

Cheaper party foods but healthy food prices rise

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The cost of grocery foods fell in April, partly countered by higher prices for vegetables, Stats NZ said today. Overall, food prices fell 0.8 percent in April 2017.

"The cost of throwing a party fell in April, with lower prices for grocery foods such as potato chips, chocolate biscuits, and crackers," consumer prices manager Matthew Haigh said. "Other party favourites, such as soft drinks, grapes, and carrots, also fell in price."

Fruit and vegetable prices rose 4.2 percent, with vegetable prices up 10 percent (up 9.1 percent after seasonal adjustment) but fruit prices down 3.0 percent.

"Vegetable prices were influenced by some seasonal increases as well as heavy rain affecting some crops," Mr Haigh said. "The largest upwards contributors were mostly salad items, with higher prices for tomatoes, lettuce, cucumber, and avocados."

Annual food prices up, led by restaurant meals and ready-to-eat foods

Food prices increased 0.2 percent in the year to April 2017, led by restaurant meals and ready-to-eat food. This followed annual increases of 1.3 and 2.2 percent for March and February 2017 respectively.

Restaurant meals and ready-to-eat food prices increased 1.9 percent in the year. This annual price increase was partly offset by lower prices of non-alcoholic beverages (down 3.1 percent).

Fruit and vegetable prices increased 3.0 percent in the year to April 2017. Vegetable prices increased 8.1 percent, influenced by higher prices for lettuce, broccoli, and kumara. Fruit prices fell 3.5 percent, influenced by lower avocado prices. Avocado prices were at historically high levels a year ago, due to a crop shortage.

Meat, poultry, and fish decreased 1.5 percent, mainly due to lower prices for pork and chicken. Chicken prices decreased 4.2 percent for the year, and have been falling annually since June 2015.

Ends

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Authorised by Liz MacPherson, Government Statistician, 11 May 2017