Why Eat Local?

NH Farm to School (NHFTS) is a statewide program working to connect NH farms and schools. Farm to school connections enable schools to serve healthy, locally grown foods in their cafeterias, integrate farms, food, and nutrition into their curriculum, and explore food and agriculture-based learning opportunities.

For further information, please contact:
Stacey Purslow
NH Farm to School Coordinator
Sustainability Institute
107 Nesmith Hall, 131 Main St Durham, NH 03824
(603) 862 -2542

Reasons to Eat Local

**Taste the difference** At a farmers market most local produce has been picked within 24 hours. It comes to you ripe, fresh, and with its full flavor, unlike supermarket food that may have been picked weeks or months before. Close-to-home foods can also be bred for taste, rather than to withstand the abuse of shipping or industrial harvesting.

**Health and Food Safety** Locally grown food retains more nutrients and is less likely to cause foodborne illness than food that is shipped from far away. The longer food takes to get to its destination, the more it is susceptible to mishandling and food borne illness.

**Knowing what you’re eating**
Buying food today is complicated. What pesticides were used? Is that corn genetically modified? Was that chicken free-range or did it grow up in a box? People who eat locally find it easier to get answers. Many build relationships with farmers whom they trust. And when in doubt, they can drive out to the farms and see for themselves.

**Explore your home** Visiting local farms is a way to be a tourist on your own home turf, with plenty of stops for snacks. This is also a great family activity.

**Discover more flavors** Local food promotes variety and genetic diversity. Ever tried sun chokes, pea shoots, purple potatoes, Easter egg radishes, Lacinato kale, atomic red carrots?
Why Buy Local?

Sustainability is a core value of UNH. It shapes our culture, informs our behavior, and is a guiding principle. As a nationally recognized leader, the Sustainability Institute acts as convener, cultivator and champion of sustainability on campus, in the state and region, and around the world.

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<tr>
<th>New Hampshire Agriculture</th>
<th>Crops &amp; Livestock</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Farms:</strong> 4,391</td>
<td>The chief commercial crops raised in New Hampshire are greenhouse and nursery products, Christmas trees, sweet corn, chicken eggs, and apples.</td>
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<td><strong>Average Farm Size:</strong> 108 acres</td>
<td>Hay is the chief field crop grown to feed livestock. Many farmers tap the maple trees on their land to produce maple syrup and sugar.</td>
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<td><strong>Total Farmland:</strong> 474,065 acres</td>
<td>Forest products are also produced in New Hampshire. Dairy products account for nearly 1/3 of the state’s total farm income.</td>
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<td>Other livestock raised includes beef cattle, hogs, chickens, goats, and sheep.</td>
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New Hampshire Agriculture

Half the farms in NH sell less than $10,000 worth of products. NH ranks 48 in the market value of agricultural products sold. NH ranks 37 for both dairy and fruit trees and berries.

Most NH farmers have other jobs off the farm.

The average age of a NH farm owner is 57.8.

Reasons to Buy Local

**Buying local food helps preserve green space and farmland.** In NH, the loss of open space would decrease tourism, the state’s second largest industry. Land that has been developed can become contaminated and lose its topsoil and fertility.

**Local foods have less of an environmental impact.** Buying local saves on transportation and energy costs reducing pollution and the use of fossil fuels. Most small and mid-size farms practice organic agriculture and/or IPM, which reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.

**Local foods support the local economy.** A dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy. Buying local also saves and creates jobs.

**Local food benefits wildlife.** Most farms are a mix of fields, forest, meadow, ponds and streams, all of which provide essential habitat for wildlife.

**Local food keeps your taxes in check.** Farms contribute more in taxes than they require in services. Suburban development costs more than it generates in taxes.

**Buying local food helps maintain and build food systems.** Buying local ensures a safe and reliable source of food whose supply may not be interrupted by natural disaster or other event.