

Inflation-beating advice offered for buying food

By Robert Dorfman

National retail food prices are expected to escalate 12.2 percent in 1981, according to recent reports. Nebraska prices will probably follow the national surge, said a local consumer specialist.

"Prices will first increase in poultry, meat and eggs categories. You can expect food prices to eventually level off," said Janet Wilson, extension specialist in consumer education at UNL's East Campus.

Wilson predicted the inflation rate for the 80s would stay around seven or eight percent.

Wilson projected that during the winter, Nebraska will have difficulty with inflation, but by spring, inflation should even out.

As more women are working outside the home, Wilson said, they are exchanging their time with budget dollars, by purchasing convenience foods.

Bill Wagner, grocery manager for Hinky Dinky at 2535 O Street said there are "higher sales in budget meal and convenience food items, while sales have dropped in the fine-cut meat category."

There are a number of ways consumers can curb inflation Wilson said. People are co-op buying in quantities, she said.

A new law, The National Consumer Cooperative Act, allows federal grants to be awarded to those who buy cooperatively.

Those living in rural areas can also cut their budget by growing their own food, she said. Comparative shopping is also a good way to stretch dollars.

Save Mart had lower prices over-all in a recent survey than its main competition, Hinky Dinky and Safeway. The survey was a price check of 25 identical brand products between the three chains, concluding that Save Mart averaged 27 cents cheaper per product than Safeway, a national front runner.

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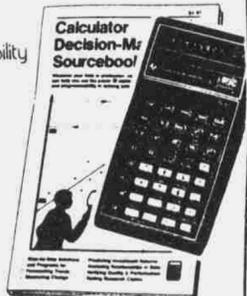
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