

"Why should I buy local?"

By Roxanne Jungé

It tastes better

Peak season, fresh-picked produce gives you the best flavor. Strawberries smell and taste like strawberries! And fresh-baked bread does not even compare to store-bought!

It's healthier

Did you know fresh vegetables lose up to 45% of their nutritional value between being picked and landing on a grocery shelf? The average produce on grocery store shelves travels 1500 miles. At a farmers' market, the food is brought in from local farmers, usually less than 100 miles.

It keeps communities strong and economically resilient

Businesses spawn at farmers' markets. Interdependence of businesses, local hired labor, and buying directly from the producer - all these contribute to it. Did you know a whopping 84.2 cents of every dollar spent at the grocery store goes towards marketing and distribution, and only 15.8 cents goes to the farmer?! Whereas if you buy directly from a farmer at a farmers' market, s/he gets 100% of the food dollar!!

It's better for the environment

Farm land stays in production. Farmer knowledge is preserved. Direct-market farmers tend to be the smaller, more sustainably-run operations. Less fuel is used in transportation.

It costs you the same or less

With all the above reasons to buy local, you might be thinking, "That's all very well and good, but it COSTS more to shop at farmers' markets." This is a myth. Studies have shown (most recently a 2015 Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont study) that prices at farmers' markets for conventionally grown produce items were lower than they were at supermarkets. For organic items, farmers' markets beat grocery stores every time hands down.