

Baja Arizona Sustainable Agriculture

Ten Reasons to Eat Local Food

- ***Local food taste better and has more variety.*** Think just picked tomatoes, lettuce or asparagus and heirloom or local varieties such as Willcox Pink Lady & Sundowner apples. Local farmers are not limited to the few varieties that are bred for shipping and shelf life.
- ***Locally grown produce is fresher and retains more nutrients.*** Compare supermarket food that has been in transit or cold-storage for days or weeks to that sold at a farmers market often picked within 24 hours of your purchase.
- ***Locally grown fruits and vegetables have longer to ripen.*** They don't have to stand up to the rigors of shipping and are not harvested green but left to truly vine ripen. Local peaches and figs can be deliciously soft, sweet or juicy and watermelons split at the touch of a knife.
- ***Local food travels many fewer miles.*** That means less use of fossil fuels, less pollution and better air quality. The average forkful of food in the US travels 1,500 miles to reach your plate.
- ***Eating local supports the local economy.*** According to a study by the New Economics Foundation in London, a dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy. When businesses are not owned locally, money leaves the community at every transaction.
- ***Buying locally raised food directly from the producers helps to keep ranchers and farmers in business.*** With industrial, long-distance food, the producer gets only 8 cents out of every food dollar. Ninety two cents goes to the shippers, processors, grocers, middlemen and advertisers.
- ***Eating local food keeps local agricultural land in production*** ensuring that future generations will still be surrounded by lots of open fields, grazing lands and wildlife.
- ***Eating local food keeps us in touch with the seasons and the land.*** By eating with the seasons, foods are eaten when they are at their peak taste, are most abundant and least expensive. Children who grow up where there are still farms and ranches know where food comes from and how it is produced.
- ***Local food has a story.*** Knowing where your food comes from and the rancher, farmer, orchardist or beekeeper who produced it means that it is not anonymous stuff but is accountable. You can visit where it's raised.
- ***Local food increases community food security*** by retaining the experts that know how to produce food. Depending on far away food sources at the end of a long and vulnerable food chain leaves a region at the mercy of supply disruptions and more opportunities for harmful contamination.