



MUNICIPAL MONEY MATTERS

PHILADELPHIA CITY CONTROLLER CHRISTY BRADY

November 2025

Thanksgiving Then and Now: How Prices Have Changed Since 1975

Traditional Thanksgiving Meal to Feed 10 in Philadelphia
Over the Last 50 Years

Philadelphia's cost of living is now 4% above the national average, with grocery prices reflecting the broader rise in expenses. As a result, many families across the city will face higher costs at the grocery store this Thanksgiving.

This year, Philadelphians can expect to pay about \$78.92 for the annual meal, an almost 19% increase over the cost in 2024. The price of a 16-pound turkey has risen by \$5.76 compared to last year, contributing significantly to the overall uptick in costs. Shoppers can also expect to pay more for bread and potatoes this year, up 23% and 48%, respectively.

Fifty years ago, the cost for a traditional Thanksgiving meal was less than \$19. Many items were significantly less in 1975, especially the turkey that cost just over \$6 compared to today's \$32.80 price tag. Although prices have risen sharply across the Thanksgiving menu, two staple items have remained relatively stable. A pound of green peas only increased by \$0.70 and a 3-pound bag of potatoes is \$1.20 more than it was five decades ago.

Item	1975*	2024**	2025**	50 Yr. \$ Diff	50 Yr. % Diff
Turkey 16 lb.	\$6.07	\$27.04	\$32.80	\$26.73	440%
Whole Milk	\$1.46	\$4.92	\$4.13	\$2.67	183%
Pumpkin Pie Mix	\$1.96	\$3.89	\$5.82	\$3.86	197%
Whipping Cream	\$0.58	\$3.66	\$6.44	\$5.86	1010%
Cubed Stuffing, 12 oz	\$1.06	\$3.50	\$3.32	\$2.26	214%
Green Peas, 1 lb.	\$1.83	\$2.82	\$2.53	\$0.70	38%
Dinner Rolls 12 rolls	\$0.43	\$4.09	\$5.03	\$4.60	1069%
Sweet Potatoes, 3 lbs.	\$3.19	\$2.96	\$4.39	\$1.20	38%
Fresh Cranberries, 12 oz	\$0.11	\$2.32	\$2.14	\$2.03	1842%
Pie Shells	\$0.50	\$5.42	\$5.82	\$5.32	1065%
Mis. Ingredients/Relish Tray	\$1.34	\$5.98	\$6.50	\$5.16	285%
Total	\$18.53	\$66.60	\$78.92	\$60.39	326%

*The cost for each item was derived from the Consumer Price Index for prices recorded in 1975.

**The cost for each item was calculated by averaging prices from three separate grocery stores in the City of Philadelphia.

Flashback to 1975: In November 1975, Frank Rizzo was re-elected for his second term as Mayor, serving alongside City Controller William (Bill) Klenk. The city was also gearing up to host the nation's Bicentennial celebration in 1976, with improvements planned for Independence Mall and Penn's Landing.

Meanwhile, the Flyers won the Stanley Cup for the second year in a row, defeating the Buffalo Sabres. Those back-to-back championships earned them their nickname, the "Broad Street Bullies." Sports fans could take the subway to the stadiums for just \$0.35.

From all of us here at the Controller's Office,
we wish you a happy and healthy Thanksgiving!

Happy
Thanksgiving

Each month Controller Brady looks forward to bringing transparency and accountability of our city, right to you.