

Statistical Institute of BELIZE

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CPI

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

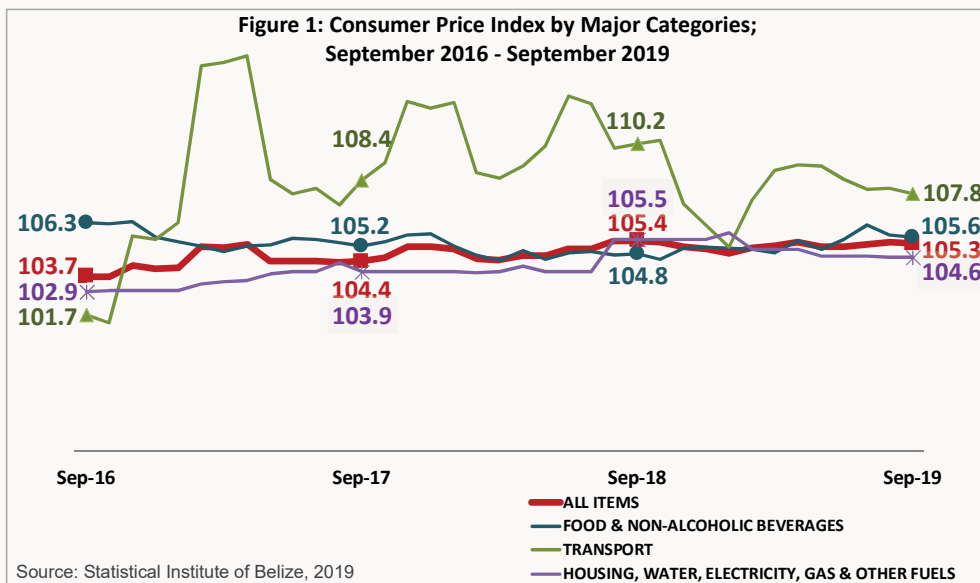
For the month of:
SEPTEMBER 2019

CONSUMER PRICES
DOWN
0.1%

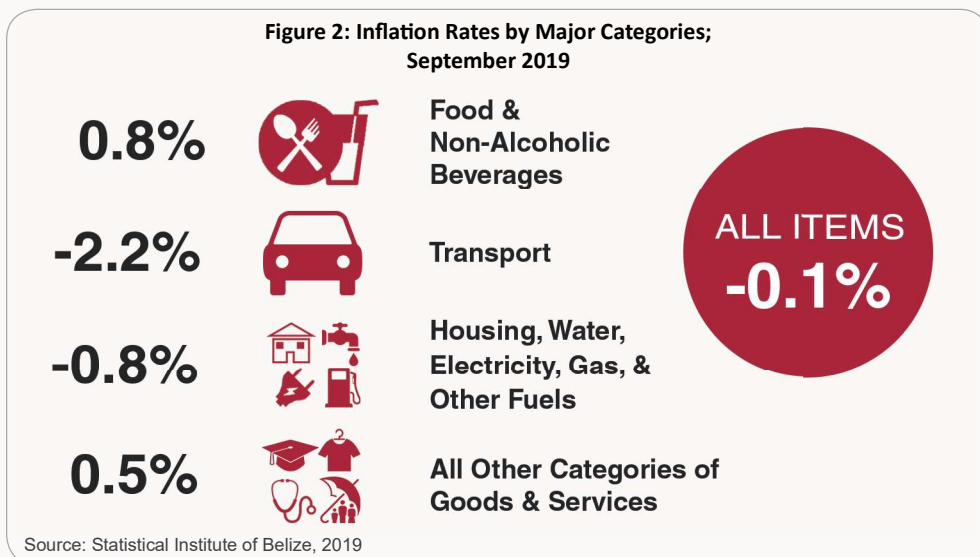
Date published:
OCTOBER 30th 2019

CONSUMER PRICES DOWN 0.1% IN SEPTEMBER 2019: FOOD AND EDUCATION UP, AIRFARE, RENT, AND FUEL DOWN

ALL-ITEMS: The latest results from the Statistical Institute of Belize's monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) survey show that for the month of September 2019, on average, Belizean households saw the cost of regularly purchased goods and services almost unchanged from the same month one year ago, going down by a marginal 0.1 percent when compared to September 2018. Higher prices for various food items as well as tertiary education were offset by lower prices for fuel, home rental costs and international airfares. The All-Items CPI, which summarizes all categories of good and services, stood at 105.3 in September 2019, a slight decrease from 105.4 in September 2018. The cumulative inflation rate for the first nine months in 2019, when compared to the same period in 2018, stood at 0.2 percent.



FOOD AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: For the month of September 2019, the 'Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages' category saw an overall increase of 0.8 percent when compared to September 2018 (see Figure 2). Higher prices were recorded for several meat products, including beef steak, pigtail and whole chicken. Additionally, higher prices for several fruits and vegetables, such as pineapples, sweet peppers, onions, tomatoes and cabbages contributed to the overall increase in this category. The effect of these higher prices were, however, partly offset by decreased prices for other items such as ground beef, pork chops, red kidney beans and watermelons (see Table 1).



Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding

TRANSPORT: Despite an increase in the cost of maintenance and repair of personal motor vehicles, 'Transport' was the main category exerting downward pressure on consumer prices during the month, with an overall decrease of 2.2 percent for September of 2019, when compared to September 2018 (see Figure 2). This was mainly due to lower prices in the 'Fuels and Lubricants' sub-category, as all fuel types recorded decreases in comparison to September of last year. At the pump, the average price per gallon of Premium gasoline went down by 2.9 percent from \$11.76 in September 2018 to \$11.42 in September 2019, Regular gasoline declined by 7.9 percent from \$11.10 to \$10.23, while the price per gallon of Diesel fell by 5.1 percent from \$10.71 to \$10.17 (see Table 1). Additionally, contributing to the decrease within this category were international airfares, which saw prices go down by 11.7 percent when compared to the same month in 2018.

Table 1: Average Prices of Selected Foods and Fuel (BZ \$), September 2018 and September 2019

| Item | | September 2018 | September 2019 | | % Change |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------------|----------------|---|----------|
| Ground Beef | 1 Lb | 5.87 | 5.50 | ↓ | -6.2 |
| Beef Steak | 1 Lb | 7.62 | 7.88 | ↑ | 3.4 |
| Pork Chops | 1 Lb | 6.92 | 6.70 | ↓ | -3.2 |
| Pig Tail | 1 Lb | 4.26 | 4.28 | ↑ | 0.4 |
| Whole Chicken | 1 Lb | 2.67 | 2.70 | ↑ | 1.0 |
| Sugar, White | 1 Lb | 0.79 | 0.79 | | 0.0 |
| Sugar, Brown | 1 Lb | 0.52 | 0.54 | ↑ | 4.8 |
| Flour (Gitana) | 1 Lb | 0.92 | 0.92 | | 0.0 |
| Rice | 1 Lb | 1.13 | 1.16 | ↑ | 2.9 |
| Eggs | 1 Dozen | 3.17 | 3.18 | ↑ | 0.4 |
| Natural Milk | 1 Litre | 2.54 | 2.54 | | 0.0 |
| Red Kidney Beans | 1 Lb | 1.61 | 1.50 | ↓ | -6.9 |
| Pineapple | 1 Lb | 1.17 | 1.19 | ↑ | 1.2 |
| Orange | 1 unit | 0.15 | 0.15 | | 0.0 |
| Watermelon | 1 Lb | 0.68 | 0.51 | ↓ | -25.0 |
| Sweet Pepper | 1 Lb | 3.34 | 4.47 | ↑ | 33.6 |
| Onions | 1 Lb | 1.84 | 1.95 | ↑ | 5.7 |
| Tomato | 1 Lb | 1.96 | 2.12 | ↑ | 8.2 |
| Cabbage | 1 Lb | 1.18 | 1.64 | ↑ | 39.0 |
| Lettuce | 1 Lb | 2.44 | 2.44 | | 0.0 |
| Limes | 1 unit | 0.26 | 0.21 | ↓ | -17.1 |
| Potatoes | 1 Lb | 1.70 | 1.69 | ↓ | -0.4 |
| Belikin Beer (w/out bottle) | 284 ml | 2.98 | 2.98 | | 0.0 |
| Premium Gasoline | 1 Gal | 11.76 | 11.42 | ↓ | -2.9 |
| Regular Gasoline | 1 Gal | 11.10 | 10.23 | ↓ | -7.9 |
| Diesel | 1 Gal | 10.71 | 10.17 | ↓ | -5.1 |
| Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) | 100 Lbs | 114.97 | 115.93 | ↑ | 0.8 |

Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, 2019

HOUSING, WATER, ELECTRICITY, GAS & OTHER FUELS:

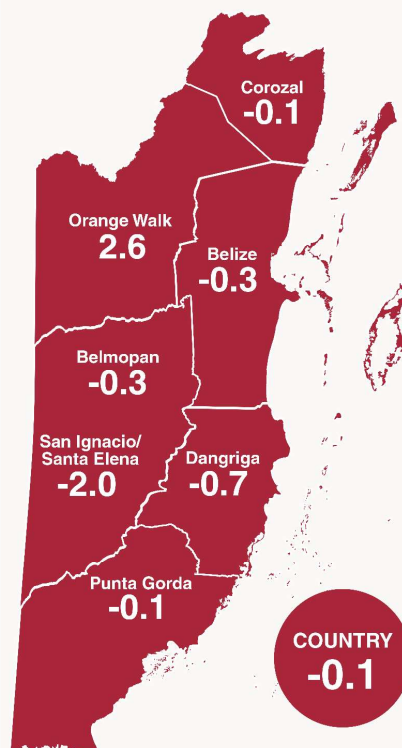
The 'Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels' category saw a decrease of 0.8 percent for the month of September 2019 when compared to September 2018 (see Figure 2). This was mainly due to a 1.1 percent decrease in home rental costs, as lower rental prices were recorded in Corozal Town, Belize City, Belmopan City, San Ignacio/Santa Elena and Dangriga Town during the month. Nonetheless, this decrease was partially offset by a 5.2 percent increase in electricity tariffs, resulting from rate increases that took effect in January of this year. Additionally, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) prices were 0.8 percent higher than they were one year earlier, with the average cost of a 100-pound cylinder up from \$114.97 in September 2018 to \$115.93 in September 2019 (see Table 1).

ALL OTHER GOODS AND SERVICES: Together, the remaining categories of goods and services experienced a 0.5 percent rise in consumer prices during the month of September 2019 (see Figure 2). This was mainly due to higher prices for items such as men's and women's clothing, fees at tertiary education institutions, and motor vehicle insurance premiums, compared to the same month in 2018.

INFLATION RATES BY MUNICIPALITIES: Among the country's municipalities, Orange Walk Town experienced the highest monthly increase in consumer prices, with an inflation rate of 2.6 percent for the month of September 2019. Consumers in this town saw above average increases in prices for food, home rental costs and men's and women's clothing. On the other hand, the twin towns of San

Ignacio/Santa Elena experienced the lowest inflation rate, with prices being 2 percent lower, on average, than they were in September 2018. Consumers in these municipalities saw greater than average reductions in home rental costs (see Figure 3) for the month.

Figure 3: Inflation Rates by Municipality (Percent); September 2019



Source: Statistical Institute of Belize, 2019