

### Why Buy Local Food?

On average, food travels 1,500-2,500 miles from farm to table. "Local" food is food grown within 100 miles of its point of sale. With over 8,000 farmers' markets across the nation, buying local has never been easier! Here are many reasons why it's important to buy local food:

- Fresh food looks and tastes better
- Local food often retain more nutrients. Local produce has time to ripen naturally, while food that travels long distances is most often picked before it is ripe. The shorter the time between the farm and your table, the less likely it is that the nutrients will be lost from fresh food
- Choosing fruits and vegetables that are in season may also be healthier. When you know where your food comes from, and who grows it, you know a lot more about your food
- Local food may be safer. When food is imported out of season, it is often picked unripe. Then artificially ripened with ethylene gas. In addition, the fewer steps there are between your food's source and your table, the less chance there is of contamination
- Food from local growers may contain less (or no) pesticides. Farmers must pay an extra fee to become certified organic. Some small-scale farmers use organic methods but are not certified because they are not able to afford the fees. Even if they are not organic, small farms tend to use fewer chemicals than the larger farms
- By eating more local foods you are reducing the distance the food travels which in turn reduces the amount of CO2 emissions
- Smaller farmers may grow a variety of produce that you might not find at the supermarket
- By choosing food produced locally, you are supporting your community, and you help to keep local producers in business. Local farmers sell direct to the consumers, cutting out the middleman and get full retail price for their food, which helps farm families stay on their land
- Getting to know your local growers and shopping at a local farm market, co-op, or CSA helps to build meaningful social and community connections
- Local food benefits wildlife. Well-managed farms provide ecosystem services. They conserve fertile soil and protect water sources

### Where to Find Farm Markets Near You

- Farmers' Markets in Buffalo, NY <http://farmersmarket.country/city/buffalo/>
- Farmers' Markets in Rochester, NY <http://farmersmarket.country/city/rochester-ny/>
- Farmers' Markets in Syracuse, NY <http://farmersmarket.country/city/syracuse/>
- The 25 best farmer's markets in Upstate NY: [Top 25 Upstate NY Farm Markets](#)
- Local Harvest – Search by zip code [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)

### Tips for Visiting the Farm Market

**Know your season!** Knowing what's in season will help with your realistic expectations. Learn what grows in your areas and when.

**Time your visit.** Avoid peak times. Going early assures the best selection and going late can bring the best deals.

**Bring Your Own Bags.** Avoid using plastic bags. Instead bring canvas or nylon sturdy bags. This will ensure your groceries will make it to your home safe. If you buy a lot, you may want to invest in a cart.

**Bring change.** The purchases will be quicker if you have exact change.

**Be flexible.** Meal planning is great but allow some room to explore and try something new.

**Buy in volume.** Buying in bulk is not necessary but will get you the best deals.

**Talk to your farmer.** Ask the farmers about the produce, what is expected in the upcoming weeks, and how they like to prepare it.

