Prices of groceries vary; average price does not

By Gerald Radak

You can "Talk to the Boss" or "Get Your Stop and Shop's Worth" even on your bag at the "Un-Common Market," but you will be paying almost exactly the same price for your bag of groceries.

A "shopping trip" to the three chain stores closest to MIT -- the Purity Supreme in Central Square, the Star Market at the Prudential and the Stop and Shop on Memorial Drive -- revealed that although prices in the same chain stores closest to MIT varied by only 2 per cent -- less than 50 cents for a five-pound bag of groceries -- there were other differences between the stores. The Stop and Shop was the largest of the three, and had wider and less crowded aisles, plus a larger selection of items. It also had institutional sizes for certain staples -- one-gallon jars of Cains mustard, for example.

The Star Market seems to cater to a more international clientele than the other stores; it has a selection of imported cheeses, for example. It also sells more crowded last Saturday, when the stores were visited.

The table at right shows the average price for your bag of groceries, varied by only 2 per cent -- less than 50 cents for a five-pound bag -- when the stores were visited. In most cases the cheapest brand for each item was selected -- usually the stores' own brand.

The Star Market is the smallest of the three stores, and was the most crowded last Saturday, when the stores were visited.

The table at right shows the prices found for the items surveyed. In most cases the cheapest brand for each item was selected -- usually the stores' own brand.

The local market basket

You Want HiFi. Not Just Stereo.

hand, refers specifically to the way a system sounds. A high fidelity system will produce music with tonal quality, dynamic range, and volume that comes close to matching the original performance. Sometimes uncannily so. It takes good audio equipment to do it.

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