10 Reasons to Shop at Your Local Farmers’ Market

1. Taste real flavors
   Produce at the farmers’ market is the freshest and tastiest available. Fruits ripen in the field and are brought directly to you — no long-distance shipping, no gassing to simulate the ripening process, or sitting for weeks in storage. This food is as real as it gets: fresh from the farm.

2. Know where your food comes from
   A regular trip to a farmers’ market is one of the best ways to reconnect with where your food comes from. Farmers’ themselves sell their produce at the farm stands. Meeting and talking to farmers’ is a great way to learn more about how food is grown, when it is grown, and why!

3. Variety is the spice of life
   At the farmers’ market, you can find an amazing variety of produce that you don’t see in your supermarket: Asian vegetables, a rainbow of heirloom tomatoes, green garlic, watermelon radishes, and so much more. It’s fun to explore new flavors, and eating a wide variety of foods is important in any healthy diet.

4. Nourish yourself
   Much food found in grocery stores is highly processed. Often, it’s grown using pesticides, hormones, and antibiotics. This may have negative effects on your health when you eat these foods. Most food at the farmers’ market is in it’s whole, natural form. Many farmers’ work hard to cultivate healthy soil, which makes the food more nutritious.

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Promote humane treatment of animals
Most commercial livestock live in cramped indoor conditions, and never graze on green pastures. But at the farmers market, you can find meat, cheese, and eggs from animals that have been raised under healthy conditions. Healthier living conditions benefit both animals and humans: when animals are raised without hormones and antibiotics, and graze on fresh grass, the meat and dairy from these animals can be more nutritious.

Support family farms
Large agribusiness farms and ranches have taken over food production in the U.S. Small family farms are becoming rare, and having a hard time competing. Buying directly from farmers’ gives them much more profit on the food they grow, and gives them a fighting chance.

Connect with your community
The farmers’ market is a community gathering place—a place to meet up with your friends, bring your children, or just get a taste of small-town life in the middle of your wonderful city.

Enjoy the season
Food at the farmers’ market is seasonal. Cooking with seasonal produce helps you to reconnect with the cycles of nature in our region. As you look forward to asparagus in spring, savor sweet corn in summer, or bake pumpkins in autumn, you reconnect with your local environment.

Get cooking tips and meal ideas
Farmers, ranchers and vendors at the farmers’ market are often passionate cooks with lots of free advice about how to cook the foods they sell. They’ll give you ideas for what to have for dinner, and even hand out recipes.

Protect the environment
Food in the U.S. travels an average of 1500 miles to get to your plate. All this shipping contributes to pollution and creates trash with extra packaging. Conventional agriculture can also pollute water, land, and air. Farmers’ market food travels shorter distances, and is typically grown using methods that have less impact on the earth.

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