

15 Benefits of Eating Local

15 BENEFITS OF EATING LOCAL



LIVE WELL UTAH

Some of the reasons to buy local food may surprise you. They may even entice you to visit your local farmer's market this summer.

Local is in. And if trends from the past several years are any indication, the movement is here to stay. Why are people so drawn to buying locally? The top three reasons Americans do so, according to the Food Marketing Institute, include freshness, supporting the local economy, and knowing where the product came from. Other studies show similar reasons, along with higher and better quality, positive relationships with growers, and the opportunity to purchase unique products.

Although many might first connect local food purchasing to positive environmental benefits, the benefits extend to your mental and physical health, your social sphere, and your community's prosperity. Specific benefits of engaging in the local movement include:

1. Improved nutrition, increased likelihood of making healthier food choices, obesity prevention, and reduced risk of diet-related chronic disease.
2. Small farms preserved and rural communities sustained.
3. Sixty-five percent of your dollar remains within the community, compared to shopping at large chain stores where only 40 percent of your dollar stays in your community.
4. More job security in your local community.
5. Attraction of employees and patients to local restaurants, hospitals, and other businesses advertising local food sourcing.
6. Increased national food security.
7. Local and small-scale farmland preserved.
8. Food travel distance is reduced (food miles). This cuts down on fossil fuel consumption, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions associated with transporting

food.

9. Preserved cultivar genetic diversity.
10. Higher likelihood farmers selling direct to consumers and markets are engaging in environmentally friendly production practices.
11. Reduced food safety risks through product decentralization.
12. If growing your own food, greater physical activity is an additional health benefit.
13. Being able to talk to the people who grew and/or made the food you are buying.
14. Being able to ask questions about pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones, animal treatment, fertilizers, and any other queries you may have about how your food was produced.
15. Getting to know your local producers gives you a stronger sense of place, relationships, trust, and pride within your community.

Read More

More Sustainable Food Resources

This article was written by Roslyn Brain, Sustainable Communities Extension Specialist with USU Extension, Moab