

# We Know...

## Farmers Markets



Kansas is home to 80 farmers markets, which provide a rich variety of homegrown fruits and vegetables, as well as such locally produced goods as eggs, meat, baked goods, honey, cut flowers, bedding plants, and jams or jellies.

Research shows that fruits and vegetables picked at the height of ripeness and consumed within a few days of harvest are higher in nutrients. Most of the fruits and vegetables sold at farmers markets are picked less than 24 hours before being offered for sale.

Kansas farmers markets provide fresh, healthful, high-quality foods and products for people who want to add variety to cooking or who just want to have a fun shopping experience.

Some other advantages of buying locally produced foods:

- Farmers markets allow shoppers to meet the people who produce the goods and to ask how the food was grown.
- Farmers markets offer consumers a fresh food choice.
- Farmers markets contribute to the community's economic base.
- Buying locally grown products supports the agriculture industry and the community.

A complete list of Kansas farmers markets – including news, recipes, and dates and times each market is open – is available at: [www.ksfarmersmarkets.org](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org). Search for your local market by city, county, or region.

## 8 Benefits of Buying Local Food

- **Unbeatable taste.** Vendors often grow fruit and vegetable varieties you'll never see in a supermarket. Heirloom varieties are known for flavor and taste, but are best eaten within a few days of harvest. Most shipped varieties are grown for their ability to withstand industrial harvest, extended travel, and a long shelf life.
- **Farm freshness.** According to *www.foodroutes.org*, fruits and vegetables shipped from distant states and countries may spend one to two weeks in transit before arriving at the supermarket. In contrast, most farmers market tomatoes were picked less than 24 hours before being set out for sale.
- **Better nutrition.** Nutrients in food deteriorate over time. For the best taste and nutritive quality, fruits and vegetables should be picked at the height of ripeness and eaten within a few days.
- **Easier on the environment.** Most food travels 2,000 miles before reaching the consumer. Reduced food miles and more sustainable production practices utilized by most local growers reduce reliance on nonrenewable resources. Bring your own shopping bags.
- **Support for family farms and communities.** Local family farms create jobs that help diversify and strengthen the local economy. On average, every dollar spent locally stimulates \$4 of additional economic activity.
- **Comfort of knowing where your food originated.** Consumers who support local growers can find out how the food is grown.
- **Stronger relationships.** Farmers markets provide an opportunity for the consumer to meet the people who grow the foods and ask for recipes. Local growers bypass the middleman and sell directly.
- **Fresh air, exercise and fun.** Going to farmers markets is a great family activity. In many communities, the farmers market is the place to be and to be seen.

For more information on farmers markets, contact your local K-State Research and Extension office or visit us online at [www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu). Publications are reviewed or revised annually.



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