

### How Transportation Costs Affect Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Prices

Richard Volpe, Edward Roeger, Ephraim Leibtag



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This report examines the ways that fuel prices are transmitted to wholesale produce prices via transportation costs. Specifically, it focuses on marketing costs for asparagus, cantaloupes, table grapes, oranges, bell peppers, and tomatoes. Results of the study indicate that transportation costs significantly increase the costs of marketing these produce items and therefore their wholesale price. The impact of fuel prices on produce prices depends on a number of factors, including the distance between wholesale markets and the source of the produce, the method of transportation, the importance and timing of imports, and commodity-specific factors such as perishability. Overall, as fuel prices rise, so do wholesale produce prices and the margins between farm and wholesale prices.

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