

## *UnFed: Creating Equality in our Food Systems*



Locally grown food for everyone

### **Buying Local**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YL5wWHLk3rM>

Create demand to create excess! This is key to how we change the game on a community level. Driving the demand up for local food will create more opportunities across the board, especially for those in need. It is important to know where your food comes from, how it is grown, and how long since it has been picked or processed.

**Nutrition, Taste, and Carbon Footprint:** Food on average travels 1500 miles before we eat it. Crazy! Expenses and resources are burned up as our food loses its nutritional value every day post-harvest. Help the environment and get the most nutrition and flavor from shopping local. Reducing food miles helps alleviate our dependence on fossil fuels, reduce air pollution and cut back on greenhouse gas emissions. Local farms promote a safer food supply, the more steps there are between you and your food's source the more chances there are for contamination.

Growing locally also preserves genetic diversity. In our modern agricultural system, plant varieties are chosen for their ability to ripen uniformly, withstand harvesting, survive packing and last a long time on the shelf, so there is limited genetic diversity in large-scale production. Smaller local farms often grow many different varieties of crops to provide a long harvest season, an array of colors, and the best flavors. Livestock diversity is also higher where there are many small farms rather than few large farms. Food grown from depleted soil, with pesticides or chemicals and that has traveled for extended periods of time is just not going to be as nutritious or flavorful.

Well-managed farms provide ecosystem services, they conserve fertile soil, protect water sources, and sequester carbon from the atmosphere. Farms are made up of fields, meadows, woods, ponds and buildings that provide habitat for wildlife. We all want to help maintain farmland, as well as green and open space in our communities.

**Local Economy:** CT hosts over 5500 farms that generate over \$550 million, BUT the farms only keep \$25 million in net income! It has been found to show that buying local can keep almost an extra \$.50 out of

every dollar in the local economy to help support community projects. Because local farmers don't have the same transportation and distribution costs as large agricultural businesses, they can retain more of the profits from their sales. So, when you choose to spend money on locally grown food instead of supporting large supermarket chains, you are supporting individuals in your own community to help them prosper.

Small local farms are also excellent for the economy because they create jobs. Producers also supply their meat and produce to other local businesses, such as restaurants, schools and hospitals. People are choosing restaurants because they use local food and creating demand. Hopefully more restaurants will follow suit.

Local farmers keep taxes down, operations typically contribute more to the economy in taxes than they require in services. Most aren't dependent on social services like schools and emergency services. Cows don't go to school and tomatoes don't dial 911.

**Social Benefits:** Get to know your farmer! A generation ago our parents and grandparents knew all of the local producers where they got bread, vegetables, meat, and dairy from. Let's bring that back! Farmers put a lot of love and hard work into bringing us the very best. Strike up a conversation! Farming is often family-run and more than just a business, it's a way of life that they are trying to preserve for future generations.

Local farmers develop a close network between themselves and with their local buyers which fosters a sense of belonging. You can get in the game by purchasing directly from the farmer at a farm stand, through farmers' markets, or through a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture: a once-a-week or biweekly box full of local fruits and veggies). Make it a priority to visit a farm or farmers market and ask about their farming techniques. Lots of farms are not certified as organic but, are doing organic gardening practices. They will be happy to respond to suggestions and demand.

The most satisfying part of buying local farm-grown food is knowing that you're contributing to your community, economy and the environment. The combined benefits lead to an improved sense of wellbeing and fulfillment knowing your purchases make a difference. It is an investment in the future and by supporting local farmers today, you are helping to ensure that there will be farms in your community tomorrow.

**Resources: Supporting Local- Our Favorites Around Town:**

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**Listings of Farms, CSA's, and Farmers Markets**

[Heart CT Grown](#)

[CT DOA](#)

[CT NOFA](#)

[Food and Farm Magazine Field Guides](#)

**Need Assistance: The Information**

[SNAP](#)

## [WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#)

### Farmers Markets Open in Winter!

[The Shakespeare Market](#) opened every other Sunday

[Westport Farmers Market](#) opened in Nov-March Tues 10 am-2 pm

[Litchfield Farmers Market](#) opened Oct-June Saturdays from 10 am-1 pm

[CitySeeds](#) in New Haven, CT

### Farms Open Now

[Holbrook Farm](#) in Bethel CT opened on Wed 3-5 pm and Saturday's 12-3.

[Sport Hill Farm](#) in Easton, CT Keep an eye out for their pop up coming up this month

### Restaurants Around Newtown

[Taproot Restaurant](#) in Bethel CT

[Farmhouse Restaurant](#) in Newtown, CT

[Lucas Local](#) in Newtown, CT

### Grocers Focused on Local Food

[New Morning Market](#) in Woodbury, CT

[Phinney's: Home](#) in Newtown, CT

[Butcher's Best Market](#) in Newtown, CT