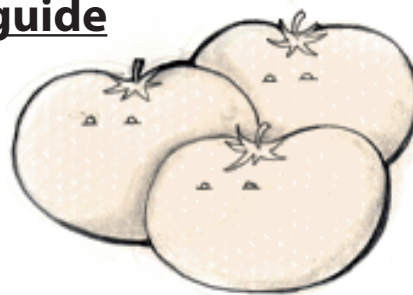


***Interested in eating more local food?
Here are some tips and facts from 100milediet.org to help!***

Getting Started guide



1. Start small.

We walked smack into a year of strict 100-Mile eating. That was a big, blind leap into the unknown. You can start with a single meal, a 100-Mile day, a one-week commitment. Most people partner up, or do the 100-Mile Diet as a family or group.

2. There are no rules.

Make your 100-Mile Diet experiment a challenge. If you're trying it for a day, consider getting tough: every ingredient in every product has to come from within 100 miles (that was our rule for a year). Over a longer period, escape clauses are nice. Maybe the occasional restaurant meal or dinner at friends' houses? And what will you do if you travel? Ask some deeper questions, too. If you eat meat, where does the feed for the animals come from? If you're vegetarian, would you be prepared to eat animal products if no beans or tofu are raised where you live? If you just can't live without coffee, don't let it stop you. Wave your magic wand and declare it 'local.'

3. Surf the internet.

There are likely resources specific to your area, from lists of nearby organic farms to community kitchens where people get together to can foods. A great resource for Americans is Local Harvest, where you can find markets, local-food-friendly restaurants, farms, and food delivery programs for every region. Folks in the UK can visit BigBarn

4. Find your farmers' market.

The easiest and most fun step toward eating locally. Make the market a weekly priority for your food shopping. To find yours, search the web, look for listings in local newspapers, or call your area's tourism office. Check out our 13 Lucky Farmers' Market Tips for more info.

5. Find your farmers.

Most larger cities and many smaller towns have organic food delivery companies, often with direct connections to local farms. Consider joining a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, in which you support a specific farm by paying a lump sum at the beginning of each growing season and then sharing in that farm's food products year-round. Most delivery and CSA programs have websites, or try contacting your regional organic certifying body or farmers' association.

6. Start a garden — even a tiny one.

Self-sufficiency feels good, and greens up our cities and towns. We live in a one-bedroom urban apartment but grow vine beans, tomatoes and herbs in pots on our balcony. We also have a 3'x12' plot in a community garden, which is run by a cooperative community group. Is there one in your neighborhood? If not, remember this: many began as 'guerrilla gardens' planted on longtime vacant lots.

7. Plan a winter garden.

Winter is a tough time to find local produce, but you might be surprised at what still can grow. Ask your gardening friends or at garden shops, or read through regional seed catalogues. We keep garlic, kale, mustard greens, turnips and cabbage going throughout the winter. Spinach and Swiss chard are other good winter greens. Friends as far north as Whitehorse, Yukon, have extended the growing season with a backyard greenhouse.

8. Buy in bulk and preserve.

Buying bulk saves money, and since it is often hard to find local preserves, you may have to do it yourself. Well, throw a party. With a few bottles of local wine and cider, even a small group can make quick work of canning jams, pickles, fruit and tomatoes. We also froze corn, spinach, carrots, basil pesto, beans, brussels sprouts and more. A cornucopia for the winter. Don't know how to do any of this? Neither did we. Call up your elders before the knowledge is lost, try the local library, or go online with National Center for Home Food Preservation.

9. Join the movement.

If you haven't already, sign up with the 100-Mile Diet Society to receive updates, calls to action, and seasonal toolkits to help you bring your eating closer to home. In the coming months, this website will begin to host local-eating resources for towns and cities across the continent and beyond.

13 Lucky Farmers' Market Tips

The typical vegetable now travels 1,500 miles from farm to plate. Now's the season to buck the trend and reconnect with your food at your local farmers' market. Here's how:

1. If possible, plan to walk, ride a bike, or take public transit to your farmers' market. Parking can be a hassle. Mid-week markets are quieter, but weekenders often have the best selection.
2. Shop early in the day to get the best food and to avoid missing out on unusual items.
3. Arrive with sturdy cloth bags, a backpack, or a basket, and plan to pay cash. Bring more money than you think you'll need, and lots of small bills and change.
4. Three ways to save money: First, walk the whole market to check prices. Second, look for foods at their peak of seasonal abundance. Third, make arrangements with market farmers to buy bulk at a discount or to visit their farms for U-pick savings.
5. Shop smart. A head of farmers' market lettuce can appear higher priced than at the megamart, but may also be much larger. Many people find they need smaller amounts of market foods when cooking because fresh food is more flavorful.
6. Bring the kids. The market experience goes a long way toward raising children who eat their vegetables, and there is often kids' entertainment on site.
7. Don't be afraid to ask questions. When was the corn picked? How do you cook squash flowers? How "free range" are the "free-range chickens"?
8. Ask for a taste and offer to pay for it. Buying one tomato may save you from canning a bushel of tasteless ones.
9. Experiment! Most farmers are happy to suggest ways to prepare a food you've never tried before. Buy ugly food—strange looking fruits and vegetables are often heritage varieties bred for taste rather than shelf life or visual appeal.
10. Organic food is everyone's market favorite, but don't ignore conventional growers. In some locations, organic certification is out of reach for market gardeners. Ask farmers what chemicals they use on their food; you may decide to choose low-spray products that are better priced.
11. Plan to go home right after the market, or bring a cooler. Frozen foods such as meat and fish are increasingly common at markets.
12. Seasonal eating calls for different meal planning. Instead of picking a recipe and then shopping for the ingredients, buy what's in season and then look for recipes to match.
13. Use the internet. Many farms now have websites with everything from foodie philosophy to photos of the living conditions of farm animals. The web is also excellent for finding markets as well as info on how to use the goodies you bring home.

100-Mile Index

The 100-Mile Index provides a statistical snapshot of our world's globalized food system. The numbers are fascinating, troubling, funny and sometimes, just plain strange.

- * Minimum distance that North American produce typically travels from farm to plate, in miles: 1,500
- * Number of Planet Earths' worth of resources that would be needed if every person worldwide lived like the average North American: 8
- * Planets saved if all of those people ate locally: 1
- * Ratio of minutes spent preparing food by English consumers who buy ready-made foods versus traditional home-cooking: 1:1
- * Estimated number of plant species worldwide with edible parts: 30,000
- * Number of species that currently provide 90 percent of the world's food: 20
- * Share of each U.S. consumer food dollar that returned to the farmer in 1910, in cents: 40
- * Share that returned to the farmer in 1997, in cents: 7
- * Ratio of prisoners to farmers in the U.S. population: 5:2
- * Percentage of fresh vegetables eaten in Hanoi, Vietnam, that are grown in the city: 80
- * Percentage of all tomatoes in U.S. that are harvested while green : 80
- * Major river dams constructed to irrigate California, now the world's number five agricultural producer: 1,200