



**HELLMANN'S**

# **Local Food Guide**

**for Ontario and Quebec**

# GOING AND GROWING LOCAL

Here are actions, from simple to challenging, that you and your family can take to find more local food:

1. BUY, PREPARE AND SERVE
2. ASK FOR IT
3. GROW YOUR OWN
4. GET MORE INVOLVED
5. LEARN MORE

## 1. BUY, PREPARE AND SERVE

Get more local food in your diet by buying, preparing and serving by season...

### I. WHAT'S IN SEASON

#### II. WHERE TO BUY IT

- a. Grocery stores
- b. Farmers' markets
- c. Natural food cooperatives
- d. Community shared agriculture and food boxes
- e. Farms

### III. PREPARE AND SERVE

## I. WHAT'S IN SEASON

Here is some of the produce that is grown locally and when to find it. Some other local food products are also listed.

<http://www.realfoodmovement.ca/latesttalk/get-involved/seasonal-foods/>

## II. WHERE TO BUY IT

### A. ...AT THE GROCERY STORE

Local food is often labelled, but if not, look for a point of origin on the box. Note that if the label says, "packaged locally" or "distributed locally", the food in it may not actually be grown locally.

For organic products in Quebec, check out CARTV's directory to search by product, municipality or producer's name <http://www.produitsbioquebec.info>.

In Ontario, see visit Foodland Ontario for a list of stores that participate in promoting and distributing Ontario foods <http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/links.html>.

## B. ...AT FARMERS' MARKETS

At farmers' markets farmers sell the freshest food directly to you.

Farmer's markets can be found in Quebec at <http://www.naturaldominion.com/qc.htm> as well as <http://100mileradius.ca/quebec/page1-quebec.htm> Specifically in Montreal try <http://www.marchespublics-mtl.com/>

In Ontario see <http://www.farmersmarketsontario.com/>

## C. ...FROM NATURAL FOOD COOPERATIVES

Members of buying co-ops can spend less on higher quality produce since their money is pooled together to buy groceries in bulk directly from local farmers, wholesalers and producers.

Quebec has a number of food cooperatives or co-ops, also known as "groupes d'achat" or "achat collectif". Members of buying co-ops can spend less on higher quality produce since their money is pooled together to buy groceries in bulk directly from local farmers, wholesalers and/or producers. Visit the Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation to find a local food cooperative in your area. <http://www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca/index.php?id=2221>.

In Ontario, go to the Ontario Natural Food Co-op <http://www.onfc.ca/> for listings.

## D. ...FROM COMMUNITY SHARED AGRICULTURE (CSA) SHARES OR A FOOD BOX

Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) is a way that farmers and consumers cooperate so that consumers are guaranteed the highest quality food as it becomes available and farmers have a guaranteed market. Typically you buy a share at the beginning of the season and pick your box up weekly at a drop off spot. CSA farmers sometimes offer flowers, herbs, fruits and other farm products too.

Food Box programs are a variation of a CSA. Here the consumer need not commit for an entire season, paying instead on a week-by-week basis. <sup>1</sup>

Find CSAs and organic farms by region in Quebec at <http://www.equiterre.org>.

In Ontario, see the Ontario CSA Directory at <http://csafarms.ca/>.

## E. ...FROM FARMER'S ROADSIDE STANDS AND U-PICK FARMS

In Ontario, find u-pick farms on Harvest Canada's website at [http://www.harvestcanada.com/attraction\\_type.php?id=1](http://www.harvestcanada.com/attraction_type.php?id=1)

The Quebec Produce Growers Association's website lists places to find farms by item: <http://www.ajmquebec.com/>. If you're looking for a unique experience, the Agritourism Québec website connects tourists and travelers to the farm products that Québec has to offer, and at the same time, to the farmers who produce them, as well as local dining and accommodation on Quebec farms. Their website also provides a directory of local produce from Artisan beers to maple syrup <http://www.agritourismquebec.com/>.

## III. PREPARE AND SERVE

A. ...PLAN SNACKS, MEALS, MENUS AND SHOPPING LISTS, SO THAT YOU USE MORE LOCAL INGREDIENTS AS THEY COME INTO SEASON.

B. ...SERVE LOCAL FOODS AT PARTIES AND EVENTS, LIKE WEDDINGS, BIRTHDAY PARTIES, POTLUCKS. TELL EVERYONE WHAT YOU'RE SERVING AND WHY.

For Quebec recipes see <http://www.mangezquebec.com/>.

In Ontario, see <http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/recipes.html> for recipes.

## 2. ASK FOR IT

### I. ...FROM YOUR GROCER

Grocers make decisions to buy produce and products based on availability, convenience and customer demand. If you don't say what you want, your grocer may pick the cheapest food, even if it has travelled thousands of kilometres. Frequent customer requests for local food often influence groceries' buying policies.

<sup>1</sup> Definitions modified from Just Food website, accessed Mar 5, 2009 at [http://www.spcottawa.on.ca/ofsc/en/community\\_shared\\_agriculture.asp](http://www.spcottawa.on.ca/ofsc/en/community_shared_agriculture.asp)

## II. ...FROM RESTAURANTS

As you come to know what's in season, you can ask for it in restaurants and fast food places. Make sure to ask if the item you are eating is actually local.

## III. ...FROM EVERYONE!

Ask that local food be served in cinemas, at events and festivals, in daycares and schools, and by airlines and other institutions.

A local example: Go Ontario! local granola bar

Here's an example of what can happen when you ask for local. Schools working with EcoSource, an environmental education organization, have been asking for help in sourcing more local snacks. EcoSource couldn't find many, so they decided to design a local granola bar. They found a processor to make the granola bar, but the processor needed help to find local ingredients. EcoSource talked to local farmers and sourced the ingredients. The processor makes the bar and now schools in the Peel District School Board can buy the granola bar, made with 100% local ingredients, including ingredients straight from Ontario 's Greenbelt, at a reasonable cost.

For more information and an interview with Ecosource, see <http://www.ecosource.ca/>.

# 3. GROW YOUR OWN

## I. ...IN YOUR GARDEN OR ON YOUR BALCONY

Here's a list of things to grow to keep your food costs down and taste buds tingling: beans, chard, cherry and heirloom tomatoes, leaf lettuce and salad mixes, kale, and peas for a smaller garden that produces a lot. If you have more space, you might want to try beets, carrots, garlic, heirloom potatoes, onions, parsnips, summer squash, winter squashes and zucchini. If you'll be in your home for a few years, plant edible perennials such as asparagus, gooseberries, raspberries, rhubarb and perhaps a few strawberries. See below for resources on organic and natural gardening.

## II. ...IN A COMMUNITY GARDEN

A community garden is a space where gardeners grow together, either on individual allotments or on common plots.

In Quebec, To find a community garden near you in Quebec, see Regroupement des Jardins Collectifs du Quebec <http://rjcq.ca/blogue>.

In Ontario, try the list of Ontario member organizations in Food Secure Canada to source a community garden near you at <http://foodsecurecanada.org/member-organizations>.

## 4. GET INVOLVED

To increase the availability of local food in your area, join others who:

- I. LOBBY
- II. ORGANIZE
- III. TALK POLICY
- IV. DO A PROJECT
- V. TEACH ABOUT IT

### I. ...LOBBY

Lobby people who buy on behalf of a lot of others to purchase a larger percentage of local food. This strategy has begun to be effective in a number of cities and towns around the world. It takes dedication, but as institutions come under pressure to improve their food services, they have an opportunity to take more of a leadership role in developing local and sustainable food systems. Remind your municipality, school or hospital that it will support local farmers and the economy by buying local.

A local example: Markham, Ontario, first Canadian city to buy local food

The Town of Markham has committed to using more food from local farmers, starting with 10 per cent in the first year and adding 5 per cent every year. The Town is working with Local Flavour Plus, who will link them to farms that are moving towards more sustainable practices.

Read the complete media release here:

[http://www.markham.ca/Markham/Departments/NewsCentre/News/080604\\_lfp.htm](http://www.markham.ca/Markham/Departments/NewsCentre/News/080604_lfp.htm)

A local example: Province of Ontario to invest in local food logistics

The province of Ontario has just announced that it will invest \$24 million over three years to help get more Ontario-grown food into the province's schools, hospitals, food service companies and other institutions. The province aims to help Ontario farmers market and sell their products to more

Ontario consumers.

## II. ...ORGANIZE

For example, you might join a committee or become a board member of a buying co-op, which can be organized at almost any scale. Co-ops can serve the needs of a few families, multiple families and even multiple consumer-run stores.

You might also join a group that plans actions to influence how people think about food.

See [Learn more](#) for organizations and resources to help you get started.

## III. ...TALK POLICY

Food policy discussions help communities, cities and even provinces to get clearer about what people want. There are many conversations going on, from local all the way to provincial and national levels.

## IV. ...DO A PROJECT

There are many projects you might do. For example, you could start a community garden, where you connect with a group, as well as find a host site with sun, water access, storage and a washroom. You'd want to establish good communication and ways to resolve conflicts. You might also want to seek funding and plant extra for hungry folks and animals. There are many great resources available on how to involve your community, as well as how to handle issues that come up in public garden spaces.

Here are some community garden resources to help get you started:

How Does our Garden Grow: A guide to community garden success. A manual by FoodShare.

<http://www.foodshare.net/garden03.htm>

## V. ...TEACH ABOUT LOCAL FOOD

Here are some links for educators who want to teach about the importance of growing and eating local food in the classroom.

Centre for Ecoliteracy <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/>

Information, inspiration, and support for K-12 educators, parents, and other members of the school community who are helping young people gain the knowledge, skills, and values essential to sustainable living. Has resources on Food, Culture, Health, and the Environment, as well as rethinking school lunches.

City Farmer - Children and School Gardens and Urban Agriculture

<http://www.cityfarmer.org/schgard15.html> and <http://www.cityfarmer.org/subchildren.html#children/>

Brief descriptions of projects and links to their sites.

Green Teacher <http://www.greenteacher.com/>

A magazine and on-line resource by and for educators to enhance environmental and global education across the curriculum at all grade levels. Articles, lesson plans and links.

Kids Gardening <http://www.kidsgardening.com>

Kids Gardening provides information, resources, and supplies for children, parents, and teachers who are interested in gardening.

Life Lab <http://www.lifelab.org>

Through its curricula and programs, Life Lab helps schools develop gardens where children can create “living laboratories” for the study of the natural world.

The Food Project <http://www.thefoodproject.org/about/index.asp>

Program for youth and adults from diverse backgrounds to work together to build a sustainable food system.

The Food Timeline <http://www.foodtimeline.org/>

Morris County, New Jersey librarians created the Food Timeline as a way to help students, parents, and teachers locate food history and period recipes. Not one single website, but a collection of related web pages.

## 5. LEARN MORE

Links and resources to help you access and advocate for local food or grow a garden.

100 Mile Diet <http://100milediet.org/>

Local eating for global change. You can use the site to map the 100 mile zone around you (i.e. your local foodshed).

Action Communiterre <http://www.actioncommuniterre.qc.ca>

Food security and gardening in Montreal with links to other organizations in Quebec and beyond.

Agritourism Québec <http://www.agritourismquebec.com/>.

Connects tourists and travelers to the farm products that Québec has to offer, and at the same time, to the farmers who produce them, as well as local dining and accommodation on Quebec farms. Their website also provides a directory of local produce from Artisan beers to maple syrup.

Canadian Gardening [www.canadiangardening.com](http://www.canadiangardening.com)

Canadian Organic Growers (COG) [www.cog.ca](http://www.cog.ca)

A national information network for farmers, gardeners and consumers. COG promotes organic foods through national publications and events, and through memberships in local chapters.

City Farmer's Urban Agriculture Notes [www.cityfarmer.org](http://www.cityfarmer.org)

Canadian information, research and news about urban agriculture, community gardens, etc.

Équiterre <http://www.equiterre.org/>

An organization working to empower citizens to make environmentally and socially responsible choices. A main focus is their Ecological Agriculture Program.

Food Secure Canada <http://www.foodsecurecanada.org/>

Has a database with information, policy and educational resources on: Agriculture & Harvesting; Indigenous Food Sovereignty; Food Culture & Practice; Food & Health; Food & the Environment; Household / Individual Skills; Hunger / Short Term Relief; Policy Work / Systems Change; Community Building.

Foodland Ontario <http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/links.html>

Promotes local foods. Links to places that promote, sell and distribute and serve Ontario foods.

FoodShare <http://www.foodshare.net/>

Programs and resources on community kitchens, community gardens, food security and more.

Green Ontario <http://www.greenontario.org/solutions/organic.html>

Offers links to local food information as well as some useful links.

Le ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ)

<http://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/>

Local Eating <http://www.localeating.ca/>

Type in your postal code and find farmers, markets and other ways to buy local food in your area.

Local Food Plus <http://www.localfoodplus.ca/>

A non-profit organization that brings farmers and consumers to the table to share in the benefits of environmentally and socially responsible food production.

Mother Earth News <http://www.motherearthnews.com/Real-Food.aspx>

How to find fresh, local, sustainable food. Recipes too.

Natural Dominion <http://naturaldominion.com/>

To find a Farmers Market, Organic Farm, CSA program or Food Delivery service near you. Focus is on GMO free food sources.

Organic Gardening [www.organicgardening.com](http://www.organicgardening.com)

Organic Gardening from A-Z

Organic Agricultural Centre of Canada <http://www.organicagcentre.ca/>

The Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada plays a leading role in organic research and education, linking organic knowledge across Canada. OACC is dedicated to farm profitability and enhancing the environmental and social integrity of agriculture.

Organic Council of Ontario

OCO has an extensive online, searchable Organic Directory with maps

<http://www.organiccouncil.ca>

People and Planet <http://www.planetfriendly.net/>

Local and Organic information covering Food, Gardening, Agriculture, Eating, Learning, Growing, Working in Canada and beyond.

Santropol Roulant <http://www.santropolroulant.org/2006/E-home.htm>

Innovative community food programs - they grow rooftop gardens and some of the food goes to their ecologically conscious meals-on-wheels program.

Seeds of Diversity [www.seeds.ca](http://www.seeds.ca)

Lists heirloom and heritage seeds being saved by members of the public sector. Hosts a database of seed companies, Canadian growers and a living library of seeds. For organic, open-pollinated, GMO-free and heirloom seed companies, see <http://www.seeds.ca/rl/rl.php>.

Sharing Backyards [www.sharingbackyards.com](http://www.sharingbackyards.com).

In some Canadian towns and cities you can join a backyard sharing program, which matches people if you don't have your own space to garden. You can also share your backyard with others who would like to grow food.

Slow Food Canada [www.slowfood.ca](http://www.slowfood.ca)

Is interested in developing a food culture and supporting those defending food and agricultural biodiversity around the world. Slow Food stresses the need for taste education as the best defense against poor quality and food adulteration.

Sustainable Table [www.sustainabletable.org](http://www.sustainabletable.org)

Celebrates local sustainable food, educates consumers on food-related issues and works to build community through food. Based in US, but good overview.

Toronto Food Policy Council [http://www.toronto.ca/health/tfpc\\_index.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/health/tfpc_index.htm)

They are part of the Department of Health and advise the City of Toronto on policy. They also offer support to a range of projects, from urban agriculture initiatives to community gardening to food and hunger action.

Quebec Producers Growers Association [www.ajmquebec.com](http://www.ajmquebec.com)

Lists places to find farms by item and promotes Quebec produce.

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