



Farmers Markets

Promote Sustainability

Farmers markets create new business opportunities for farmers interested in selling sustainably produced food. This helps protect the natural environment, public health, human communities, and animal welfare.

- Nearly half of markets sell organically labeled products, and many more sell chemical or pesticide-free labeled products.³⁵
- A Vermont Price Study found that of the items compared, prices for many conventional products and all organic products, with the exception of potatoes, were lower at the farmers market than at nearby supermarkets.³⁶
- On average, food travels over 1,000 miles from the point of production to the retail store.³⁷ In contrast, many farmers markets only allow vendors to sell food produced within 200 miles. Some markets only have food grown within 50 miles.
- Locally or regionally sourced produce travels about 27 times less distance than conventionally sourced produce.³⁸
- In a 2015 survey of farmers selling at farmers markets:³⁹
 - One in four farmers selling at farmers markets cultivate land that is protected from commercial development.
 - Three out of every four say they use practices consistent with organic standards.
 - 48% use integrated pest management, information on the life cycle of pests and their interaction with the environment to manage and prevent crop damage.
 - 81% incorporate cover crops, reduced tillage, on-site composting, and other soil health practices into their operations.
 - Four out of five discuss farming practices with their customers, educating them about farming and its interactions with the natural environment.
 - 69% sell vegetables, 53% livestock, poultry or eggs, 47% fruits and tree nuts, and 31% value-added products. There is tremendous diversity in the foods and farm products being sold at farmers markets.

“Farmers' markets...hold potential to build and rebuild local and regional food systems...”

Gilbert Gillespie, Duncan Hilchey, Clare Hinrichs and Gail Feenstra in Remaking the North American Food System

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