

10 Good Reasons to Buy Locally Grown



1 Locally grown food tastes and looks better.

Crops marketed close to home are picked at their peak and usually sold within 24 hours of harvesting. Food imported from far away must travel on trucks or planes and then it is stored in warehouses.

2 Local food is better for you.

The shorter the time between the farm and your table, the less likely it is that nutrients will be lost from fresh food. Most fresh produce loses much of its nutritional value within 48 hours of harvesting.

3 Local food is safer.

With all the issues related to food safety and homeland security, there's an assurance that comes from looking a farmer in the eye at the farmers' market, or driving by the fields where your food comes from. Massachusetts farmers aren't anonymous and they take their responsibility to the consumer seriously.

4 Local food supports local families.

The wholesale prices that farmers get for their products are usually very low, sometimes not more than the cost of producing them. Local farmers who sell directly to consumers cut out the middleman and can get full retail price for their food—which helps farm families be able to afford to continue farming their land.

5 Local food builds community.

When you buy direct from a farmer, you're engaging in a time-honored connection between eater and grower and you're supporting a local business. Getting to know folks who grow your food helps you know more about the place you live. In many cases, it gives you access to a place where you can go to enjoy nature and the seasons, and to learn more about how food grows.

6 Local food preserves open space.

When farmers get paid more for their products by nearby shoppers, they're less likely to sell farmland for development.

7 Local food keeps taxes down.

According to several studies, farms contribute more in taxes than they require in services, whereas most residential development contributes less in taxes than the cost of required services.

8 Local food benefits the environment and wildlife.

Massachusetts farmers are leaders in the use of environmentally sound growing practices. Our farms encompass a patchwork of fields, meadows, woods, streams, and ponds that provide essential habitat for wildlife. Additionally, long distance transportation of food increases air pollution.

9 Local food is an investment in our future.

When you buy locally grown food, you're helping to preserve the strength and character of our community for our children and grandchildren.

10 Local food preserves genetic diversity.

In industrial agriculture, plants are bred for their ability to ripen uniformly, withstand harvesting, survive packing and last a long time on the shelf, so there are only a few varieties in large-scale production. This leaves our food supply vulnerable to disease or disaster. Smaller local farms, in contrast, often grow many different varieties to provide a longer season, an array of colors, and the best flavors.

