

7 Reasons to Buy Locally

Buying locally is an important aspect for both consumers and producers in Nebraska. By purchasing local food/products consumers are supporting the local economy, supporting local farmers and ranchers and consuming healthier, fresher food.

1. You get to know Nebraska's seasons and Nebraska farmers, who are very knowledgeable about the food they raise. They can tell and show you how they raise your food, what growing practices they use, when and how the food was harvested and how they handle the food for your purchase. Knowing where your food comes from and how it is grown allows you to choose food from farmers you trust.

2. Buying local strengthens food security. When you buy local food, you know that the food is from a local farmer that eats and trusts the same crops you do.

3. With the purchase of locally grown food you are preserving a taste of yesterday. Farmers are planting and harvesting a multitude of re-discovered heirloom treasures and raising rare and endangered heritage breeds of animals and poultry that are likely be impossible to find on most produce and meat counters. These farmers are ensuring the survival of thousands of diverse varieties and flavors that would otherwise be lost.

4. By supporting local food you are supporting Nebraska's vanishing family farms. Did you know that less than 1% of the US population claim farming as an occupation? On average only 10 cents of each dollar spent on food returns to the farmer. The other 90 cents goes to corporations for packaging, marketing, transportation, etc. Farmers who sell direct to consumers receive 80 cents of each food dollar.

5. Buying local strengthens the regional economy. Buying local food keeps your dollars circulating in your community and increases local food security. With each local food purchase, you ensure that more of your money spent on food goes directly to local farmers and the local farmers often put their money back into the community.

6. Enjoying local food protects the environment and improves land stewardship. While most conventionally produced food is extremely resource intensive, traveling an average of 1,500-2,500 miles from field to plate, local food is not. This reduces fossil fuel dependence, carbon dioxide emissions, and use of packing materials and garbage.

7. Buying local food protects open spaces and farmland. Keeping local family farms economically viable is critical to preserving the beautiful landscapes you see in the rural agricultural areas known as "foodsheds". By supporting Nebraska's family farmers you will ensure the farmland used to grow food remains preserved, now and in future next generations.

