

# Farm to Table



You can dine “farm to table” when you purchase seasonal foods from farmers you know or when you visit restaurants/ stores that promote local foods and develop relationships with local farmers. Farm to table isn’t a fad; it’s a growing movement that is found throughout the country, in homes, hospitals, schools, and communities. In 2011, over 85% of customers polled by the National Grocers Association said that they chose a grocery store based in part on whether it stocked food from regional producers. Over 2,000 schools across the country developed farm to school initiatives to source food from local farmers, ranchers, and food businesses, and over 7,000 U.S. cities and towns host farmers’ markets.

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Benefits: Consumers</b> | With the growth of farm to table, more consumers now have access to fresh, locally-grown foods. Fruits and vegetables taste their best when consumed as quickly as possible after harvesting, and eating at a farm to table restaurant means that you’re not eating food grown hundreds, if not thousands, of miles away. Access to locally-grown foods has a strong impact on health too. Local farmers’ markets and growing local food production in a community can enable people to consume more vegetables and fruits that are the cornerstones of a healthful diet. |
| <b>Benefits: Community</b> | On average, food in the United States travels 1500 miles from farm to consumer. Food produced and consumed locally travels an average of 45 miles. In addition, a 2010 study by the USDA’s Economic Research Service shows that nearly all the income from locally-grown foods is retained within the local community. Local farms also help preserve open space, especially in metropolitan areas, creating more enjoyable communities.  |
| <b>Seasonal Tips</b>       | Locally-grown foods are available according to local growing seasons. While you might be used to shopping in a grocery store that has everything available year-round, taking a seasonal approach to meal preparation keeps things interesting because choices change in the market each week. The delicious flavor and attractive visual aesthetic of locally-grown produce is worth it! Take a test run on your family this week to see what they think!  |
| <b>Drawbacks: Expense</b>  | Locally-grown foods at farmers’ markets are often more expensive than foods purchased at grocery stores, though this is not always the case.  |