

BUY GOOD FOOD

KNOW YOUR FOOD, KNOW YOUR FARMER

DEB MCLUCAS, FRECKLE FARM

LOOK AT YOUR SHOPPING/EATING HABITS

What are you eating and where does it come from? How much is grown locally and can you name the farm or farmer of any of the food that you eat. If not then it is time to review how you shop and eat.

1.

Buy most of your food from an accredited farmers' market, at the farm gate or fresh off the boat.

- **It's fresh** – produce is usually picked, caught or processed within a day or two of being sold and will keep much longer
- **It's top quality** – farmers who sell what they produce direct to customers really care about your eating experience and so focus on quality
- **It's real food** – you will find mostly whole foods or those that are value added will have minimal processing and use less preservatives
- **Value for money** – there are not two or three middle men adding to the cost of the produce and so you will be surprised how much further your shopping dollar goes
- **Environmentally friendly food** – it's often chemical free and biological/organic and has low food miles
- **Supporting a local business** – you know that the money you spend is going directly to the farming family who produced the food

2.

Next best option is to buy from a local organic store, greengrocer or delivery service

These outlets usually have direct relationships with local farmers and so you will find some great quality produce if you pick and choose the lines that you know are local. They often have long standing relationships with farmers and pay them more reasonable rates for their produce compared with bigger corporate entities like the wholesale agents or supermarkets.

3.

When you do shop at a supermarket, choose community or independent operations ahead of the two largest supermarkets

These players have huge buying power and can often source and sell produce at a cheaper rate than smaller businesses. This centralised food system pressures farmers into providing cheaper produce, which is what has seen many producers turn to factory farming and other intensive practices that compromise our food quality and contribute to environmental degradation.

Commit to making it happen

It's not that hard to change the way you shop. It's really just about changing habits. Push past the blockages and resist the urge to do the 'quick shop' on the way home from work. Do a planned weekly shop to source more local food and when you discover how much better it is then it will be easy to maintain a different routine. You simply won't be able to go back!

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