



Small steps to going local

*What can I do to contribute to the success of
“Going Local North Dakota??”*

Visit your nearest farmers market

Farmers markets are growing in leaps and bounds, so you may be surprised to find that you have more **choices near you** than you did even a year ago.

Chat with the farmers, find out how they grow their crops and raise their animals for meat or dairy products (some use completely organic growing methods even though they may not be certified organic; other may be mostly organic with a pound or two a day of grain just to get the goats into the barn, for example) and be open to trying something new.

Who knew how great spinach, a vitamin-packed powerhouse vegetable, could taste chopped up in muffins or sautéed with apples and onions?

To find out where the North Dakota Farmers Markets are being held visit the North Dakota Farmers and Growers Association web site at: www.ndfarmersmarkets.com/.

Ask your grocery store manager to stock locally-grown food

It's not uncommon now to find locally-grown berries, local honey or local, naturally-raised chickens at large supermarket chains. Stores such as Whole Foods pride themselves on their support of local farmers and have signs throughout the store drawing customers' attention to locally-grown food.

When given the choice between the cross-country broccoli and the local one, choose local to encourage more local food choices.

Patronize restaurants that feature locally-grown ingredients.

Every city has a few of these restaurants now. They are usually run by passionate supporters of local farms who often have reciprocal relationships with the farms.

Two local foods restaurants in North Dakota are The Pirogue Grill (www.piroguegrille.com) in Bismarck and the HoDo (www.hoteldonaldson.com) in Fargo.

Join a CSA

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture. It is a subscription relationship where you sign up for a weekly (or biweekly) share of crops from a nearby farm or collection of farms, which are then delivered to centralized pick-up spots. Some CSAs let you indicate some preferences. Others encourage you to embrace the Christmas-morning-like joy of not knowing what's in the box.

Most offer you recipes and other ways to learn what to do with crops that may be new to you, plus there often is a spirit of community among members that encourages sharing of tips. It doesn't take a recipe book to tell you what to do with all those heirloom tomatoes. Slice and eat, and pour the abundance of juice on the cutting board into a cup!

There's are several CSAs in North Dakota, please call Sue at 701-328-4763 or e-mail suebalcom@nd.gov.

Plant a garden

Don't know where to start? Pick a sunny patch in your yard (at least six hours of sun a day). Bring in good top soil if yours is a mess. Add organic compost. Plant. Water. Weed. Harvest. No time? No interest? How about pop in a few herbs? You know how you never have those sprigs of thyme you need when you need them, or how much money you waste on a whole package of rosemary when you only need a few snips. Best of all, many herbs are perennials – that means you plant them once, and they're yours year after year, with minimal work.

Get informed. Just about every newspaper and magazine lately seems to be carrying stories about the issues involved in eating local. Read up and know where you stand so you can make informed decisions at the check-out counter and at the polls.

There's also a Master Gardener's Program in the state of North Dakota. Visit <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/mg/> for all kinds of gardening information or to sign up for the next class.

SOURCE: <http://www.kudzu.com/article.do?articleID=2001>

