



HELLMANN'S

Local Food Guide

for the Prairies

REALFOODMOVEMENT.CA

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.

Here’s a list of products that are made in:

Manitoba <http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/food/consumers/index.html>

Saskatchewan <http://shop.saskmade.ca/>

The Government of Saskatchewan also lists local organic suppliers <http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=c2ebf687-9958-43ec-8776-073404197ddc>

Alberta <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app68/dinealberta>

Find organic retail suppliers on the Government of Alberta’s organic directory at <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app68/organics?cat1=Retail>.

B. ...AT FARMERS’ MARKETS

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

Farmer’s markets can be found in Manitoba at

<http://www.100mileradius.ca/manitoba/page1-manitoba.htm>, in Saskatchewan at <http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=105018192435865430118.00044d223061873fc99d1&z=6>, and in Alberta at <http://albertamarkets.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.

See the Organic Food Council for listings of where to buy organic food in Manitoba at <http://www.organicfoodcouncil.org/tenways.php>.

Here’s a great map of where consumers in Saskatchewan can find locally produced and organic food.

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=105018192435865430118.00044d223061873fc99d1&z=6>.

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.¹

A local example: Thoughts from a CSA farmer

“One of our favourite customers is Jenny. She loves vegetables and loves to cook, but has little time to garden or to make it to a Farmers’ Market. We love introducing Jenny to new items because she’ll try anything and loves almost everything.”

Norah, the farmer, tells about the first day they delivered ground cherries (also known as Cape gooseberries), a relative of tomatoes and tomatillos. They look like a small, golden tomato in a papery husk, and with a taste like pineapple. Jenny popped one in her mouth, shut her eyes, chewed, and then a smile of delight spread across her face! Apparently, they were all eaten before she got home, so she had no chance to make the pie recipe included in our weekly newsletter.”

Adapted from original text written by Norah Tolmie of Aagard Farms. The customer’s name has been changed. For more information on Aagard Farms, see <http://www.biodynamics.com/csacanada>

Find CSAs and organic farms at <http://www.biodynamics.com/csacanada?page=0%2C0%2C0> and also in Manitoba at <http://100milemanitoba.org/subpages/100milefarms.htm>.

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

Farms can be found in Manitoba at <http://www.100mileradius.ca/manitoba/page1-manitoba.htm>. U-pick farms can be found at <http://web2.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/upick/index.php>.

In Saskatchewan, see <http://www.pickyourown.org/canadask.htm>.

In Alberta, see, <http://www.albertafarmfresh.com/>.

Also see Prairie Fruit Growers Association: <http://www.pfga.com> to locate a fruit grower near you.

¹ Definitions modified from Just Food website, accessed Mar 5, 2009 at http://www.spcottawa.on.ca/ofsc/en/community_shared_agriculture.asp

III. PREPARE AND SERVE

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

For fruit recipes see <http://www.saskatoonlibrary.ca/is/prairiefruit.html>.

Sample Early Spring Menu

Potato soup - with potatoes, green onions, and garlic

Steamed asparagus with butter

Chickpea salad with sun dried tomatoes, greens, sunflower oil, vinegar, dried herbs and salt

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

Tell everyone what you're serving and why.

There are many recipes to try from the Great Tastes of Manitoba page at http://www.foodmanitoba.ca/recipe_directory.aspx.

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.

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.

In Alberta you can find restaurants that serve local fare on the Government of Alberta's website. See [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/All/apa8941?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/All/apa8941?opendocument).

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.

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.

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: Growing Up Organic and organizing a local food system

Growing Up Organic is a national project of the Canadian Organic Growers. It aims to get locally grown organic food into childcare centres, schools and other places that serve food. The Organic Food Council of Manitoba has joined them and local distributor Fresh Option Organic Delivery (FOOD) to get a wide variety of food from local suppliers. They are making local buying easier for farmers, producers and institutions. More children are eating fresh foods and the local economy is being encouraged.

Adapted from original text at <http://organicfoodcouncil.org/growingup.php>.

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.

III. ...TALK POLICY

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

A local example: The Manitoba Food Charter

The Manitoba Food Charter was drafted through broad public consultation and is a result of many years of people working together to draft policy they believe in. The Charter aims to express a common vision for a sustainable food system in Manitoba and offers guidelines for planning, making policy and practice.

Adapted from original text at http://food.cimnet.ca/cim/43C1_3T7T4T185.dhtm.

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 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

A local example: Cityfarm

Cityfarm is an agricultural and environmental education project that has been running on the edge of Edmonton since 2005. Children use real tools, plant and harvest vegetables, prepare, cook, taste food, and care for animals. During a program, students might also propagate plants, learn about sustainable farming or build solar panels.

Adapted from original text at <http://www.city-farm.org/history.html>

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/>

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).

100 Mile Manitoba <http://100milemanitoba.org/>
Info on Manitoba, with links and general info relevant to other parts of Canada.

Canadian Gardening www.canadiangardening.com

Canadian Organic Growers (COG) 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.

COG - Organic Food Council <http://www.organicfoodcouncil.org/index.php>
This group is the Manitoba Chapter of Canadian Organic Growers. They offer information, articles and research on local and organic eating, growing and advocacy work.

City Farmer’s Urban Agriculture Notes www.cityfarmer.org
Canadian information, research and news about urban agriculture, community gardens, etc.

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.

Food Secure Saskatchewan <http://www.foodsecuresaskatchewan.ca/>
With links to food security organizations and projects across the province.

Gardener's Web

A prairie vegetable planting guide and website

<http://www.gardenersweb.ca/vegguide.lasso?session=138.3161525&shop=&PRG=&CT=396&menu=&look=&refto>

Going Organic Network of Alberta <http://www.goingorganic.ca/>
Network of organic consumers and producers.

Growing Food Security in Alberta <http://www.foodsecurityalberta.ca/>
Links to local food connections and resources.

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.

Manitoba Food Security http://food.cimnet.ca/cim/43C1_3T7T4T185.dhtm
They wrote the Manitoba Food Charter and are aiming to grow the work.

Mother Earth News <http://www.motherearthnews.com/Real-Food.aspx>
How to find fresh, local, sustainable food. Recipes too.

Organic Gardening 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.

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

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

Seeds of Diversity 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

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.

Simply in Season Fruit and Vegetable Guide

<http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/season/guide/index.html>

Tips on how to choose, store, prepare, and use selected fruits and vegetables.

Slow Food Canada 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

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

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