

— FACT SHEET · SEPTEMBER 2026

Down, Set, *Price Hike.*

Tailgating costs are getting sacked by Trump's economy.



A FACT SHEET • SEPTEMBER 2026

Football season is here — but tailgating costs *significantly more* than it did just twelve months ago.

As football season kicks into full swing, fans across the country are firing up the grill, cracking open a cold one, and gathering with friends and family before kickoff — but tailgating costs significantly more this year than it did just twelve months ago. Gas prices are at a record high for this time of year, the average cost for a family of four to attend an NFL game has climbed more than 10% in a single year, and the price of everything from beer to burgers to the propane in your grill has gone up. There's no question Donald Trump's tariffs and economic agenda are driving up the cost of America's favorite fall tradition. Read on for the true cost of tailgating under Trump.

\$4.15

National gas average as of
Labor Day — the highest ever
at this time of year.

AAA

+10.1%

NFL family-of-four game-day
cost, up from \$1,339 to
\$1,474.55 in one year.

Action Network

+64%

Tennessee college football
game-day cost YoY — Texas
up 45.9%.

Sports Illustrated

— GETTING TO THE GAME

The *road* to kickoff.

- National gas prices are the highest they've ever been at this time of year, averaging \$4.15 a gallon nationwide as of Labor Day.

- The national average cost for a family of four to attend an NFL game – tickets, parking, food, and drinks combined – jumped from \$1,339 in 2025 to \$1,474.55 in 2026, a 10.1% increase in a single year.

- College football costs are climbing too, with TickPick's estimated total cost of attendance up sharply nationwide – led by Texas (\$388, up 45.9%) and Tennessee (\$302, up 64.1%) year-over-year.

IN THE COOLER

Beer, soda, and Trump's aluminum tariffs.

- Beer is up to \$1.88 for a 16 oz. serving, up 26% since January 2021 – including a 3% jump in just the last year.
- Trump's aluminum tariffs are driving up the cost of beer and soda cans industry-wide.
- Soda is up to \$2.27 for a 2-liter bottle, up 35% since 2021; name-brand 12-packs have nearly doubled, from \$5.18 in 2020 to \$9.79 in 2025 – an 89% increase.

“*Trump’s aluminum tariffs are driving up the cost of beer and soda cans industry-wide.*”

– THE NEW YORK TIMES · OPINION

ON THE GRILL

Burgers, dogs, and *propane*.

- Ground beef is up to \$6.89 a pound, up 10% in the last year alone and roughly 24% since Trump took office.

- A 12-pack of hot dogs is up to \$6.45, up from \$6.07 last year – a 6.3% increase.

- Burger and hot dog buns for a crowd of 20 now cost around \$9, as white bread prices climb 4% – faster than headline inflation.

- Grilled vegetables like mushrooms, peppers, onions, and zucchini are up to \$11.90 for a 5-pound portion, up from \$11.19 last year.

- Propane costs for the grill are up too – the Department of Energy reports propane prices have risen more than 11% since Trump's war in Iran began.

DEFEND AMERICA ACTION

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*America's favorite fall tradition
just got more expensive.
It's time to fight back.*

Defend America Action is a 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to defending working families from the destructive policies of the Trump administration and Congressional Republicans.

Every figure and citation in this fact sheet links to its source – from FRED (St. Louis Fed) and AAA to the Action Network, Sports Illustrated, Newsweek, Axios, and The New York Times.

DefendAmericaAction.org

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