



### CONSUMER PRICES UP 1% IN SEPTEMBER 2018

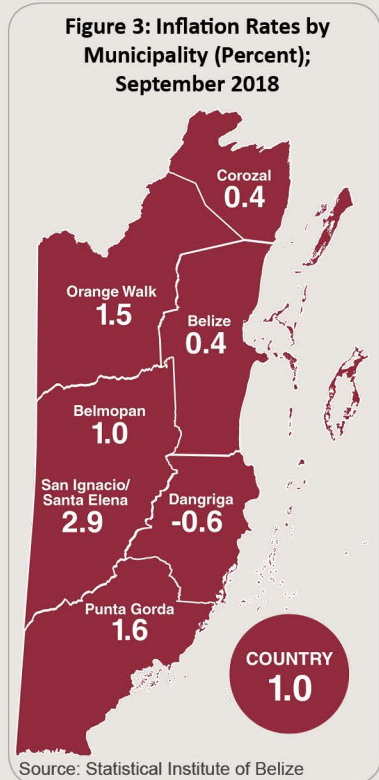
**ALL-ITEMS:** Results from the Statistical Institute of Belize's monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) survey show that for the month of September 2018, the All-Items CPI stood at 105.4, an increase of 1 percent from 104.4 in September 2017 (see Figure 1). This means that, on average, households in Belize experienced a 1 percent increase in the cost of goods and services regularly purchased for daily living. For the first nine months of the year, a year-to-date inflation rate of 0.3 percent was recorded.

**TRANSPORT:** With an increase of 1.7 percent for the month, the 'Transport' category was the main contributor to the overall increase in consumer prices compared to September 2017. This was mainly attributed to a 6.2 percent increase among prices in the 'Fuel and Lubricants' sub category. At the pump, the price per gallon of Premium gasoline rose by \$0.59 from \$11.17 in September 2017 to \$11.76 in September 2018, Regular gasoline rose by \$0.72 from \$10.38 to \$11.10, and Diesel increased by \$1.31 from \$9.40 to \$10.71 (see Table 1). Also contributing to the overall increase in prices within this category were international airfares, which were 5.6 percent higher than they were in September 2017, and the cost of motor vehicle maintenance and repairs, which increased by 5.3 percent. Although there were some small price decreases recorded within this category, such as the cost of new motor vehicles and of vehicle spare parts and accessories, these were insufficient to offset the increases in fuel, airfare and maintenance and repair prices.

**FOOD AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** For the month of September 2017, prices within the category of 'Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages' saw an overall decrease of 0.4 percent in comparison to September of last year (see Figure 1). This slight decline was primarily due to decreases in several food items, with lower prices being recorded for several meat products such as beef steak and pork chops, along with some vegetables and fruits. However, these decreases were mostly offset by higher prices among other products, including whole chicken, red kidney beans, pineapple and natural milk (see Table 1).

**HOUSING, WATER, ELECTRICITY, GAS & OTHER FUELS:** The 'Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels' category recorded an overall 1.5 percent increase during the month. Average home rental costs rose by 1.1 percent in comparison to September of 2017, while Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) prices were up 15.5 percent. The average cost of a 100-pound cylinder of LPG jumped from \$99.55 in September 2017 to \$114.97 in September 2018 (see Table 1). In addition, electricity tariffs, which saw an increase earlier in this year, were up 6.4 percent compared to last September, further contributing to the overall rise recorded for this category.

**ALL OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES:** Across 'All Other categories of Goods and Services' prices saw an average increase of 1.1 percent during September 2018, compared to September of last year. This was due to higher prices for a number of services, including doctor consultation and surgery fees, entrance fees to sporting events and facilities, motor vehicle insurance premiums, and pre-primary and primary education fees.



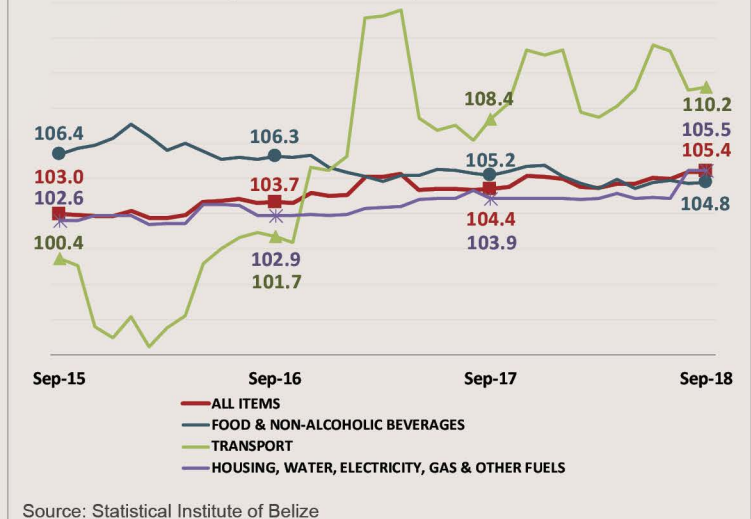
Source: Statistical Institute of Belize

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#### INFLATION RATES BY MUNICIPALITIES:

The twin towns of San Ignacio/Santa Elena reported the highest rate of increase in consumer prices among the various municipalities, with a monthly inflation rate of 2.9 percent. Households in those towns experienced above average increases in home rental prices compared to the other municipalities. Dangriga Town recorded the lowest inflation rate for the month, with prices going down on average by 0.6 percent during September 2018.

Figure 1: Consumer Price Index by Major Categories; September 2015 - September 2018



Source: Statistical Institute of Belize

Figure 2: Inflation Rates by Major Categories; September 2018



Source: Statistical Institute of Belize

Table 1: Average Prices of Selected Foods and Fuel, September 2017 and September 2018

Item	Quantity	September 2017	September 2018	% Change
Ground Beef	1 Lb	5.55	5.87	↑ 5.8
Beef Steak	1 Lb	7.77	7.62	↓ -1.9
Pork Chops	1 Lb	7.03	6.92	↓ -1.6
Pig Tail	1 Lb	4.32	4.26	↓ -1.3
Whole Chicken	1 Lb	2.50	2.67	↑ 7.0
Sugar, White	1 Lb	0.80	0.79	↓ -0.9
Sugar, Brown	1 Lb	0.54	0.52	↓ -5.0
Flour (Gitana)	1 Lb	0.93	0.92	↓ -1.5
Eggs	1 Dozen	3.08	3.17	↑ 2.8
Belikin Beer (w/out bottle)	284 ml	2.96	2.98	↑ 0.7
Natural Milk	1 Litre	2.34	2.54	↑ 8.4
Red Kidney Beans	1 Lb	1.44	1.61	↑ 11.5
Pineapple	1 Lb	0.97	1.17	↑ 21.3
Sweet Pepper	1 Lb	4.26	3.34	↓ -21.6
Cabbage	1 Lb	1.38	1.18	↓ -14.9
Limes	1 unit	0.26	0.26	↓ -0.5
Potatoes	1 Lb	1.63	1.70	↑ 4.4
Watermelon	1 Lb	0.57	0.68	↑ 19.0
Premium Gasoline	1 Gal	11.17	11.76	↑ 5.3
Regular Gasoline	1 Gal	10.38	11.10	↑ 7.0
Diesel	1 Gal	9.40	10.71	↑ 13.9
Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)	100 Lbs	99.55	114.97	↑ 15.5

Source: Statistical Institute of Belize