

RETAIL PRICES OF BEVERAGES
IN RETURNABLE AND NON-RETURNABLE CONTAINERS

AN ECOLOGY CENTER REPORT
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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In March and October of 1972, price data were obtained for twenty-three brands of beer and soft drinks from nine retail outlets in the Ann Arbor area. Three basic types of containers were of interest--returnable bottles, non-returnable bottles, and non-returnable cans.

The survey indicated that the most economical way to purchase beer and soft drinks in the Ann Arbor area is to buy products in returnable bottles. For 80% of the brands surveyed, returnable containers were less expensive than the other types. An additional 17% of the returnable containers were the same price as the non-returnables.

In the case of beer, there was a 14% price difference between a six pack of 12 ounce returnable bottles and non-returnable cans. In the case of soft drinks, there was a 70% difference in the cost per ounce of product in a 16 ounce returnable bottle and a 10 ounce non-returnable bottle. Unfortunately, many consumers are unable to take advantage of these price differences because beverages in returnable bottles are not widely available in Ann Arbor.

PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

The purpose of the survey was to compare the retail price of beer and soft drinks in the various containers available to Ann Arbor consumers. These containers are (1) returnable bottles (2) non-returnable (NR) bottles, and (3) non-returnable (NR) cans.

SOURCES OF DATA

The survey data were gathered in March (soft drinks) and October (beer) of 1972. Prices were obtained from a sample of retail outlets which sell beverages in the three types of containers mentioned above. A list of those outlets surveyed can be found in Appendix I.

SOFT DRINK PRICES

Four brands of soft drinks were priced in the five retail outlets surveyed. Each of the brands were available in four container types. The chart below shows the average cost per ounce of product in each of the four container types.

<u>TYPE OF CONTAINER</u>	<u>COST PER OZ. of product</u>	<u>% increase over returnables</u>
16 Oz. returnable bottle	.825¢	---
16 Oz. NR bottle	.950¢	15%
12 Oz. NR can	1.250¢	52%
10 Oz. NR bottle	1.400¢	70%

The data above shows that the price of soft drinks is directly related to the type and size of container purchased.

APPENDIX I
SOURCES OF PRICE DATA

SOFT DRINKS:

1. A & P - Stadium and Jackson
2. Krogers - Packard beyond Stadium
3. Wrigley's - Maple Village Shopping Center
4. Meijers - Carpenter Road
5. Beer Depot

BEER:

1. Beer Depot
2. Bee Hive Market & Party Store
3. Big 10 Party Store
4. Village Corners
5. Campus Corners

APPENDIX II
SOFT DRINK PRICE SURVEY

	10 oz. NR bottle	12 oz. NR can	16 oz. NR bottle	16 oz. Ret bottle
COCA COLA				
Cost	8/\$1.13	6/\$.93	8/\$1.29	8/\$1.09
Cost/oz	1.4¢	1.3¢	1¢	.8¢
Cost 16 oz.*	22.4¢	20.8¢	16¢	12.8¢
Cost 6/12 oz.*	\$1.01	\$.94	\$.72	\$.58

PEPSI COLA				
Cost	8/\$1.14	8/\$1.29	8/\$1.29	8/\$1.14
Cost/Oz.	1.4¢	1.3¢	1¢	.9¢
Cost 16 oz.*	22.4¢	20.8¢	16¢	14.6¢
Cost 6/12 oz.*	\$1.01	\$.94	\$.72	\$.65
DIET PEPSI				
Cost	8/\$1.13	8/\$1.19	8/\$1.28	8/\$1.14
Cost/Oz	1.4¢	1.2¢	1¢	.9¢
Cost 16 oz*	22.4¢	19.2¢	16¢	14.6¢
Cost 6/12oz*	\$1.01	\$.86	\$.72	\$.65
SEVEN-UP				
Cost	8/\$1.09	6/\$.89	8/\$1.09	8/\$.94
Cost/Oz.	1.4¢	1.2¢	.8¢	.7¢
Cost 16 oz.*	22.4¢	19.2¢	12.8¢	11.2¢
Cost 6/12 oz.*	\$1.01	\$.86	\$.58	\$.50

*These two columns are presented to make price comparison easier

*N-A means not Available
at stores surveyed

APPENDIX III
BEER PRICE SURVEY

	12 oz NR can	12 oz NR bottle	12 oz. Returnable
ALTES			
Cost	6/\$1.66	6/1.49	6/1.35
Cost/oz	2.3¢	2.1¢	1.9¢
Cost 12 oz.	27.6¢	25.2¢	22.8¢
BALANTINE ALE			
Cost	6/\$1.60	6/1.52	6/1.57
Cost/oz	2.2¢	2.1¢	2.2¢
Cost 12 oz.	26.4¢	25.2¢	26.4¢
Bavarian Spc.			
Cost	N-A*	6/1.55	6/1.46
Cost/oz		2.2¢	2.0¢
Cost 12 oz		26.4¢	24¢
BLACK LABEL			
Cost	6/1.53	6/1.46	6/1.41
Cost/oz	2.1¢	2¢	2¢
Cost 12 oz.	25.2¢	24¢	24¢
BLATZ			
Cost	6/1.57	6/1.51	6/1.41
Cost/oz	2.2¢	2.1¢	2¢
Cost 12 oz.	26.4¢	25.2¢	24¢
BUCKEYE			
Cost	6/1.57	6/1.52	6/1.41
Cost/oz	2.2¢	2.1¢	2¢
Cost 12 oz	26.4¢	25.2¢	24¢
BUDWEIZER			
Cost	6/1.63	6/1.65	6/1.58
Cost/oz	2.3¢	2.3¢	2.2¢
Cost 12 oz	27.6¢	27.6¢	26.4¢
COLT 45			
Cost	6/1.76	N-A*	6/1.53
Cost/oz	2.4¢		2.1¢
Cost 12 oz	28.8¢		25.2¢
DREWERY'S			
Cost	6/1.56	6/1.49	6/1.24
Cost/oz	2.2¢	2.1¢	1.7¢
Cost 12 oz.	26.4¢	25.2¢	20.4¢
FALSTAFF			
Cost	6/1.56	6/1.51	6/1.46
Cost/oz	2.2¢	2.1¢	2¢
Cost 12 oz	26.4¢	25.2¢	24¢
FRANKENMUTH			
Cost	6/1.56	6/1.61	6/1.38
Cost/oz	2.2¢	2.1¢	1.9¢
Cost 12 oz	26.4¢	25.2¢	22.8¢
GOEBEL			
Cost	6/1.31	6/1.52	6/1.27
Cost/oz	1.8¢	2.1¢	1.8¢
Cost 12 oz	21.6¢	25.2¢	21.6¢
HAMMS			
Cost	6/1.52	6/1.45	6/1.25
Cost/oz	21.¢	2¢	1.7¢
Cost 12 oz.	25.2¢	24¢	20.4¢