

Historical Trends and Data for My Diet Cost, Body Weight, and Exercise

Paul VanRaden

Least Cost Ration experiment 1987-2026

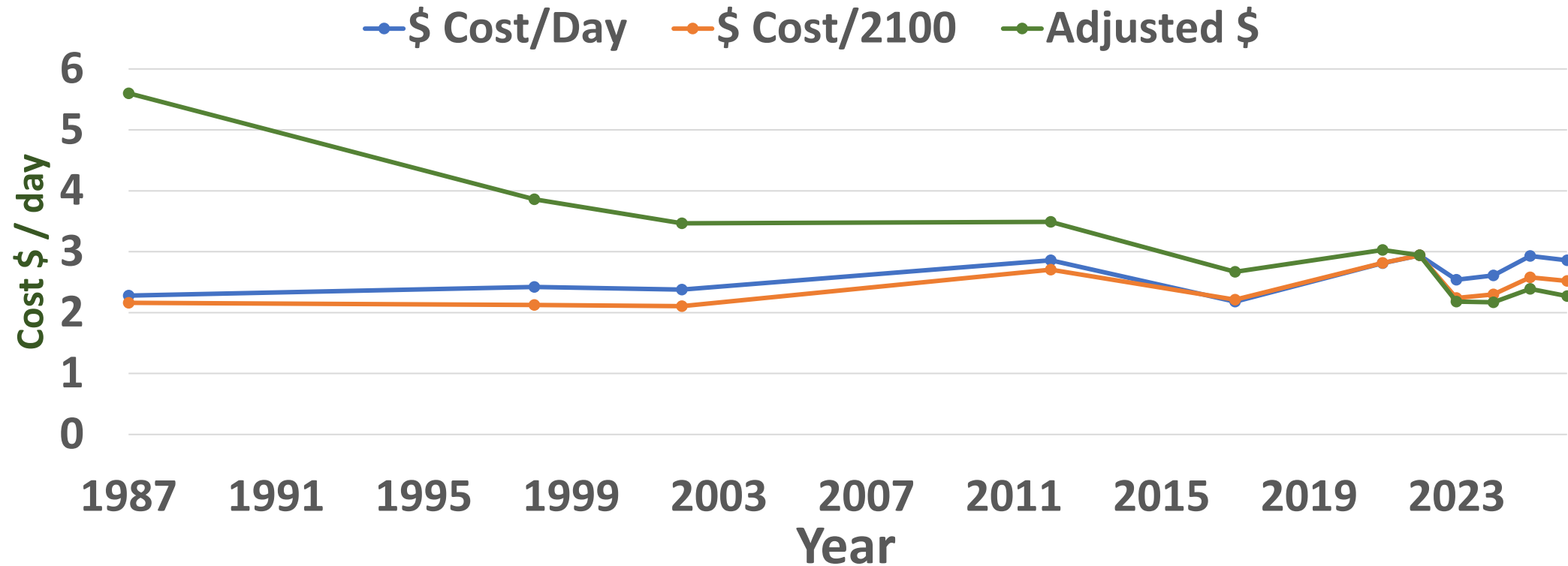
- Human least cost ration, every day for 39 years.
- Current total cost **\$2.86 / day** for food, drink, and snacks
 - Breakfast: 3-day rotation of cheapest cereals + whole milk
 - Lunch: every day a bologna and peanut butter sandwich
 - Dinner: 4-day rotation of macaroni, spaghetti, rice, noodles
 - Dessert: ice cream every day
- Prevents both starvation and obesity (100% successful so far)
- Invented by me in 1987:
 - Began at Kohl's food store (now Metro Market) in Madison, WI, USA
 - Continued in Maryland since 1988 and now in Florida since 2025



Diet Cost History 1987-2026

In US\$ as originally estimated, adjusted to 2,100 calories / day, and adjusted for inflation

39 Years of Food Cost

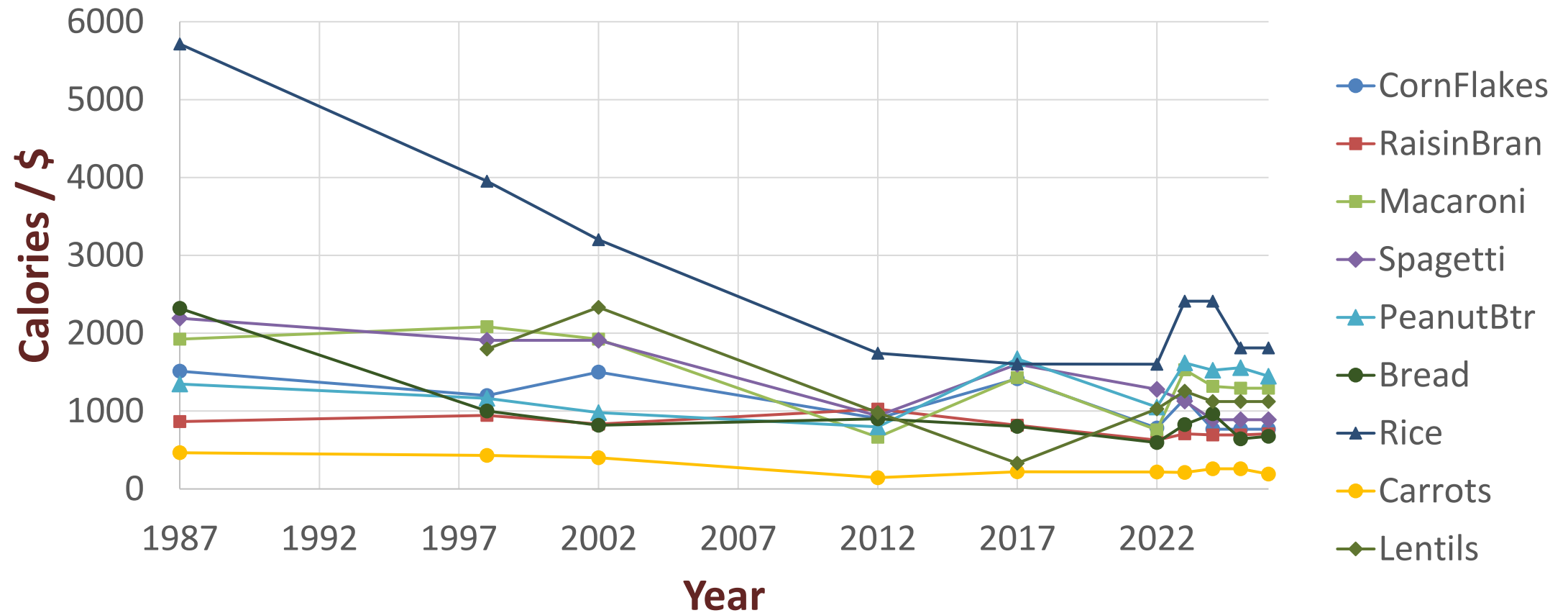


Diet cost calculations

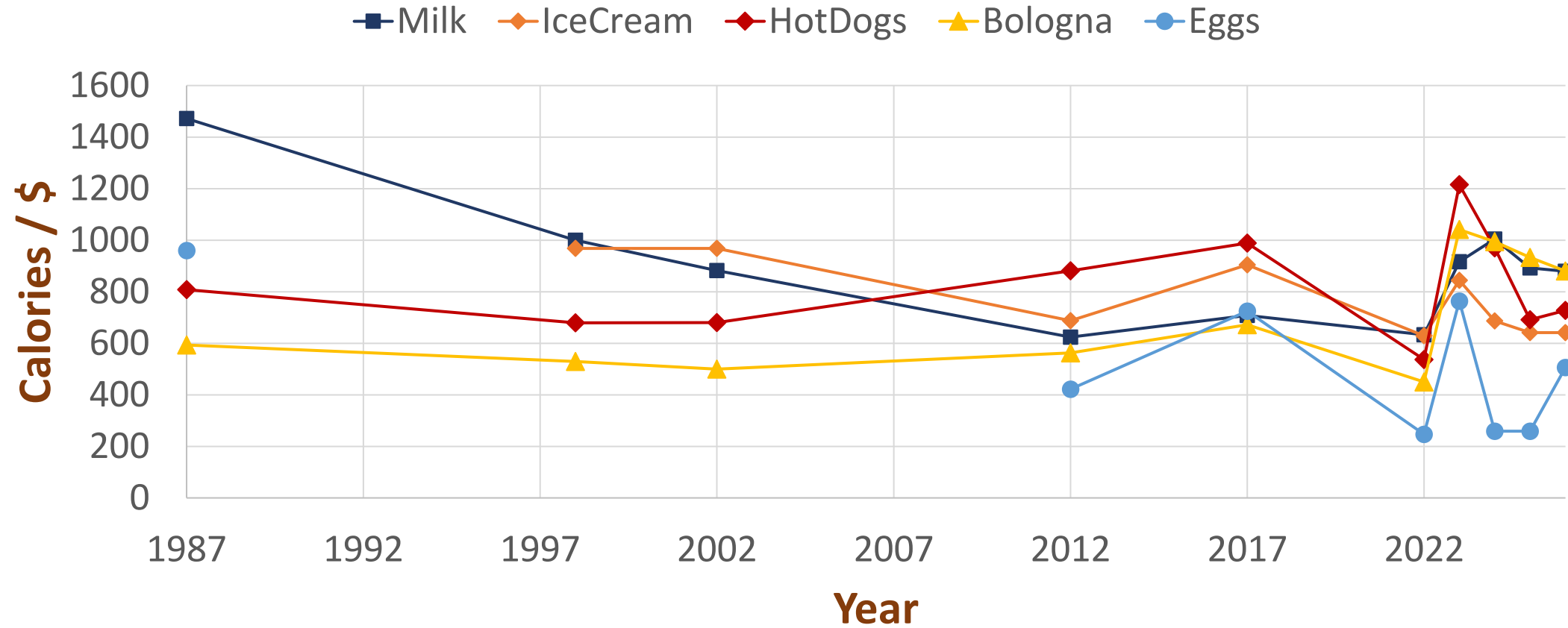
- Costs per day in Figure 1 were calculated from initial estimates of total calories I consumed.
- Costs were then standardized to 2,100 calories.
- Then adjusted by the consumer price index to 2022 US dollars.
- After adjusting for the general inflation rate, the cost of my food is now about half of the cost 39 years ago. Thus, food has become much more affordable across time.
- The world has...

- Historical values of **plant and animal products**
(Calories per dollar as originally purchased, not adjusted for inflation)
- **Plant product value history:** The dinner rotation substituted dried noodles for potatoes after about 2007. The lentil line often substituted dried split peas, whichever had best value. The carrot line instead included bananas from 1987-1998 and in 2024 bananas almost qualified for my diet with 577 calories per dollar at a price of 0.39 per pound.
- **Animal product value history:** The breakfast rotation often included 2 or 3 eggs each Sunday, but not in some earlier years or in 2022 or 2025 due to rapid changes in egg prices. but the ice cream line instead included sour cream from 1998-2002.

History of plant product values (calories/\$)



History of animal product values (calories / \$)



Grocery store receipts – 1988-2026

- About every 5 years I calculated a formal diet update.
- I saved receipts for all except the initial 1987 diet.
- This December 10, 1988 receipt is the first I kept.
 - From Giant Food, Laurel, MD.
- Then in 2017 I began saving all my receipts.
 - Shown on next slide

GIANT FOOD - TOWN CENTER

O/M BOLOGNA	1.38	F
EK BF FRANKS	1.24	F
GT RAISN BRN	2.99	F
GT NAT CERAL	1.69	F
HI-C FRUIT	.93	F
HI-C GRAPE	.93	F
GT SL CHEESE	1.68	F
RAGU SPAG SC	2.69	F
GT NAT CERAL	1.69	F
VIT-D MILK	2.15	F
GT F/NUT BTR	3.27	F
KEL CORN FLK	1.89	F
LD BROWNIES	.99	F
LD CREAM PIE	1.09	F
OI HASH BRWN	1.28	F
GF SPAGHETI	2.19	F
GT MAC CHEES	.40	F
GT MAC CHEES	.39	F
PF BRAN BRD	1.85	F
JR GRT SPLT	.39	F
GT RICE 2LB	.99	F
TAX .00 BAL	32.10	
CSH 33.00 CHG	.90	

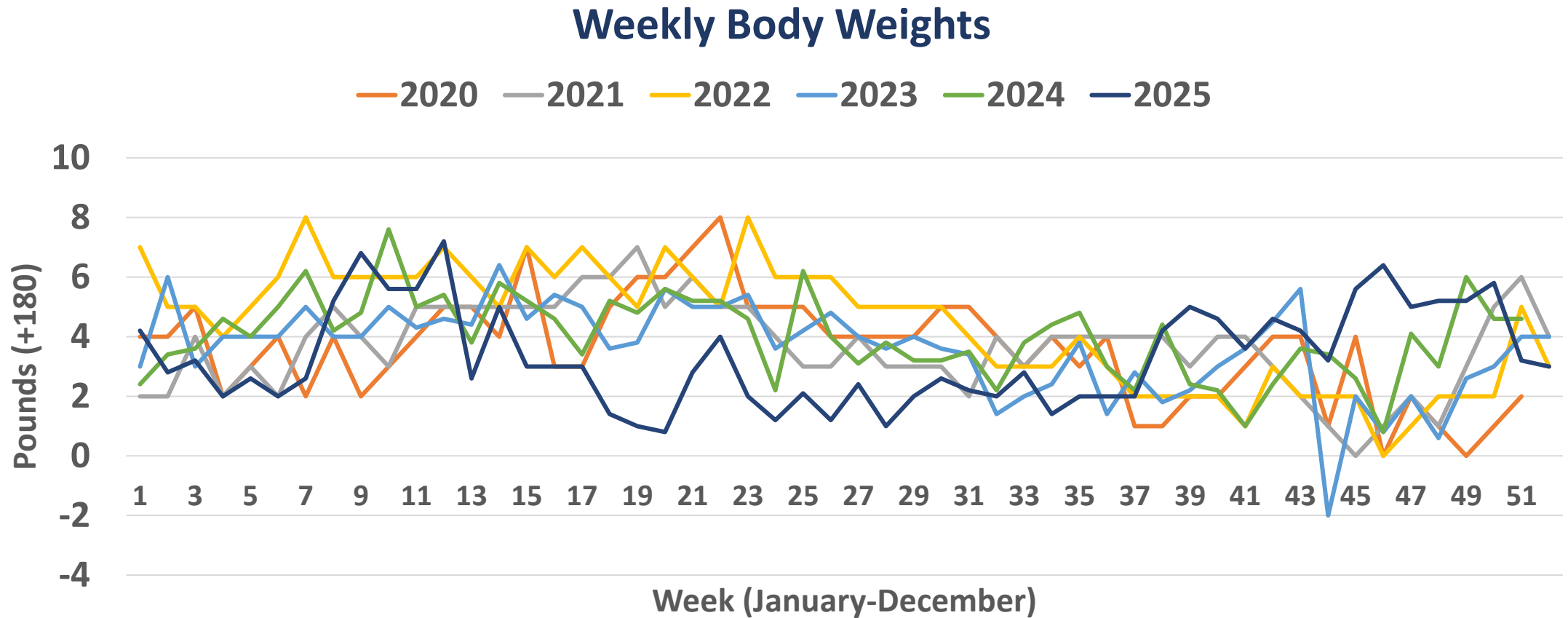
12/10/88 12:25 017042 1389
THANK YOU, COUNT ON US.

Constant diet and constant body weight

- The diet helps you avoid both starvation and obesity because the nutrients are so affordable, and the standard meals prevent overeating.
- My weights since 2020 are graphed in next slide.
- For the last 30 years my weight has not increased or decreased by more than 5 pounds from the average of 185 pounds (84 ± 2.5 kg).
- Weights from earlier years were observed but not stored.

Paul's body weight history

As differences from 180 pounds. The big blue dip in late 2023 was when I got Covid-19.



Paul's exercise history

Hours of Vigorous Exercise per Year, 2012-2025

