

The *Lotus Live* Guide to **Local Food**

(Updated February 1, 2007)

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Local Food

Why Eat Local?

- Eating local is simultaneously one of the easiest and most significant ways you can increase the social, economic, and ecological responsibility of your everyday life.
- Eating local promotes a healthy local economy, and keeps your money and jobs in the area-long distance transactions siphon your money far away. Revenues from local crops are more likely to benefit local farmers, not distant middlemen.
- Local food will be fresher, tastier, riper, and healthier. Food from afar will likely have been transported and/or stored for days, weeks, or even months. (Food in the U.S. travels an average of 1,500 miles before consumption).
- Buying from local producers reduces the embodied energy of your food, improving air quality and slowing resource depletion.
- Eating local protects your food from contamination and unknown chemical exposure. (Food from afar changes hands an average of 6 times before reaching you).
- A local diet puts you in touch with your own natural environment and its unique harvest and seasonal changes.
- Local farms keep open spaces pristine by giving them value beyond space for office parks.
- Native crops are often available in more variety than just the most commonly mono-crops.
- Local eating often accompanies organic eating, and decreases the chance that your food has been genetically modified.

How Do I Eat Local?

- Eating local is not too hard when it comes to produce, as many labels include the origin of fruits and vegetables. Processed and prepared foods will be harder to judge, however as currently labeling standards do not require manufacturers to include the origin of ingredients, though such labeling would be highly desirable, at least for consumers.

What's In Season?

- In an attempt to make local eating as easy as possible, Lotus Live presents regional local eating guides (more coming soon).

Local Foods Wheel

- [Local Foods Wheel \(SF Bay Area\)](#)
List of foods local to the SF Bay Area around the year.

San Francisco Bay Area

- [Local Meat in the Bay Area](#)

Where Can I Buy It?

Farmer's Markets

- [Local Harvest](#) will help you find the nearest farmer's market anywhere in the U.S.

Local Food Documents

Articles

- [If It's Fresh and Local, Is It Always Greener?](#) (NYTimes 2007)
The researchers of UC Davis are finding it's not quite that simple
- [Energy, an Ingredient in Local Food and Global Food](#) (NYTimes Dot Earth 2007)
Energy is an issue in both global and local food, but it isn't the only consideration.

Papers

- [Home Grown: The Case For Local Food In A Global Market](#) (Worldwatch 2002)
Long report on the case for local food.

About this Guide

Author: [Nick Enge](#)

References: [Ideal Bite](#), [10 Reasons to Eat Local Food](#), [10 Reasons to Buy Local Foods](#)

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If you have any ideas, suggestions, or corrections you would like to contribute to this guide on Local Food, please send us an email at [dining@lotuslive.org](mailto:dining@lotuslive.org).

As Lotus Live's knowledge base increases, and as new resources are created, this guide will be updated. The most recent version of this guide can be found [here](#).

Feel free to make use of any of the information in this guide for any purpose--we simply ask that you credit us and our predecessors, and link to us.

**Citation:** Enge, N. (2007). *The Lotus Live Guide to Local Food*. Lotus Live, from <http://lotuslive.org/dining/files/LLLocalFood.pdf>.