

Why Choose Local Organic?



1. Discover amazing flavors, heirloom foods, and regional delicacies.

You'll be eating in harmony with the seasons and perhaps even acquiring new cooking skills.

2. Keep important cultural traditions going!

Farming, gardening, cooking, preserving, and eating local foods are parts of everyone's heritage.

3. Help create a self-sufficient, fair, and resilient local economy.

When you support NH's farmers, small businesses, and artisans, you're becoming a conscious co-producer of a more vibrant local economy! Your actions are benefiting your neighbors, yourself, and your family because you're making sure that more money circulates in your hometown – rather than flowing off to distant, unaccountable corporations. You're ensuring that interesting, creative, independent work abounds here. Numerous studies indicate that dollars channeled into locally-owned enterprises strengthen and reinvigorate communities in terms of increases in employment, taxes paid, and money going to other local businesses.¹

4. Get to know the Farmers / Farmworkers who are bringing your food to market. And let them get to know you.

You're building real, face-to-face community. Through direct conversations, you can learn about growing and harvesting practices. You can inform yourself about the ways that food production is influenced by all sorts of factors – from weather to insects to human social structures such as types of land ownership, legislation at many levels, international commodity markets, or even the policies of financial institutions. Importantly, you can also let growers know what foods, growing methods, and human work settings you value and seek.

5. Eat fresher, probably healthier, more nutrient-dense, foods.

Local food is likely to be healthier for you, your family, and your neighbors. Ideally, it has been grown in biologically active living soil, open air, and sunshine - conditions that generate maximum vigor and nutritional quality. Organic foods, by definition, are free from persistent toxic synthetic chemicals and genetically modified organisms. Real Organic foods also come from animals who have been able to enjoy fresh pasture and organic feeds rather than being crowded into disease-causing CAFO's. Real Organic foods are not raised hydroponically.

6. Local Organic Agriculture Strengthens Biodiversity and Conserves Nature

Because synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and GMO's are not used in organic production, natural populations of living beings (large and small) can continue their lives even as human food is being grown. Local, organic farming protects not only pollinators, amphibians, and aquatic life, but also the health of human eaters, farmworkers, food processors, and people living upwind and downstream. (After all, people are just one more part of biodiversity!) Regenerative, small-scale, organic farms increase biodiversity by deliberately raising animals and plants together (polyculture), and by growing not only annual crops but also long-lived plants such as fruit or nut trees, as well as berry producing shrubs and vines. Note how very different this is from industrialized farming. The latter typically grows single crops on large swaths of land utilizing massive, automated capital- and fossil fuel-intensive equipment. This often results in soil degradation, compaction, and heavy water use. Significantly, small-scale, diversified organic farms also avoid the cruelty and disease-causing conditions associated with Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's). That industrialized method of raising domesticated animals (for meat, dairy, and eggs) crowds the creatures into confined spaces. It often relies on GMO feeds, excessive antibiotics (which can lead to antibiotic resistant disease organisms), and herd densities that can transform potentially beneficial manure into concentrated toxic waste.

¹<https://ilsr.org/key-studies-why-local-matters/>
Image source: www.BioLib.de



7. Help Reduce Fossil Fuel Consumption, Waste, and Climate Change

Industrialized food supply chains depend upon fossil fuels and the capital-intensive mechanization of as many aspects of food production, processing, and distribution as possible. Presently, a ‘plate’ of typical, conventionally produced food in the U.S. is estimated to have traveled 1500 miles.² All sorts of storage facilities, refrigeration, plastic packaging, chemical preservatives, trucking, shipping, and/or air transport is required to supply such food. Yet along the way to our tables, 1/3 of the food is wasted.³ Perhaps it’s not surprising that 1/4 to 1/3 of climate-changing greenhouse gases are being generated by activities related to the industrialization of agriculture.⁴ A critical example of this is synthetic nitrogen fertilizer. This substance requires large amounts of fossil fuel for its initial manufacturing and distribution to croplands. Once used, it not only pollutes waterways, but frequently degrades into N₂O, a molecule 300 times more heat trapping than CO₂.⁵ Local, organic farming avoids many of these factors (and others) that add to global warming. It can provide our state and people with both healthy food and a resilient economy and environment.

8. Local Organic Agriculture Helps Restore Soil Health, CO₂ Levels, and Climate Resilience

When regenerative organic practices are employed, complex microbiomes are able to flourish beneath the layers of food plants and their complementary cover crops. These microbiomes support the health of the multicellular creatures (including us humans) who live on or near such farms or eat their products. In well-aerated, non-compacted layers of earth, tiny micro-organisms partner with plant roots, invertebrate animals, and fungi. The resulting biological networks recycle materials such as dead leaves, stems, and roots or manure and transform them all into humus. Additionally, the fungi (in exchange for plant sugars) help transport minerals into the crop plants from the deeper levels of subsoil and bedrock. Such interactions increase the nutrient density of the resulting food. Such biological webs further increase the water-absorbing capacity of the ground, leading to better aquifer recharge and greater resistance to flooding and erosion. All this leads to improved water quality in watersheds, estuaries, and even oceans. Organic, regenerative practices (such as biodynamic farming, permaculture, agroforestry, composting, and other agroecological methods) can even remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it underground in the form of that amazing organic substance mentioned earlier – humus. This process, today called carbon sequestration, has been the hallmark of many traditional, sustainable growing systems across the centuries. It allows farmers and gardeners to build their soil’s fertility. Carbon sequestration can help reverse the climate change that has been caused by burning fossil fuels during our species’ excessive industrialization over the past 250 years. To summarize: localized, organic, regenerative growing can provide healthy foods, reduce CO₂ levels, and improve land’s climate resiliency, even while it restores intricate and unpolluted habitats for both humans and other species.

9. Support for Local, Organic Agriculture (combined with a modest amount of Fair Trade purchasing) is an act of solidarity with people across the planet, people whose lives and cultures are threatened by globalized, industrialized agriculture.

On every continent, communities and cultures based upon centuries of food sufficiency achieved through small-scale agriculture, craftsmanship, and unique world-views are being threatened and disrupted. People often find it necessary to leave their homelands due to the related pressures of climate instability and industrialization. Both factors frequently make it impossible for traditional farmers to meet their own food needs, sell at fair prices, and / or hold onto their families’ land. This is particularly the case where extractive industries / land grabs have targeted a region’s gifts – such as its mineral, water, timber, soil, or even human resources. Young people in such areas often find it necessary to migrate to foreign lands and / or megacities that are ill equipped to provide them with employment. Once there, they often have little access to dignified, creative work, nourishing food, basic housing, or even clean water or functioning sanitation and social systems. The disruption of formerly self-reliant, agrarian communities occurs in part due to financial structures. These include prices, subsidies, taxes, and monetary returns that do not accurately account for the true costs externalized / inflicted upon the global commonwealth by conventional, industrialized agriculture – costs to the land, waters, atmosphere and ecosystems that are indispensable for a healthy, human-friendly biosphere. Given this situation, the UN recommends small-scale, agroecological production as an important path for keeping Earth’s people well-fed and resilient as we all move into the future.⁶ Agroecological methods (which foreground regenerative organic practices) provide food sovereignty while respecting the integrity of diverse ecosystems. Co-creating ecologically-sound food systems here in our region is simply a matter of us doing our part in this planetary effort.

²<https://www.ecoliteracy.org/article/fossil-food-consuming-our-future>

³<http://www.fao.org/3/i3347e/i3347e.pdf>

⁴http://www.ipes-food.org/images/Reports/UniformityToDiversity_FullReport.pdf

⁵<https://newscenter.lbl.gov/2012/12/04/nitrous-oxide-levels-in-california/>

⁶http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20140310_finalreport_en.pdf