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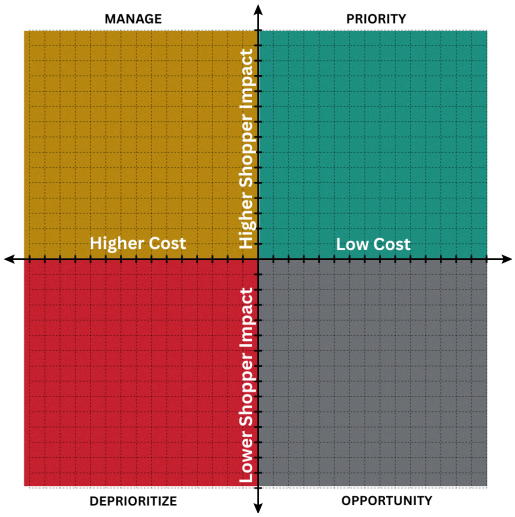
Impact-Cost Evaluation Tool

Why This Tool Matters

As food sourcing becomes more complicated, evaluating your current purchases is key to planning ahead, staying on budget, and making any necessary changes. This tool is an excellent companion to the Most Expensive Items by Food Category list available in your Food Sourcing Analysis (FSA) Report.



Detailed Steps

1. **List your Top 20 Purchases** (You can use your list provided from your FSA consultation, or you can use your own recent list.)
2. **Evaluate the shopper's need and the impact that a particular item makes on the shopper (see below)**
3. **Evaluate the cost (see below)**
4. **Plot each item:**
    - **X = Cost** (Right = Lower cost; Left = Higher cost).
    - **Y = Shopper Impact** (Up = Higher Impact; Down = Lower Impact).
5. **Decide what to do per quadrant (see Decision Helpers below).**
6. **Make your plan:** keep/increase, substitute, buy when on deal, or drop.
7. **Revisit quarterly** or when prices/availability shift.

Shopper Impact

Things to evaluate:

1.) Does this item fit within the **Most Important Food** categories from the MN Food Shelf Survey? This is our compass and should always be our first consideration.

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2.) Other things to consider:
- **Shopper demand:** consistent take-rate, waitlist, requests, shopper survey data.
- **Ease & equipment:** minimal prep; common kitchen tools; low waste.
- **Dietary Needs & Cultural Foods:** accommodates a wide variety of food preferences and needs
- **Versatility:** fits local preferences; multiple uses.

Decision Helpers by Quadrant

- **High Benefit + Low Cost (Top-Right) – "PRIORITIZE"**
  Keep/increase priority; determine minimum inventory levels; pre-buy on deals.
- **High Benefit + High Cost (Top-Left) – "MANAGE"**
  Keep but cap quantities; seek substitutes, get additional vendor bids, can you get a better deal if you purchase it in bulk, only order it when you can get it from TEFAP, etc.
- **Low Benefit + Low Cost (Bottom-Right) – "OPPORTUNITY"**
  Buy opportunistically for variety; not a core priority.
- **Low Benefit + High Cost (Bottom-Left) – "DE-PRIORITIZE"**
  Replace with higher-benefit alternatives or discontinue.

Optional Tie-breakers (when dots cluster)

- **Shelf life & storage** (cold space impact).
- **Waste rate** (expired/goes bad quickly).
- **Case-size practicality** (fits volunteer capacity for repack and shopper pack size needs).
- **Equity** (does this expand choices for groups with fewer options?).
- **Local food items**

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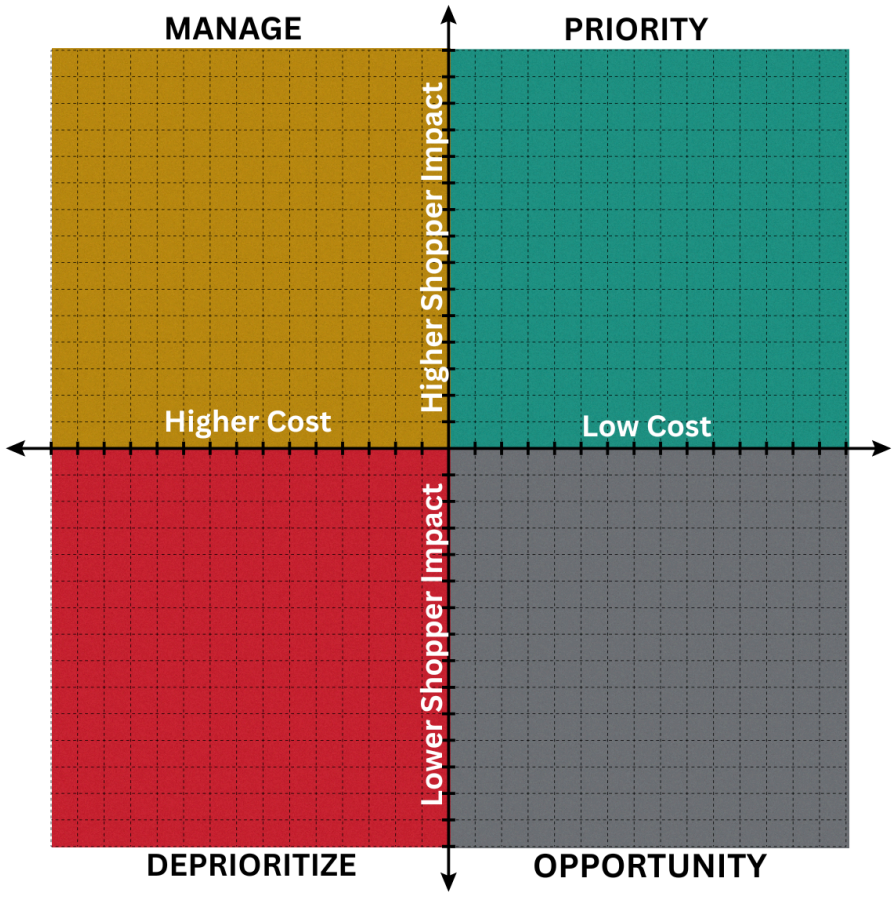
IMPACT–COST EVALUATION TOOL

Plot each of your top 20 purchased items on this grid. Use the **Cost** on the x-axis (left = higher cost, right = lower cost) and a **Shopper Impact** on the y-axis (bottom = lower impact, top = higher impact). Items in the top-right (high impact, low cost) are **priority buys**; top-left (high impact, high cost) are **manage/seek deals**; bottom-right (low impact, low cost) are **opportunistic**; bottom-left (low Impact, high cost) are **deprioritize/replace**.



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Top 20 Food Purchase Prioritization Tool

This is being provided if you would like to maintain a list of your top items:

Food Item	Cost Notes	Shopper Impact Notes	Quadrant Results
1.)			
2.)			
3.)			
4.)			
5.)			
6.)			
7.)			
8.)			
9.)			
10.)			
11.)			
12.)			
13.)			
14.)			
15.)			
16.)			
17.)			
18.)			
19.)			
20.)			

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