

Welcome to the Tuesday Tree Huggin' Tip!

Tip 15: Buy local foods whenever possible.

Did you know that most foods you eat travel 1,300 miles before they get to your plate? Buying food that's grown on local farms minimizes transportation-related emissions. It also keeps local farmers in business—which is good for local land and water quality. Many stores now advertise “local” products, so choose those over imports from other countries and/or other states whenever feasible. Try shopping for your produce at farmers' markets, or join a Community Supported Agriculture farm.^[1]

Community Supported Agriculture consists of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation so that the farmland becomes, either legally or spiritually, the community's farm, with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and benefits of food production. Typically, members or "share-holders" of the farm or garden pledge, in advance, to cover the anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer's salary. In return, they receive shares in the farm's bounty throughout the growing season, as well as satisfaction gained from reconnecting to the land and participating directly in food production. Members also share in the risks of farming, including poor harvests due to unfavorable weather or pests. By direct sales to community members, who have provided the farmer with working capital in advance, growers receive better prices for their crops, gain some financial security, and are relieved of much of the burden of marketing.^[2]

If you are interested in learning more about joining a CSA farm, this site will tell you all about the ones in your area: <http://www.localharvest.org/csa/> . Some of these in the MD area, for instance, offer a full share of vegetable weekly for as little as \$22 per week. Several of these CSA programs are already sold out, so it pays to investigate this even before the actual production of vegetables starts.

Yours in crunchiness,

Angelique

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^[1] Adapted from http://www.cbf.org/site/PageServer?pagename=act_sub_yourpart_home , accessed 3/31/09 at 12:37 p.m.

^[2] <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/csa.shtml> accessed 3/31/09 at 12:51 p.m.