

THE DISH ON THE LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENT

Trends, Facts and Statistics

- A new survey of 1,609 chefs by the National Restaurant Association ranked locally grown produce as the hottest trend for 2009.

National Restaurant Association

- The number one food trend of 2008 was eco-friendly foods. Increasingly, consumers want to know more about their food – where it was grown, what ingredients it contains, how it was packaged, and the footprint its production left on the earth.

“It is the evolution of organics that consumers want to know and understand more about the foods they eat,” says “Supermarket Guru” Phil Lempert, food trends editor and correspondent for NBC’s *Today Show*. “You may choose a locally grown product over one that is organic because the food is fresher and its footprint is smaller.”

MedicineNet.com

- John Ikerd, a retired agricultural economics professor who writes about the growing “eat local” movement, says that farmers who sell direct to local consumers need not give priority to packing, shipping and shelf-life issues and can instead “select, grow and harvest crops to ensure peak qualities of freshness, nutrition and tastes.” Eating local also means eating seasonally, he adds, a practice much in tune with Mother Nature.

About.com

- Another benefit of eating locally is helping the local economy. Farmers on average receive only 20 cents of each food dollar spent, says Ikerd, the rest going for transportation, processing, packaging, refrigeration and marketing. Farmers who sell food to local customers “receive the full retail value, a dollar for each food dollar spent,” he says. Additionally, eating locally encourages the use of local farmland for farming, thus keeping development in check while preserving open space.

About.com

- “Local” can refer to a fairly specific area – whether it’s 100 miles or 150 miles – but one farm may define the area as anywhere within a day’s drive, since that’s where they can easily and efficiently move their products.

Treehugger.com

- The *New Oxford American Dictionary’s 2007* word of the year was locavore, meaning someone who eats exclusively local food.

Idealbite.com

- Produce shipped from outside the country travels up to two weeks before it arrives in grocery stores.
Idealbite.com
- Food that has to travel long distances usually requires additional packaging and may have been genetically modified in order to survive the trip.
Idealbite.com
- Sustainable seafood came in at No. 10 in the National Restaurant Association's top trends list, with non-traditional seafood items – including several sustainable farmed species.
National Restaurant Association
- In the U.S., the average grocery store's produce travels nearly 1,500 miles between the farm where it was grown and (a consumer's) refrigerator. About 40% of our fruit is produced overseas and, even though broccoli is likely grown within 20 miles of the average American's house, the broccoli we buy at the supermarket travels an average of 1,800 miles to get there. Notably, 9% of our red meat comes from foreign countries, including locations as far away as Australia and New Zealand.
Sustainabletable.org
- About 1/3 of all U.S. farms are located within metropolitan areas, comprising 18% of the total U.S. farmland.
Sustainabletable.org