Sugar leads grocery price hikes

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Led by sharp increases in sugar, prices of a sample basket of groceries advanced at the end of November in 10 of 11 Ohio cities.

Lima held the line on prices.

Only eggs and toilet tissue backed away from rising prices on 16 selected grocery store items priced for comparison with the previous month. One dozen white medium eggs declined an average of two cents to 76 cents and tissue was down one cent on averages at 73 cents.

Sugar prices climbed during the month. A five-pound bag of granulated cost an average of $2.95 compared to $2.12 a month earlier.

And most shoppers can remember the good old days of 13 months ago when the same five-pound bag sold for 80 cents.

Peanut butter was the only shopping item that was unchanged for the month. It held steady at 63 cents for a 12-ounce jar.

Smallest price hikes were noted in hamburger, up one cent to 92 cents, and a 14½ ounce container of chocolate cookies, up one cent to 99 cents.

Three or four different grocery stores were checked in some cities to provide a better cross reference on prices but the overall cost varied little in those cities.

The basket of 16 items selected for comparison cost $18.99 at the end of last month.

Average prices of some other grocery staples showed chuck roast up 6 cents per pound to $1.17, frying chicken up 4 cents per pound to 61 cents, and pork chops were priced at $1.54, up 7 cents over Nov. 1 prices.

Lima was the only city checked where the total price of the grocery basket remained steady at $18.34 cents. Sharpest hike for the shopping list was at Conneaut where the same groceries that cost $16.95 Nov. 1 cost $19.71 on Dec. 1.

The highest total price of the shopping list was at Portsmouth one of the cities checking three different stores. The market basket there cost $20.20 Dec. 1, up from $19.88 a month earlier.

Other cities checked and the total cost of the shopping list:

- Akron $18.19
- Athens $18.91
- Cincinnati $18.61
- Columbus $17.50
- Massillon $17.24
- Van Wert $19.23
- Youngstown $18.63

And Urbana $17.76.