

Title:

Buy Local Food...Save The Environment

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504

Summary:

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Just think about the fuel needed to transport produce like this across the country or across borders. Also think about the pollution generated by the vehicles carrying this produce. An apple a day may keep the doctor aw...

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Article Body:

Do you know how far the apple in your kitchen traveled before you picked it up at the grocery store? According to the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, apples in American grocery stores typically travel 1,726 miles before reaching your kitchen!

Just think about the fuel needed to transport produce like this across the country or across borders. Also think about the pollution generated by the vehicles carrying this produce. An apple a day may keep the doctor away but the fumes accompanying it will definitely hurt us!

The impact on the environment is one issue, but we also have to worry about preservatives that are used to keep this apple nice and crispy during its very long journey to your grocery store. To keep produce fresh during the long haul across continents and oceans, produce companies have to use chemical preservatives. It is well documented that preservatives are hazardous to human health.

So what can we do? Well, you can try your best to buy local produce whenever possible. Even though America has lost more than 5 million farms (USDA figures) since 1935, there are still many farmers who have generated markets for themselves in the cut throat world of global competition.

Since produce from your local farms are traveling very short distances there is less pollution created in their transport. There is also less packaging and processing involved which also helps to lessen the amount of garbage we put into the environment and ourselves!

There is hope. Many small farms surrounding suburban communities or urban city centers have weekly or daily farmers' markets. These markets connect regional small farmers with suburban and urban dwellers. Check to see if there is a market like this in your community. Often times the cooperative sponsoring the market can't afford to spend a lot on advertising so you've got to search out their location. Try your local business improvement association or municipal office to see if they might be able to help.

It really is enjoyable to mix up your food shopping routine by purchasing your fresh produce and meats at your local farmers' market. In many cases you can negotiate prices (which is fun). I also find your fellow shoppers are generally in a happier frame of mind when they're perusing farmer's booths than when they're steering a shopping cart through crowded aisles at the grocery store.

If you're like me and treasure the rural areas surrounding your urban region, then you also likely feel the sense of sadness each time a farm is sold for yet another residential or commercial development. Here's your chance to do your bit to save the "family farm" (and help curb urban sprawl).

Find out the location of your nearest farmers' market, note the dates that they are open and plan to be there bright and early to get the freshest, tastiest food choices of the day! Your family will thank you, you'll be supporting your local economy and helping to save the environment.