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Statistic: Food Markets & Prices

August 10, 2015



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Taking a Look at Price Spreads from Farm to Consumer

by Howard Elitzak and Curtia Taylor

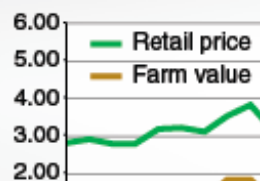
Taking a Look at Price Spreads from Farm to Consumer



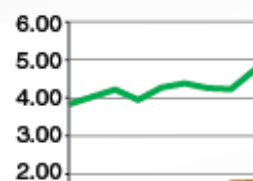
Price spreads measure the cost of processing, transporting, wholesaling, and retailing food commodities after they leave the farm. **Price spreads are the difference between a food product's retail price and the value of the raw farm commodities used to make the product.** For many foods, especially highly processed ones, costs of post-farm labor, packaging, advertising, and other marketing inputs widen the price spread, and these marketing costs become a larger share of the retail price than the farm value of the raw commodities.

The more highly processed and marketed the food, the larger the price spread ...

Whole milk
Dollars per gallon



Cheddar cheese
Dollars per pound



Ice cream
Dollars per half-gallon



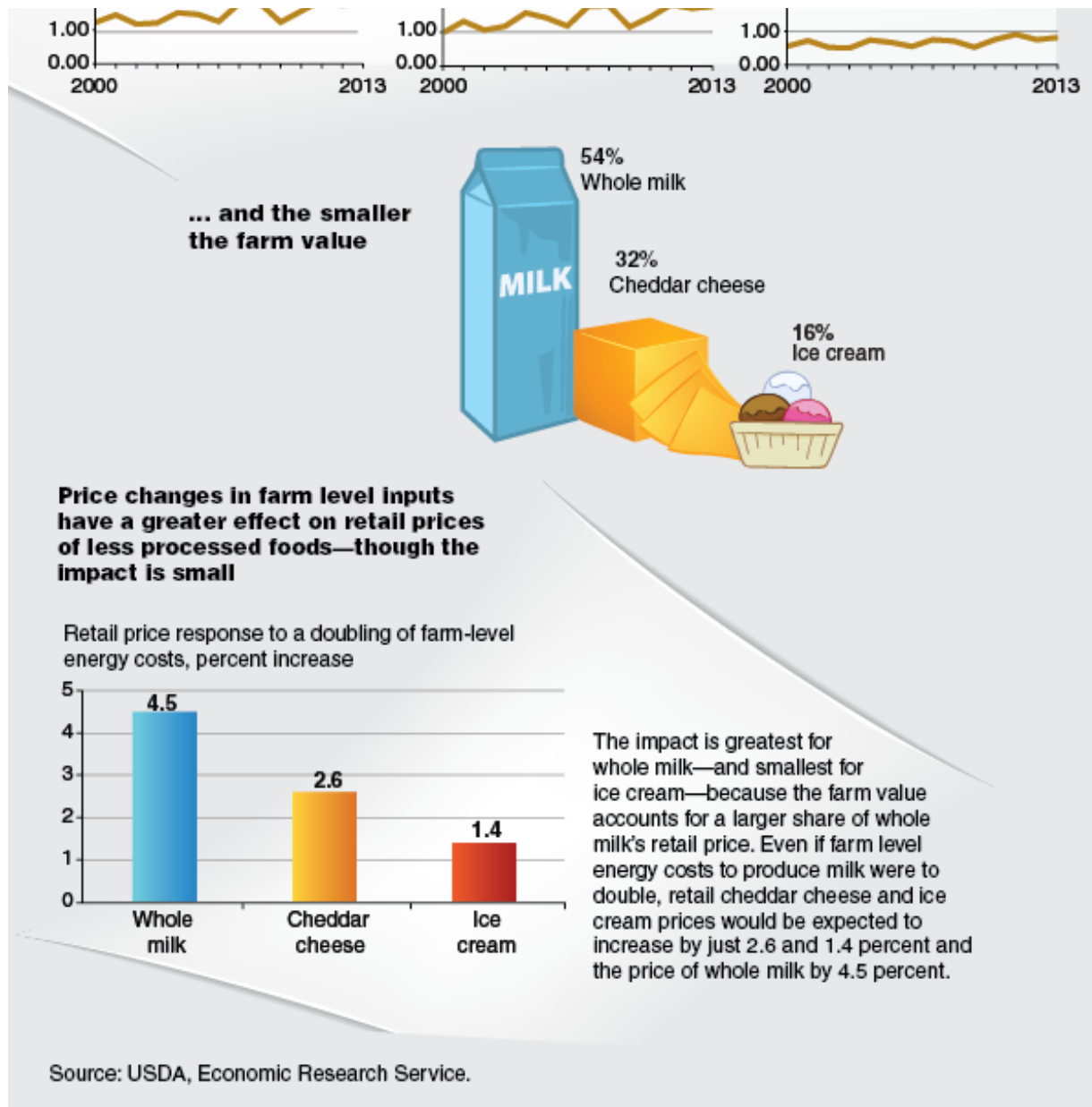
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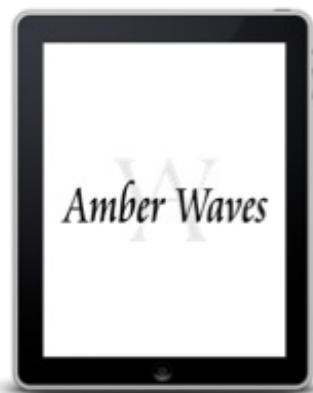




More information on food price spreads for over 20 commodities can be found in ERS's [Price Spreads from Farm to Consumer](#) data product.

A more detailed, interactive visualization of these price spreads can be found at:

USDA's Farm-to-Retail Price Spreads: How Can They Be Used to Analyze Trends in U.S. Food Markets?



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