FARM-TO-TABLE

Many beloved holidays fill the calendar over the next few months, and most of them center around food. For this year's holiday celebrations, **why not join the farm-to-table movement and seek out locally grown produce and protein that are not only tasty and healthy for your family, but also help support local farmers?** Farm-to-table eating is becoming popular in restaurants and home kitchens, and it could be a great way to elevate your own holiday meals without breaking the bank.



You eat well
You support local farmers
You build your local economy
You save money
You help the environment

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Flavor and nutrition – just the beginning

There are many reasons why people find farm-to-table eating appealing. Flavor tops the list, and nutritional value ranks a close second. These benefits alone make trying a farm-to-table approach worth considering.

Local produce is typically grown practicing crop rotation, allowing smaller and more sustainable farms to focus on growing nutritious crops and maintaining nutrient-rich soil. Local produce is also usually harvested at its peak ripeness, when nutrients have had their full time to develop. Because of this, you can buy produce at its ultimate flavor and highest nutritional content.



most nutrients



freshest flavor

Economic and environmental benefits

When you plan seasonal menus that take advantage of local growing cycles, eating farm-to-table can help you reduce your food cost by not buying out of season. Plus, you'll avoid paying the cost of transporting produce to commercial suppliers who then pass that expense on to you, the shopper.

Additionally, farms that practice sustainable farming typically produce lower greenhouse gas emissions, have less nitrogen runoff from fertilizers and use less pesticides compared to industrial farms. And when you support local farmers, you're also supporting those who care for the fields and harvest the crops directly, keeping money in your local economy.



seasonal cooking

Farm-to-table DEFINED

The term "farm-to-table" simply refers to food that is locally sourced directly from a farmer or other producer, rather than purchased from a grocery or big box store. The term is also used to describe the up-and-coming food movement that promotes this way of eating.

Decades ago, farm-to-table eating was the standard way of life for most Americans. After the commercialization of farming and food production – and the introduction of supermarkets and chain retail stores – consumers shifted from buying local to choosing convenience. But now that trend is reversing.

Another trend:
People raising their own chickens for fresh eggs!



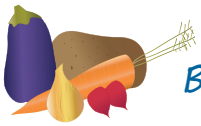
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How to eat FARM-TO-TABLE

Now that you know the benefits of eating farm-to-table, how do you start? Here are a few ideas:

Seek out your nearest farmers' market.

Buying local produce at farmers' markets is the easiest way to begin your farm-to-table adventure. Most farmers' markets offer a wide variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables, along with farm fresh eggs, milk and honey.



Buy only what you need

Instead of buying bulk, pre-packaged produce from grocery stores, seek out local sources that allow you to simply get the amount you will be able to put to use.

**This can save you money and eliminate waste.*

Build relationships with local farmers.

By visiting farmers' markets regularly, you can learn about seasonal growing cycles, regional foods you can get locally, and even meal ideas based on current in-season produce.





Sign up for a CSA or subscription box.

If you don't have time to visit a farmers' market, consider having local produce delivered to your doorstep. You can often choose the size and frequency of your delivery, and some companies offer add-ons, such as eggs, milk, and other local and regional products. There are even subscription boxes for sustainably raised meat and fish.



Try DIY.

If you don't live near a farm or can't find a farmers' market in your neighborhood, try growing your own produce. Whether you live in a multi-story house or a small apartment, there are gardening options to suit your space.

Get down to earth with holiday meal prep.

Seek out a local turkey, pig or chicken farm to source meat for your holiday feast. Buy local produce to use in your traditional side recipes – or try a new seasonal side dish!

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