



MEET YOUR FARMERS, GROW YOUR COMMUNITY AT YOUR LOCAL MARKET

Shopping at the farmers market has a ton of great benefits for customers including getting outside and having access to the delicious food being grown and raised right in your community. However, farmers markets have other benefits that are often overlooked.



Be a taste tourist

As you travel, consider visiting the farmers market near your vacation destination. This will allow you to get a taste of what makes that part of the world special!



Things are always changing

If you only drop by the farmers market when your favorite peaches are in season you are missing out on the beauty of seasonality. As things come into season starting in the spring and continuing through the summer with the grand finale in the fall you will be taken on a tour of different flavors and textures. And don't forget- many farmers markets remain open for at least part of the winter too!



Wave to your neighbors

Farmers markets are sites for communities to come together and have a space to connect, talk and have fun. The slower pace allows for neighbors to chat while picking out tomatoes or offer recipe ideas while shopping for sourdough bread. The relationships aren't only between shoppers- make sure to say hi to the vendors, they're your neighbors too!



Learn from a farmer/producer

Speaking of vendors being neighbors, this is your reminder that the major difference between a farmers market and a grocery store is you can talk to the person who grew or raised your food. Take the time to learn about what makes the food each vendor is selling so special. Farmers are often quite proud of the incredibly hard work they do each day to bring food to our tables, and are therefore happy to educate shoppers on their practices.



Healthy Family Fun

Taking your children to the farmers market each week can feel like a big commitment, but it is one that pays many dividends. Many markets have some kind of entertainment such as live music, as well as educational activities for kids such as scavenger hunts, cooking demonstrations, or physical activities like yoga. Plus, children may be more willing to try foods they pick out themselves at the market. For example a child may be impressed with the greens left on carrots, and get curious about their taste in a way they aren't about ones from a store.



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If you are new to shopping at the farmers market, here are some tips to make your trip go smoothly.



Do a little research ahead of time

Check on the market's hours, days and location. You may also want to follow the market on social media to be sure to see any updates or changes due to weather or other factors.



Have a flexible grocery list

Look in your pantry and see what staples you already own and think of some meals you can make. Make a list of what you need, but be flexible.



Time it right

If there is something you have your heart set on buying, you should plan to arrive to the market early. Popular seasonal items may sell out quickly. However, if you want a slower shopping experience, head over closer to the end of the market's hours.



Take a quick tour

When you arrive at the market, walk around to see what's available, and at what prices, before getting out your money.



Ask about food access programs

Each food access program work differently, so ask at the market's information table about which programs the market may have that may assist you and your family.



Be a courteous shopper

Farmers markets are fun and lively spaces, and it takes a community to make them so. Help to keep the market running smoothly for everyone by following some basic rules such as: keeping your dog under close supervision and not letting them enter vendor's tents, not blocking vendors tents when chatting with your neighbors, and keeping your interactions short if there is a long line behind you.

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