

# Survey compares food prices, Waremart wins

By Karen Engels  
Emerald Reporter

Even when college students don't feel much like merry-making, they still need to eat. This often translates into the local dorm cafeteria, late night Haagen-Dazs runs to 7-11 or waiting for the parental units to bring foodstuffs to replenish bare refrigerators.

If you're in the above categories, read no further. But for those who do make weekly or monthly treks to local grocery stores in search of sustenance and/or Top Ramen, please continue.

On a quest for verity and the cheapest prices, this Emerald reporter did a quick, rather unscientific comparison of five local grocery stores, all frequented by University students. In no way meant to be a conclusive study or the answer to every discriminating shopper's needs, this survey is meant only as food for thought.

The random price survey is of 20 "typical" college food items (read: grub that college students may buy that was likely to be found at most stores). Every attempt was made to compare items of equal weight and brand. (See chart) Where an exact match wasn't available, the chart is left blank, even though a similar item may have been in stock.

Items on special are not marked differently in the chart and may account for some large price variation. Food selections in no way represent the author's preferences, except for Haagen-Dazs coffee ice cream.

In this random 20-item price-check, Waremart bolted to first place for lowest total of \$36.46, followed closely by Albertsons at \$37.73 for the same 20 items. Food Value pulled in third place with a \$41.77 total and Safeway squeaked in fourth

with \$42.93. Prices for all but Sundance Natural Foods were compared Saturday, March 7. Sundance, which was price-checked March 4, doesn't carry all the listed items, so no total price comparison was available.

But prices aren't everything on the supermarket scene, even for tuition-squeezed pocket-books. Customer service, organic produce, proximity to campus and store ambiance also play roles for many foodstuff connoisseurs.

Natural food fans and the environmentally conscious may prefer Sundance Natural Foods, located at Hillyard and 24th Avenue, home of "animal and environment friendly" edibles. Tana Allison, who works in the produce department, said Sundance prices are slightly higher overall, but the clientele doesn't seem to mind. They may trade off slightly higher prices and smaller selection to avoid preservatives and additives, all of which are absent in food selections, Allison said.

The cozy store, open from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., has no meat section and carries mostly organically grown produce. Few brand names jump off the shelves, but local ones like Great Harvest Bakery and Sprout City do. The store also boasts a hearty selection of bulk foods and vitamins, and a popular organic salad bar.

Sundance is no longer just a "hippy haven" as it was once known, Allison said. Members of the University population, young, old, international, with and without tie-dye frequent the store, she said.

Joe Albertson was nowhere in sight, but his store on Hillyard and 30th Avenue was bustling with shoppers last Saturday. Obnoxious Muzak and frequent intercom interruptions announcing fresh garlic bread

## GROCERY STORE COMPARISON

ITEM	ALBERTSONS	FOOD VALUE	SAFEWAY	WAREMART	SUNDANCE
1 gallon 2% milk	\$1.92	\$1.92	\$1.92	\$1.88	\$2.37
Loaf of Health Nut bread	1.82	2.09	2.09	1.90	.
Grape Nuts 24 oz.	2.89	3.25	3.53	2.78	.
Frosted Flakes 25 oz.	3.79	4.29	3.79	3.74	.
1 lb. granola	1.20	1.37	1.23	1.46	1.59
1 lb. Imperial margarine	0.56	0.63	0.56	0.48	.
Adam's peanut butter	1.79	2.59	2.39	2.14	.
Kraft Macaroni and Cheese	0.59	0.59	0.50	0.41	.
1 lb. spaghetti	0.50	0.77	1.09	0.63	0.75
Newman spaghetti sauce	2.46	3.39	2.65	2.42	2.79
Carmen's chips	1.59	1.59	1.89	1.48	1.59
1 lb. Tillamook cheese	2.15	2.00	3.99	2.08	3.49
1 lb. lean ground beef	1.79	1.89	1.23	1.23	.
Oreos 20 oz.	2.50	2.75	2.89	2.38	.
Sixpack Henry's Light Beer	3.99	3.69	3.99	3.38	4.50
Top Ramen	0.00	0.20	0.20	0.29	.
1 pt. Haagen-Dazs	2.19	2.59	2.69	3.38	2.69
Ritz Crackers 16 oz.	2.29	2.79	2.79	2.35	.
Fig Newtons 20 oz.	2.69	2.69	2.79	2.28	2.55
Nancy's lowfat yogurt 8 oz.	0.69	0.69	0.75	0.77	0.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$37.73</b>	<b>\$41.77</b>	<b>\$42.93</b>	<b>\$36.46</b>	<b>N/A</b>

\* price not available

Graphic by Jeff Paslay

accompanied shoppers.

Open 24 hours a day, Albertsons has good variety, great chocolate chip cookies, a salad bar, a small pharmacy, a florist section and a good selection of videos. It's a bit farther from campus, but the cookies and fresh garlic bread may be worth it.

The Food Value (IGA) on Franklin Boulevard and Orchard, although smaller than some of the other stores, has a fun selection of bulk foods, which may be a draw for some shoppers. The store is in close walking distance to dormland and the East campus area and is open from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. A good produce selection and a deli were definite highlights.

For every dollar shoppers spend, they are rewarded with one Food Value stamp. Using these to fill cards entitles shoppers to special discounts on selected items around the store. A

sign outside boasts "double smart shopper stamps every other Friday," a boon for stamp-collecting types.

The Safeway on 18th Avenue and Pearl Street, although scoring the highest prices in this survey, seems to be a favorite among the college crowd. Proximity to campus is one draw for many students, said Harold Baker, University student and Safeway employee. But he adds that the good customer service also pulls them in.

Safeway is open 24 hours a day and has both a deli and florist section and cute mini shopping carts for the younger-than-University-age tots.

Waremart, located at West 11th Avenue and Garfield, although farthest from campus, scored a big plus for the lowest prices. It's less glitzy than other supermarkets and bagging your own vittles is part of the deal, but the store has definite advantages. The biggest of these

was the absence of Muzak, at least while this reporter was there.

An impressive bulk food section boasts such interesting selections as "dried papaya spears," "apricot logs" and "brotherhood mix," besides the more typical granola and pasta selections. Just reading the bin labels could provide hours of entertainment.

Richard Rice, Waremart employee, said the store is able to keep prices down because of low overhead. "We don't advertise," he said. These low prices and variety keep the store busy 'round the 24-hour clock.

Personal preferences, prices, selection and mode of transport will all play a role in students' grocery store choice, but one student journalist at least, will be making merry while heading to Albertsons for one of the cheapest Haagen-Dazs ice cream prices in town.

## ACTING

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victs" even stole everyone's jewelry as an impromptu gag.

After presenting our scenes to the class, we explored new possibilities with creative exercises, guided by instructor Amy Sarno. She had class members do their scenes while pillow fighting, arm wrestling, playing tag and tug-of-war, singing the lines, dancing the jitterbug and speaking in gibberish.

One quickly learns to shelve inhibitions.

Sarno and her teaching assistant Jennifer Stark kept us on our toes all term with pop quizzes on the reading, written journals, projects, written character analysis, play attendance, and coaching sessions. But they also encouraged us immensely.

I have gained amazing respect for theater majors and am proud to spout my sparse theater vocabulary while hobnobbing in the green room.

It's not a class for the faint-hearted, over-extended or lazy. The rehearsal time and paperwork alone take mega-hours. And we have rules. No absences or tardies. No bogging on scene partners. No late assignments. Be

prepared on the day your scene is set. Make time for rehearsal and play attendance.

I guess one could say it's not just an adventure, it's a job.

My "acting career" may well end here with my final monologue Wednesday, but at least that pesky dream is gone, replaced with a new improved one.

*I'm in a theater, but not on the stage this time. I'm the director, watching the actors rehearse. And for once, I know everyone's lines.*

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