

Cutting back on fresh foods and nonessentials is the most common reaction to inflation

Article

The price of groceries has reached a historic high. In August 2022, the US consumer price index found the cost of food was up 11.4% year-over-year (YoY), the largest 12-month

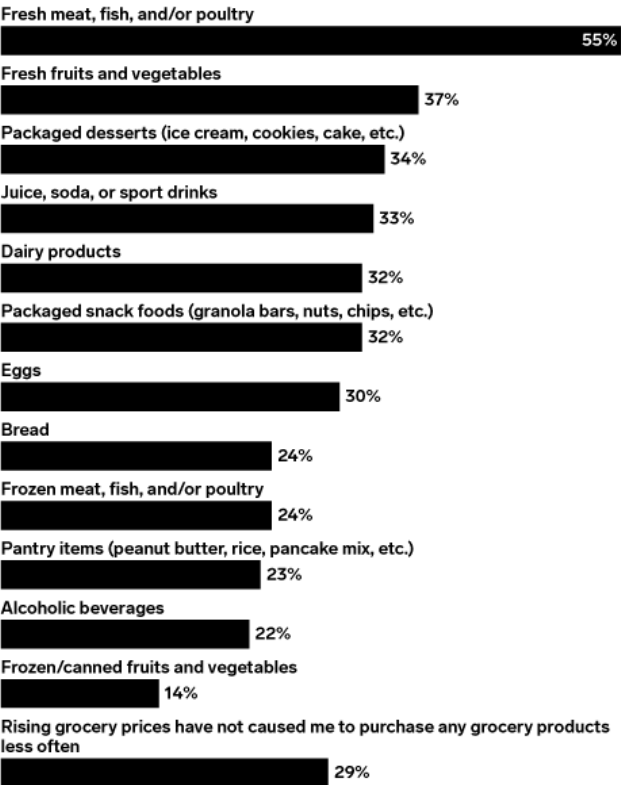
increase since May 1979. Prices were up 11.2% YoY in September, showing virtually no signs of slowing down. Consumers have responded with a massive shift in grocery buying behavior, including cutting back on fresh foods and other nonessential products.

Perishables have taken the hardest hit. More than half of US shoppers have cut back on fresh meat, fish, and/or poultry. Many have also curbed purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products, and eggs.

Buyers were far more likely to buy less than to look for cheaper options on fresh meat, fish, and/or poultry and fresh fruits and vegetables. This indicates that either consumers are unwilling to compromise on the quality of fresh foods or there simply are no cheaper options available.

Products US Grocery Buyers Have Purchased Less Often due to Rising Grocery Prices, Sep 2022

% of respondents



Source: "The Insider Intelligence Grocery Survey" conducted in Sep 2022 by Bizrate Insights, Sep 27, 2022

Grocery shoppers are even cutting back on simple pleasures. Prices have become so high that buyers are forced to buy fewer nonessentials, even small indulgences like desserts, soft

drinks, and snacks.

Alcohol remains the exception. This is the one nonessential where respondents are less willing to scale back. Shoppers are also brand loyal: Just 7% of respondents said inflation has caused them to purchase a cheaper option in the alcohol category.

Get the full breakdown in our [Spotlight: Grocery Inflation](#) report.

Report by Blake Droesch Oct 25, 2022

Spotlight: Grocery Inflation

