

7 reasons to shop farmers' markets

A farmers' market is likely coming to a field or open parking lot near you — if there isn't already one operating nearby. The United States Department of Agriculture says that, between the years of 2008 and 2013, the number of farmers' markets doubled across the country.

Farmers' markets will continue to thrive and expand as people increasingly realize the benefits of supporting local food providers. Buyers who are not yet familiar with farmer's markets can examine the following seven reasons to break the ice.

1 Enjoy fresh, seasonal foods.

Foods at farmers' markets tend to be limited to in-season offerings. Some nutritionists suggest eating seasonally available foods is better for your body, because humans ate seasonal produce for thousands of years before shipping and refrigeration changed how people received the majority of their foods. In addition, many people feel that fresh, seasonal foods taste better than the alternatives.

2 Discover new foods.

There's always something new at

a farmers' market, and this can entice shoppers to expand their flavor palates. Explore interesting, locally grown items. Even children may fall in love with colorful fruits or vegetables and their refreshing tastes.

3 Embrace organic and non-GMO offerings.

Many farmers' markets offer foods that are organically grown and are produced without GMOs. Farmers' market retailers also tend to give firsthand accounts of where their foods come from and how they are grown or raised.

4 Indulge in nutritious foods.

The vivid colors and smells emanating from farmers' markets indicate just how fresh and nutritious the offerings tend to be. Farmers who peddle their wares at farmers' markets adhere to careful farming methods to ensure their foods are as nutritious as possible.

5 Learn secrets and recipes.

In addition to fresh produce, farmers' markets may offer baked and other prepared goods. Shopkeepers often mingle with their customers, offering trade secrets and recipe ideas. Additionally,

local farm families supported by farmers' markets generally offer supreme customer service to keep shoppers coming back week after week.

6 Turn the trip into a social excursion.

A farmers' market can be an exciting and flavorful social gathering place for families and groups of friends, as well as a great place to meet other members of the community. Sometimes farmers also mingle with local artisans, so the market can be a one-stop-shopping locale for locally produced food and art.

7 Save money.

Farmers' markets may sell organic produce at a cost comparable or even lower than other retailers. That's because local farmers don't have to transport their items as far as retailers whose foods were shipped from far away places.

Any time of the year is perfect for grabbing a tote bag and browsing the wares at a nearby farmers' market, where shoppers are bound to find something fresh, unique and delicious.

Find a Farmer's Market near you!

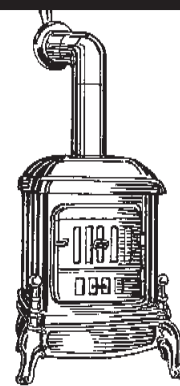


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