



# What to Expect at Farmers Markets

## Is produce from the Farmers Market more nutritious?

- In a word, yes!
- Fruits or vegetables purchased at the grocery store have traveled an average of 1500 miles from farm to store. On that journey the produce may have lost up to 45% of its vitamin nutritional value.
- <https://cuesa.org/learn/how-far-does-your-food-travel-get-your-plate>

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## Are Farmers Markets good for the local economy?

- Purchasing 15% of a family's food budget from local farmers results in a \$639,000,000 increase in the central Illinois economy.
- For every \$1 million in revenue, direct-market farms create almost 32 local jobs whereas larger wholesale growers create only 10.5.

For every dollar spent, how much goes to the farmer?

- Grocery store: \$0.16
- Farmers Market: \$1.00

Arrive early if you are looking for what's new and best quality



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Come late if you are looking for bargains



## Shopping tips:

- Check your local newspaper and social media for types of produce to be offered
- Bring cash and a reusable bag
- Stroll the entire market before you buy, check availability, prices, etc.
- Dress appropriately, wear comfortable shoes
- Don't over buy—you can come back next week!

## Know the season

- Do not go to a farmer's market in Illinois expecting tomatoes in May or pumpkins in July.
- Do not expect uniform size in produce.
- Try something new.
  - Heirloom varieties are often not found in the supermarket; they might look different, but the taste is often superb!



## Meet the farmers

Do not be shy; farmers are passionate about their produce and proud of what they do.

Ask them how to prepare some of the varieties of produce unfamiliar to you.

## Practice food safety

- Bring a clean reusable bag
- Wash fruits and vegetables just before serving
- Buy meat that has been kept at 41F°, keep it separate from other products
- Only buy pasteurized cider

Watch these videos!

[How to wash leafy greens](#)

[How to wash strawberries](#)

What's Cooking with Mary Liz Wright on YouTube

## Resources

- Illinois Department of Ag:  
<http://www.agr.state.il.us/markets/farmers/>
- How to find a farmers market:  
<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Consumers/FarmersMarkets/Pages/Current-Farmers-Markets.aspx>

## References

*Crossroads Resource Center.org*  
*Farmersmarketcoalition.org*  
*Illinois.gov*  
*Usda.gov*

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