred and what still needs checking.

Good economic explanation should interpret the checkout experience, not ask households to disregard it. Better comparisons make both shopping and public debate more honest.

OPEN THE EVIDENCE / CLICK EACH SOURCE

01 USDA: Food Price Outlook, summary findings

Updated 23 October 2026; September year-on-year food price indices.

02 BLS: Consumer Price Index questions and answers

The CPI measures average price change, not every household's experience.

03 BLS: October 2026 Consumer Price Index

Released 10 November. Monthly grocery change is seasonally adjusted; no October annual food comparison.

04 American Farm Bureau Federation: 2026 Thanksgiving dinner survey

Released 18 November. Classic menu, ten servings; USD $58.63 total.

Compare with the 2025 survey: $55.18 for the same classic basket.

Before comparing your receipt

The Farm Bureau basket is a benchmark, not a local quote. Compare equal quantities and include offer conditions and necessary fees. The $100 chart is an example, not observed inflation.

Conceptual illustrations of fictional people and scenes; not documentary evidence.
Sources reviewed 20 November 2026. Review edition; not published.