

“Shopping bag” prices high third straight month

HARRISBURG Pa - Pennsylvania's average retail “shopping bag” price jumped 51 cents to another record high in February, according to the monthly supermarket survey report, released today by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

The average retail cost of 15 “shopping bag” items sampled throughout the Commonwealth during the second week in February was \$10.91, a 51 cent increase from the January shopping bag cost of \$10.40. The average retail price of the 15 items in December was \$10.21.

The survey results show record high prices for the shopping items for the third consecutive month. For the first time in the history of the survey, regional prices climbed above the \$11 mark in two regions of the state. The survey reflects a steady climb in the average shopping bag cost as prices continue to rise.

According to the survey prepared by the department's Bureau of Rural Affairs, the average retail price for February was highest in the northeastern part of the state at \$11.27, an increase of 66 cents from the previous month. Lowest prices were recorded in the southeast central part of the state at \$10.59, where prices declined one cent from the January figures.

Five of the six regions surveyed reported an increase in shopping bag averages during February. The most dramatic jump in the retail price of the shopping bag was in the northwestern part of the state, an 80 cent boost from \$10.14 to \$10.94. The one cent decrease in the southeast central region was the only decline recorded in the survey.

The difference in cost of the shopping bag in urban

and rural stores decreased to about four per cent in February. The average price of the shopping bag items in urban supermarkets rose 58 cents to \$10.77, while rural stores showed a 54 cent increase to \$11.25.

The spread between storebrand and namebrand items remained about the same, at eight per cent during February, according to the survey. A comparison of nine of the 15 shopping bag items showed the average price of storebrand items to be \$7.14 compared to \$7.75 for namebrand items.

Items increasing in price were potatoes, from 13 to 16 cents a pound; cabbage, 23 to 41 cents a pound; shortening, 53 to 54 cents a pound; coffee, \$2.43 to \$2.67 a pound; bread, 37 to 38 cents a pound loaf; cornflakes, 58 to 59 cents a pound; chicken, 51 to 55 cents a pound; eggs, 97 to \$1.01 a dozen large eggs; ground beef, 94 to 95 cents a pound; and toilet paper, 82 to 83 cents a four roll package.

Items decreasing in price were fresh pears, 40 to 39 cents a pound; canned corn, 35 to 34 cents a pound; and sugar, 22 to 21 cents a pound.

Canned peaches and American cheese remained about the same in price.

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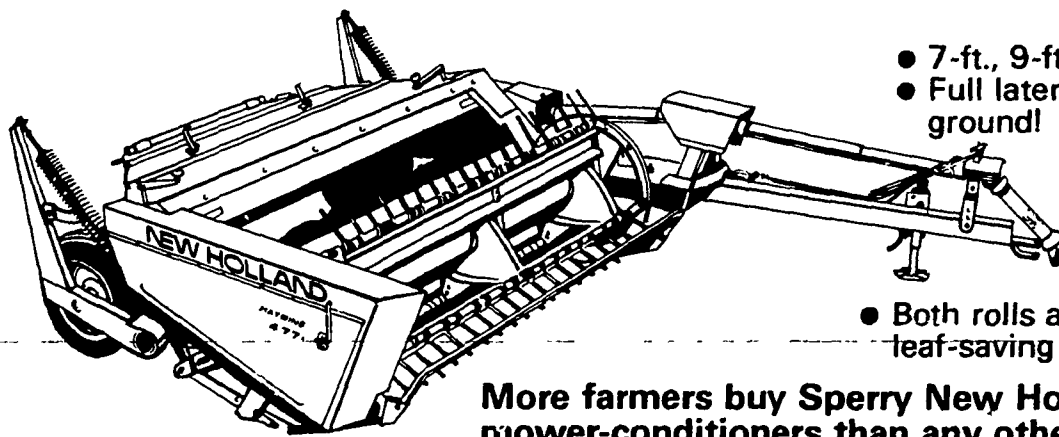
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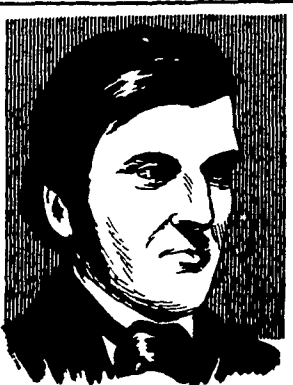
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American Viewpoint's



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Ralph Waldo Emerson

British Scare

In 1969, when the first case of a rabid dog in more than 50 years was reported in Britain, the government ordered the killing of hundreds of pets and farm animals within a 12-mile radius of where the dog was found, and banned imports of cats, dogs, and other felines and canines for two years.