

Urban CU Spending on Produce Before and During Covid-19

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Consumer Expenditure Surveys (CE)

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Disclaimer:

This presentation provides a summary of research results. The information is being released for statistical purposes, to inform interested parties, and to encourage discussion of work in progress. The presentation does not represent an existing, or a forthcoming new, official BLS statistical data product or production series.



Introduction

- Consuming fruits and vegetables is an important part of a balanced diet and greatly contributes to good health.
 - During the COVID-19 pandemic supply chain disruptions and illness disrupted access to produce.
1. How has the pandemic affected produce expenditures?
 2. How has the pandemic affected produce prices?



Abbreviations

- Food at Home

- ▶ FAH

- Fruits and Vegetables (Produce)

- ▶ FAV

- Non-produce Food at Home

- ▶ FAH – FAV

Data and Methods

■ Data Sources

- ▶ The Consumer Expenditure Survey (CE)
- ▶ Consumer Price Index (CPI)

■ Expenditure = Price x Quantity

- ▶ $\text{Quantity} = \text{Expenditure} / \text{Price}$

■ Nominal and Real Expenditures

■ CE Urban vs CPI Urban

■ COVID-19 begins in March of 2020



Nominal Expenditures

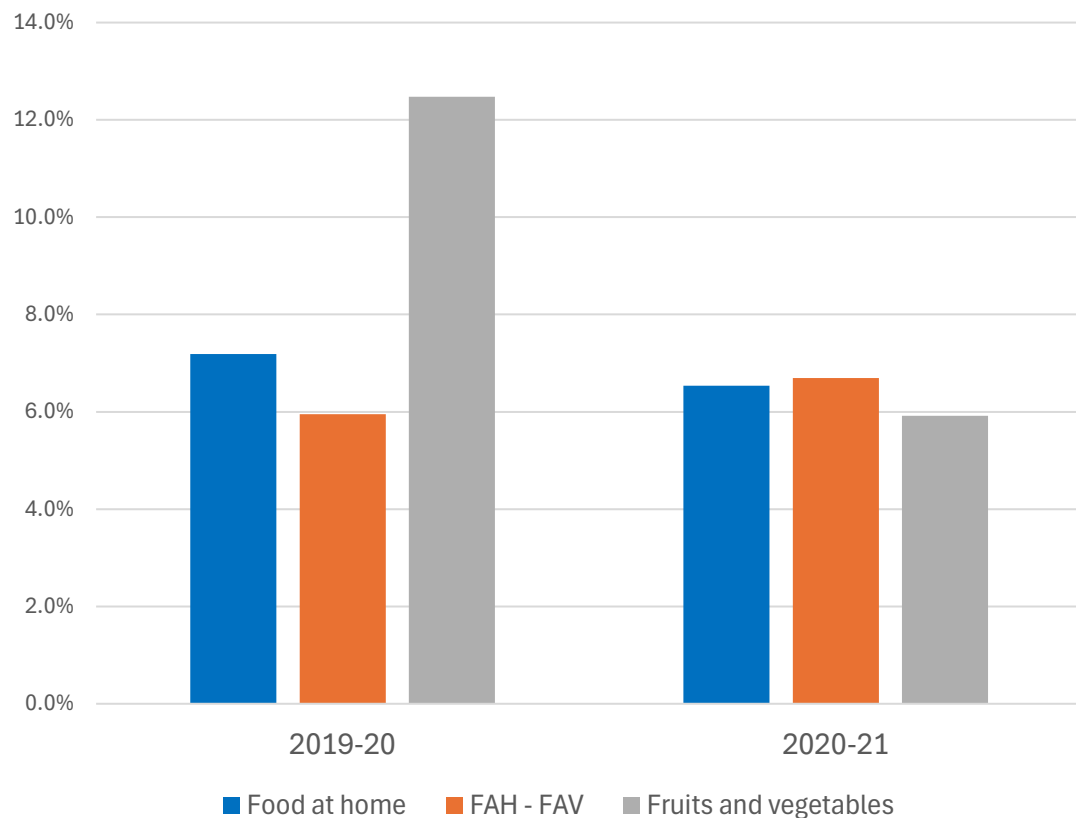


Table 1. Annual Mean Nominal Expenditure in US dollars per Urban Household

	2019	2020	2021	
FOOD AT HOME	\$4,665.43	\$5,000.80	\$5,327.81	14.2%
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES	\$884.51	\$994.83	\$1053.69	19.1%
FRESH FRUITS	\$327.67	\$358.13	\$388.12	
APPLES	\$44.14	\$50.98	\$53.66	
BANANAS	\$43.73	\$54.61	\$59.60	
ORANGES	\$32.20	\$38.73	\$43.62	
FRESH VEGETABLES	\$298.39	\$315.46	\$336.08	
POTATOES	\$44.92	\$53.38	\$53.73	
LETTUCE	\$30.40	\$38.70	\$43.92	44.5%
TOMATOES	\$48.02	\$54.09	\$57.92	

Nominal Expenditures

Chart 1. Percent Change in Mean Nominal Expenditure



■ Year 1

► Produce up 73.5% **more** than Food at Home

■ Year 2

► Produce up 9.5% **less** than Food at Home

Real Expenditures



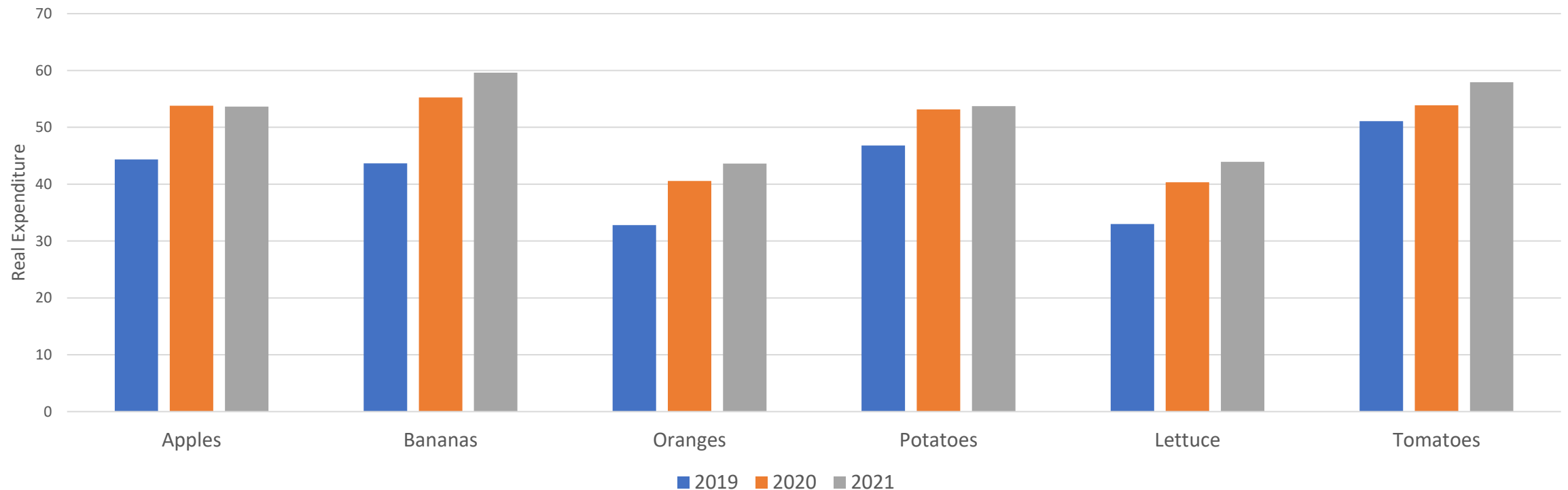
Table 2. Percent Change in Nominal Expenditure, Real Expenditure, and Prices for Urban Households

	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 2019 TO 2021		
	Nominal	Real	CPI
FOOD AT HOME	14.2%	*6.6%	7.1%
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES	19.1%	*13.8%	4.6%
FRESH FRUITS	18.4%	*13.3%	4.6%
APPLES	21.6%	21.0%	0.5%
BANANAS	36.3%	36.5%	-0.2%
ORANGES	35.5%	32.9%	1.9%
FRESH VEGETABLES	12.6%	*8.6%	3.7%
POTATOES	19.6%	14.8%	4.2%
LETTUCE	44.5%	33.2%	8.5%
TOMATOES	20.6%	13.4%	6.4%

* Real data are not reliable for aggregated categories due to substitution bias.

Real Mean Expenditures for Fruits and Vegetables

Chart 4. Annual Real Mean Expenditure for Urban Households in 2021 Dollars



Takeaways

- Nominal produce expenditures (2019-21)
 - ▶ 25.8% more than FAH, and 31.8% more than FAH-FAV expenditures.
- Expenditure growth slowed in the second year of the pandemic.



Takeaways (cont.)

- Inflation (2019-21)
 - ▶ Food at Home 7.1 percent.
 - ▶ Produce 4.6 percent.
- Quantity of produce purchased was more than 2x the increase for Food at Home.



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