



## 2019 INDIANA FARMERS MARKET PRICES

# Prices of Specialty Produce

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The local foods movement (LFM) has experienced significant growth in recent years, suggesting a significant demand for locally produced foods. To illustrate, four out of five respondents in a national survey in 2006 said they purchased fresh produce directly from growers (Bond et al., 2009). In addition, McGarry et al. (2005) estimated that 3 million Americans purchase products every week directly from farmers at local farmers markets. Carson et al. (2016) reported consumers prefer farmers markets due to the high-quality products, good pricing, specialty items, and socialization and entertainment. Other farmers market attributes appealing to consumers are health benefits, flavor, and impact to local communities.

Farmers markets have become an important sales outlet for specialty crops farmers nationwide. As key component of the LFM, farmers markets bring local foods to communities and support entrepreneurial ecosystems (Shupp, 2017). For example, farmers markets encourage spending at local businesses, provide employment opportunities, and serve

as business incubators. In low-income communities, the introduction of farmers markets has been shown to stimulate competition and lower the price of food sold at local grocery venues (Ruelas et al., 2012).

This publication illustrates the weekly prices of specialty produce sold at Indiana farmers markets. This publication is the third of a series of three articles reporting the price variations of specialty crops sold at Indiana farmers markets during the 2019 market season. Each publication provides the lowest and highest prices of specialty crops sold at Indiana farmers markets, which illustrates the price variation in 2019. This document reports the lowest and highest prices of specialty produce, including herbs, leafy greens, and mushrooms, sold at farmers markets. Reports can help farmers compare prices of products over time, evaluate the market window for different crops, choose the appropriate crop mix that can help maximize farm profitability, and understand market competition by looking at different price ranges.

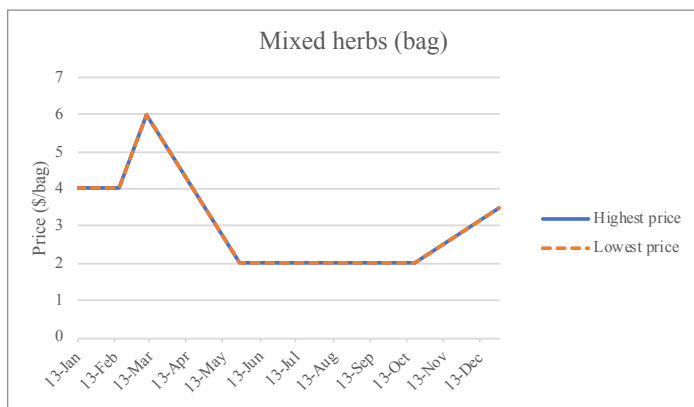
## Purdue Farmers Market Project

Data for this publication comes from a project led by researchers of the Purdue Horticulture Business Extension Program. Since 2017, researchers have collected and published weekly prices of specialty crops sold at Indiana farmers markets. The ultimate goal is to collect foundational data to support real-time decision-making of specialty crops farmers.

Through collaborations with farmers market managers, extension personnel, and volunteers, 2019 prices were collected weekly at 6 Indiana farmers markets located in 4 Indiana counties. Highest and lowest prices collected for each crop highlight how prices vary weekly. Units of products included pound, bag, box, and bunch. Farmers markets participating in the project were: Bloomington Community Center Farmers' Market and Bloomington Winter Farmers' Market (Monroe County), Lafayette and West Lafayette (Tippecanoe County), Plymouth (Marshall County), and Growing Places Indy Winter Market (Marion County). Prices are published weekly at the Horticulture Business Program website.

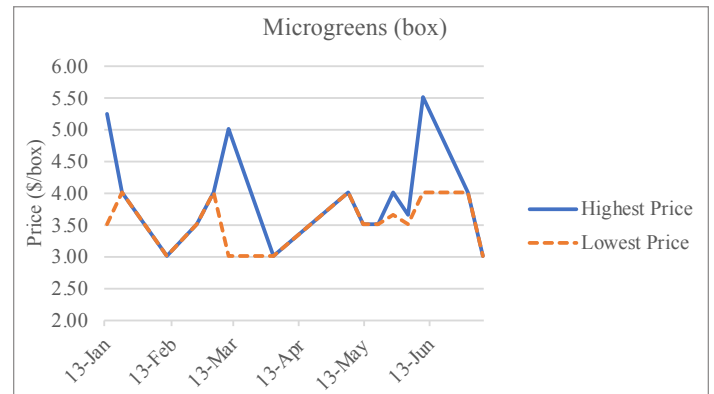
## Prices of Specialty Produce

Figures 1 through 9 illustrate the price variation of 9 main specialty produce sold at Indiana farmers markets. Weekly prices of mixed herbs (by bag) are displayed in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows the availability of this product from January (\$4.00/bag) to December (\$3.50/bag). As illustrated in Figure 1, prices overlapped all year long. Bags of mixed herbs reached the highest price in early March, at \$6.00/bag. The lowest price for a bag of mixed herbs was \$2.00/bag, reached from May to October.



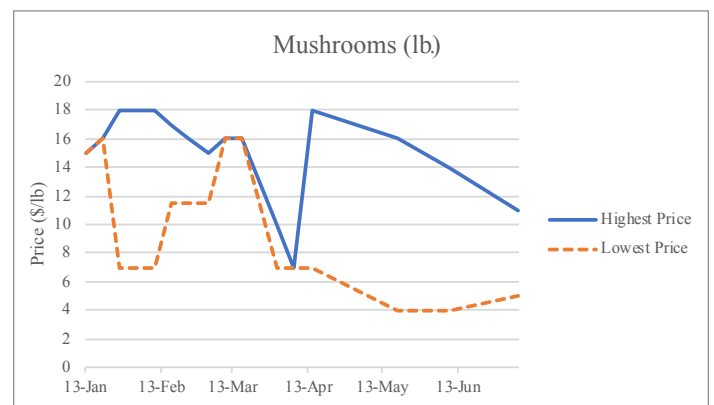
**Figure 1.** Highest and lowest prices of mixed herbs (\$/bag) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

Figure 2 illustrates the price and availability of microgreens (by box) at Indiana farmers markets. Boxes of microgreens were available from January until June, and showed significant price variation over time. The highest price paid for a box of microgreens was \$5.50 in June; the lowest price curve for a box of microgreens reached \$3.00 multiple times during the year.



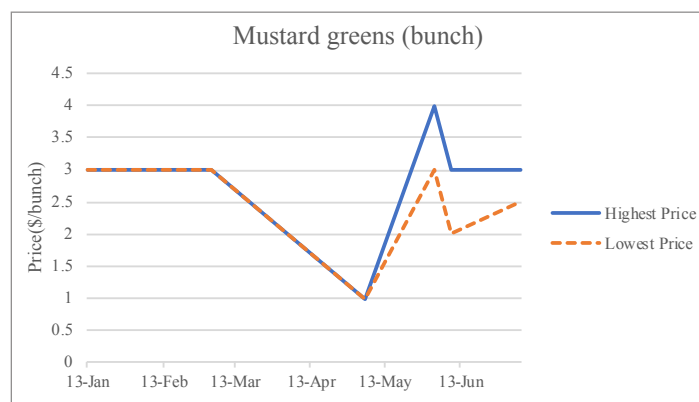
**Figure 2.** Highest and lowest prices of microgreens (\$/box) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

Figure 3 illustrates the highest and lowest prices of mushrooms (per pound) in 2019. This product was arguably the most expensive product sold at farmers markets, with an average price of \$12.00/pound. Prices of mushrooms experienced significant variation, especially in April, when the highest price increased dramatically, from \$7.00 to \$18.00. Price variation may be due to the diverse supply of mushroom varieties, including Morel, Gyromitra, Chanterelle, Puffball, and Verpa. Mushrooms reached their lowest price in late May at \$4.00/lb. The highest price was \$18.00/lb. in February and April.



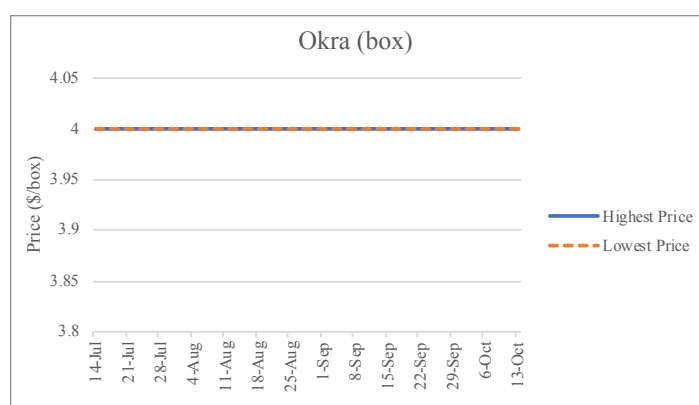
**Figure 3.** Highest and lowest prices of mushrooms (\$/lb.) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

Figure 4 displays the weekly prices of mustard greens (by bunch). Mustard greens were sold from January (\$3.00/bunch) to June (\$2.50 to \$3.00/bunch). Data showed no variation between lowest and highest prices from January until May; then both prices increased at different rates. The highest price paid for a bunch of mustard greens was \$4.00, and the lowest price was \$1.00 in May.



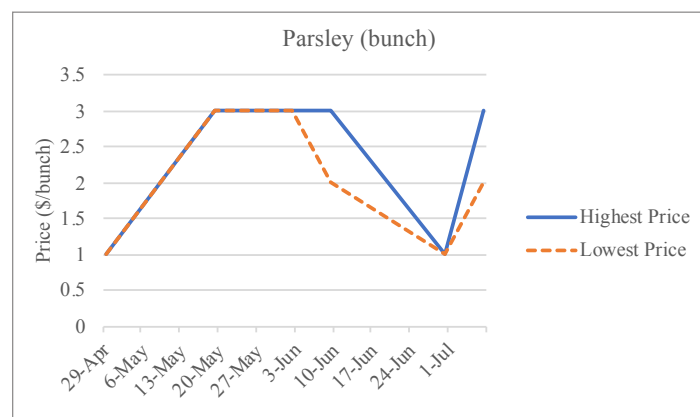
**Figure 4.** Highest and lowest prices of mustard greens (\$/bunch) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

Figure 5 shows okra was sold at Indiana farmers market from July to October. This product presents unique characteristics: first, lowest and highest prices were the same throughout the season; and second, prices remained stable at \$4.00/box. Lack of price variation may be due to the low number of farmers selling okra at farmers markets.



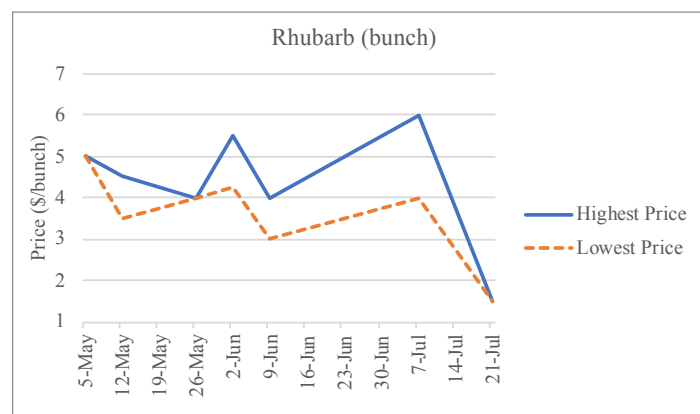
**Figure 5.** Highest and lowest prices of okra (\$/box) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

Parsley per bunch (Figure 6) was sold at farmers markets from April (\$1.00/bunch) until July (\$2.00 to \$3.00/bunch). Highest and lowest prices of parsley were similar from April to June. The highest price of a bunch of parsley reached \$3.00 in May and June. The lowest price of parsley occurred in late April and early June at \$1.00/bunch.



**Figure 6.** Highest and lowest prices of parsley (\$/bunch) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

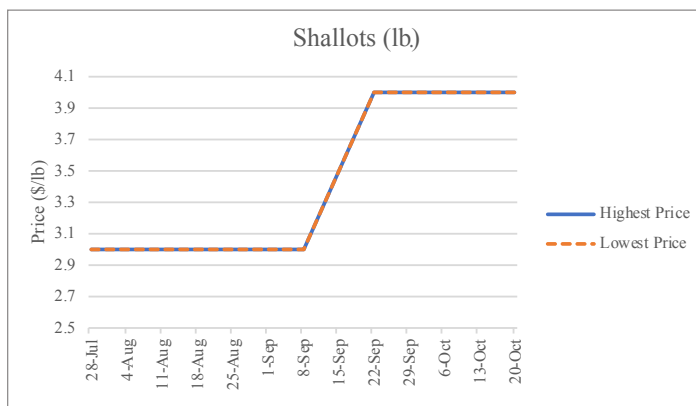
Figure 7 illustrates the price variation of rhubarb per bunch. Rhubarb was sold at Indiana farmers markets from May to July. Highest and lowest prices varied moderately, ranging from \$6.00/bunch (early July) to \$1.50/bunch (late July).



**Figure 7.** Highest and lowest prices of rhubarb (\$/bunch) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

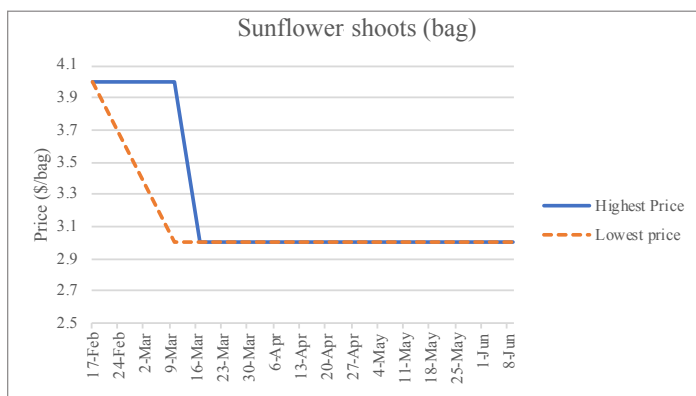


Price and availability of shallots per pound are displayed in Figure 8. Shallots were sold from July (\$3.00/each) to October (\$4.00/each). Lowest and highest prices of shallots overlapped throughout the 2019 market season. Shallots were priced at \$3/each from July until early September, increasing up to \$4.00/each until October.



**Figure 8.** Highest and lowest prices paid for shallots (\$/pound) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

Weekly prices of sunflower shoots per bag are displayed in Figure 9. Sunflower shoots were sold from February (\$4.00/bag) until June (\$3.00/bag). The price of sunflower shoots fluctuated only from February until March; then prices remained stable at \$4.00 per bag until early June. Sunflower shoots reached their highest price at the beginning of the year at \$4.00 per bag; the lowest price was \$3.00 per bag from March to June.



**Figure 9.** Highest and lowest prices of sunflower shoots (\$/bag) sold at Indiana farmers markets in 2019.

## Conclusions

This publication is the result of the Purdue Farmers Market Pricing project developed by the Purdue Horticulture Business Extension Program. This publication presents the price trends and market availability of 9 specialty produce sold at Indiana farmers markets. Data presented from the project shows the highest and lowest prices during the 2019 market season. A complete list of prices is available at [www.hort.purdue.edu/HortBusiness](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/HortBusiness).

The series of publications illustrate the product diversity of farmers markets. While most of the crops reported in this publication were available for only a few months, their contribution to crop diversity and a farmer's revenue is important. Interestingly, most crops reported in this publication experience little price variation, which may be due to supply and demand trends, location, and crop management.

Findings from this publication can help farmers understand how crop diversification can increase farm revenues. This article publishes information that will help farmers evaluate market windows for different crops, choose the appropriate crop mix that can help maximize farm profitability, and, finally, understand the gap between highest and lowest prices of some products sold at farmers markets.

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## Acknowledgement

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