



**VERMONT**

**AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS**

[www.Agriculture.Vermont.gov](http://www.Agriculture.Vermont.gov)

**A COMPARISON STUDY OF PRODUCT  
PRICING AT VERMONT FARMERS'  
MARKETS AND RETAIL  
ESTABLISHMENTS**



**This pricing project explores the cost of commonly purchased food items available during the height of the Vermont growing season at local farmers' markets and retail grocery establishments.**

In 2015, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets received support from USDA Agriculture Marketing Services to track prices of local products sold at farmers' markets.

During the month of August 2015, we compared the average prices of 55 produce and protein products from 13 local farmers' markets\*\* and 5 retail establishments throughout Central Vermont. Pricing data was collected on local and non-local products, including: organic and non-organic produce, meat, poultry and eggs.

*\*\*Farmers' markets products are local, while there is no guarantee of local at retail establishments - unless otherwise noted.*

**Key Findings:**

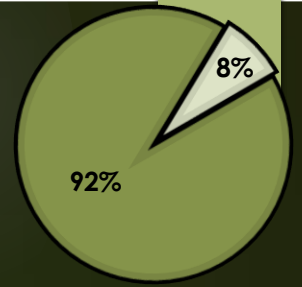
- Organic produce at farmers' markets is almost always competitively priced\* with organic produce at retail establishments.
- Local meat at farmers' markets is competitively priced\* with retail establishments more than half of the time.
- Local produce at farmers' markets is competitively priced\* with retail establishments more than half of the time.

**Project Conclusions:**

- Commonly purchased food items can be affordably priced at farmers' markets.
- If price is the only factor driving consumer purchasing, farmers' markets are generally not the most affordable option.
- Farmers' Markets are a good option for consumers whose purchasing decisions are driven by price as well as local and/or organic attributes.

*\*Competitively priced products are defined as being within a 10% price range.*

# Certified Organic produce available at Farmers' Markets is almost always competitively priced\* with retail establishments.



**92%** of certified organic produce available at farmers' markets is competitively priced\* with the same items at retail stores, including:

**Apples, Broccoli, Carrots, Chard, Kale, Lettuce, Raspberries, Summer Squash, Tomatoes & Zucchini.**

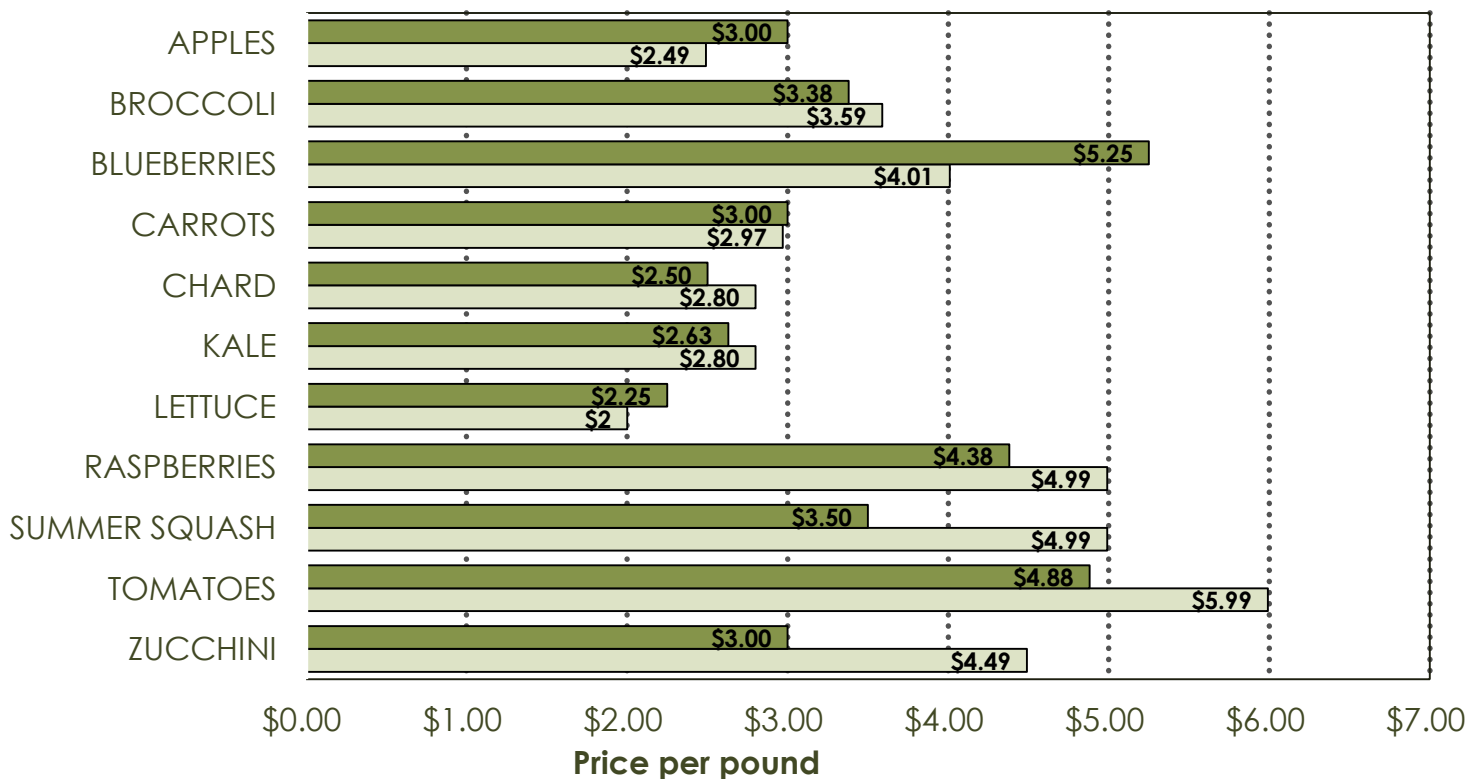
**8%** of organic produce available at farmers' markets is found NOT to be competitively priced\* with the same products at retail markets, specifically:

**Blueberries.**

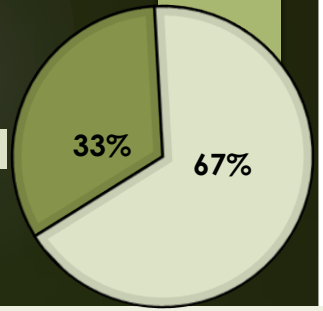
\*Competitively priced products are defined as being within a 10% price range.

## Certified Organic Produce Prices

■ Farmers' Markets      □ Retail Establishments



# Non-organic produce available at Farmers' Markets is competitively priced\* with retail establishments about a third of the time.

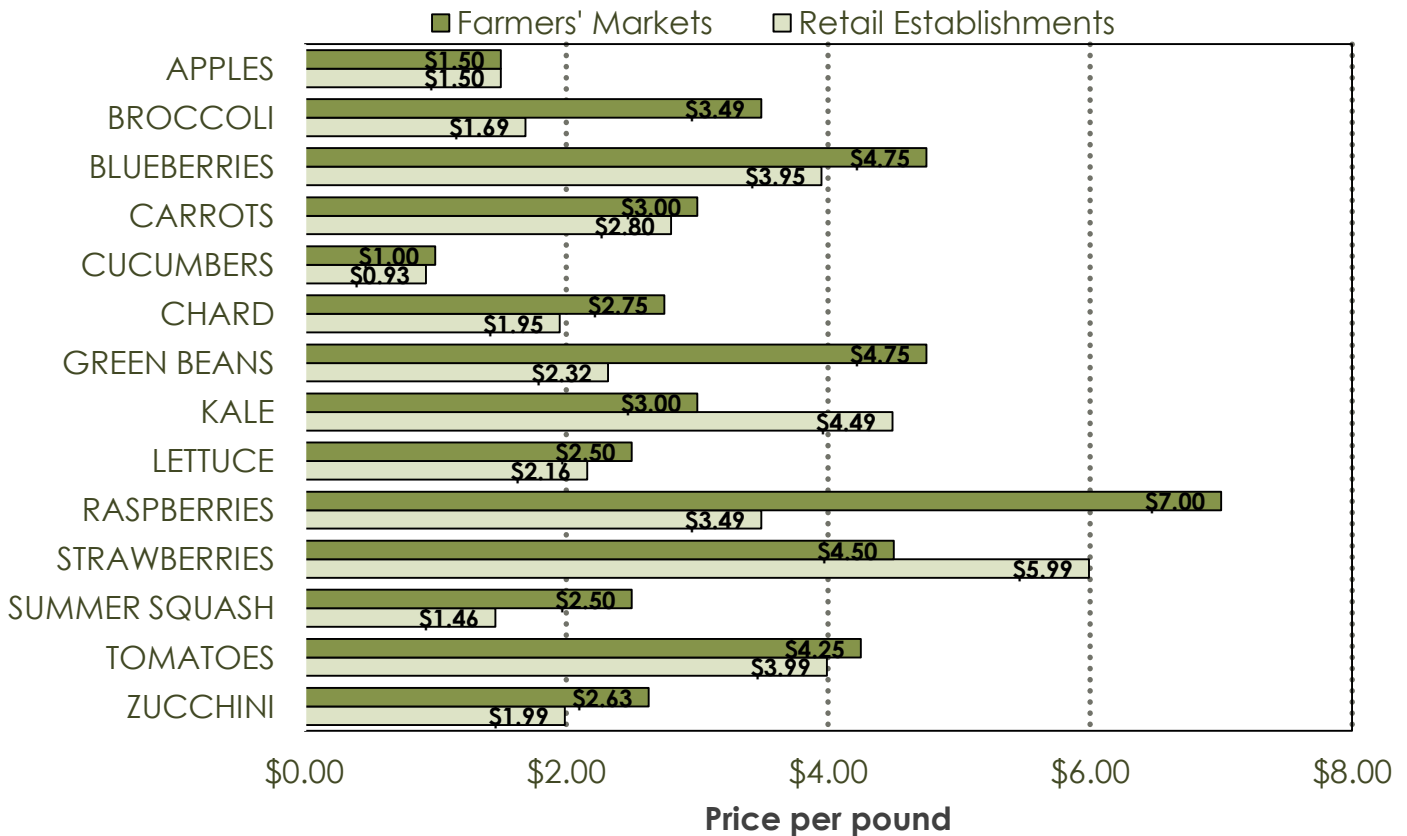


**33%** of non-organic produce available at farmers' markets is competitively priced\* with the same items at retail establishments, including:  
**Apples, Carrots, Cucumbers, Lettuce, Kale & Strawberries.**

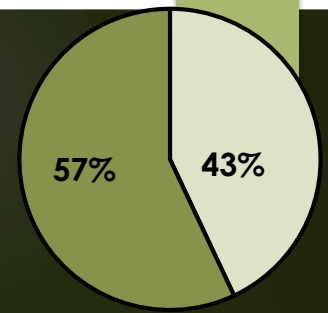
**67%** of non-organic produce available at farmers' markets is found NOT to be competitively priced\* with the same products at retail establishments including:  
**Blueberries, Beets, Broccoli, Chard, Green beans, Radishes, Raspberries, Spinach, Summer Squash, Tomatoes & Zucchini.**

\*Competitively priced products are defined as being within a 10% price range.

## Non-Organic Produce Prices



# Local meat and proteins available at Farmers' Markets are competitively priced\* with retail establishments more than half of the time.



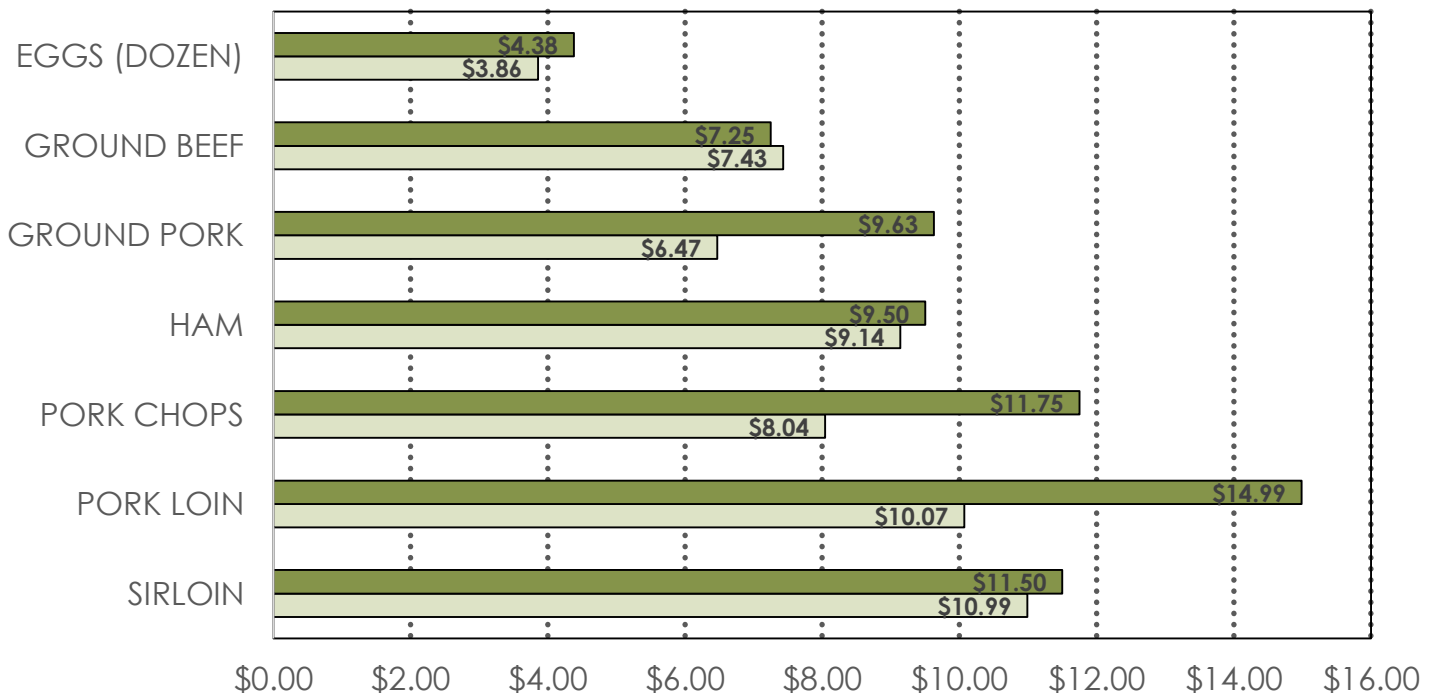
**57%** of local meat and proteins available at farmers' markets is found to be competitively priced\* with the same items at retail establishments including:  
**Eggs, Ground Beef, Ham & Sirloin.**

**43%** of local meat and proteins available at farmers' markets is found NOT to be competitively priced\* with the same items at retail establishments including:  
**Ground Pork, Pork Chop & Pork Loin.**

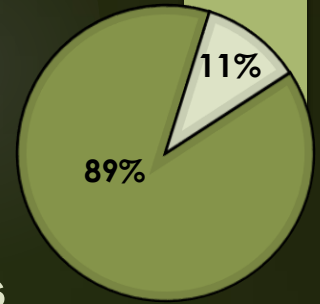
\*Competitively priced products are defined as being within a 10% price range.

## Local Meat & Protein Prices

■ Farmers' Markets    □ Retail Establishments



**When comparing local products, farmers' markets prices are competitively priced\* a majority of the time – and even less expensive for various products. Local, certified organic products at farmers' market are almost always competitively priced compared to retail.**



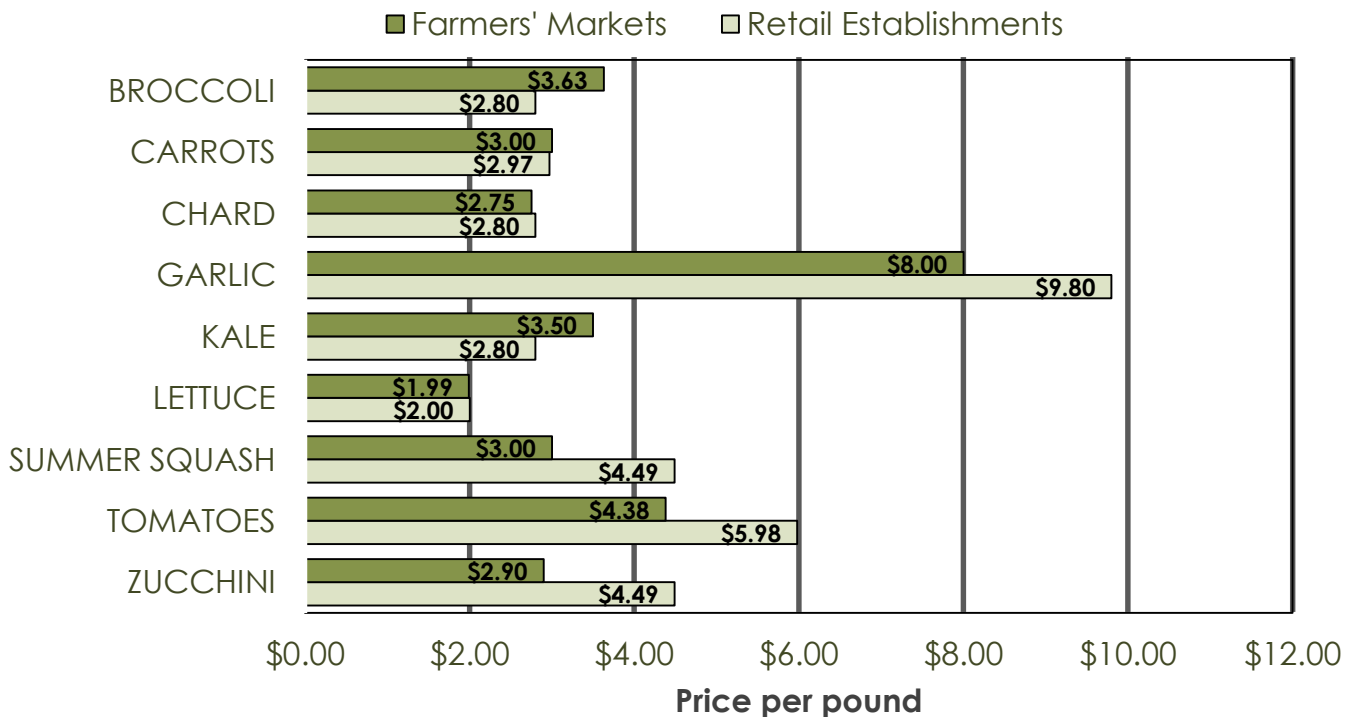
**89%** of local, certified organic produce at Farmers' Markets is found to be competitively priced\* with the same items at retail establishments. These items include:

**Carrots, Chard, Garlic, Lettuce, Summer Squash, Tomatoes & Zucchini.**

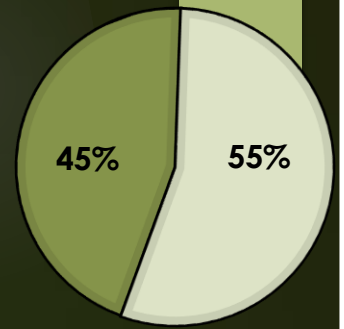
**66%** of those items are actually *less expensive* at Farmers' Markets than retail establishments. These items include: **Chard, Garlic, Lettuce, Summer Squash, Tomatoes & Zucchini.**

\*Competitively priced products are defined as being within a 10% price range.

## Local Certified Organic Produce Prices



**Non-organic local produce available at Farmers' Markets is competitively priced\* with retail establishments almost half of the time.**



**45%** of non-organic local produce at Farmers' Markets is found to be competitively priced\* with the same items at retail establishments. These products include: **Apples, Carrots, Cucumbers, Kale & Tomatoes.**

*\*Competitively priced products are defined as being within a 10% price range.*

## Non-Organic Local Produce Prices



***"The Vermont Agency of Agriculture's mission is to facilitate, support and encourage the growth and viability of agriculture while protecting the working landscape, human health, animal health, plant health, consumers and the environment."***

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS STUDY, CONTACT:  
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