

Get to Know Your Food

By Desiree Nielsen RD, the Choices Dietitian

The local food movement in BC is growing stronger every day. People all over our province are starting to re-evaluate where they purchase their food and which companies they support with their food dollar. Inspired foodies are planting condo gardens, trolling markets and learning more about food systems and the effect of food production on the health of our planet. Movies like *Food Inc.* and authors such as Michael Pollan have been at the forefront of this movement. While many of us expect our food to be grown in wholesome conditions by family farmers, this is not always the case. But with the spotlight now shining over the corporatization of our food systems, people are hungry to learn more about the journey food takes from seed to dinner table.

Hug a Farmer


March is National Nutrition Month® and this year's theme is all about celebrating the local harvest and learning more about Canadian food. So why not start at the source? If you have never been to a farm, why not try a tour this summer such as those held by Slow Food Cycling Tours and Circle Farm Tours? If you don't want to wait until the weather warms, you can get one-on-one with local, small-scale farmers all over BC at Winter Farmers Markets in Vancouver, Abbotsford, Kelowna and more. Visit www.bcfarmersmarket.org for dates and times. And as your appetite for local produce grows, you can even join a CSA: community supported agriculture group. Farmers offering CSAs sell "shares" in their harvest to the community; the farmers receive fair prices for their crops and you enjoy farm fresh produce on a weekly basis. CSAs like Kitsilano Farms and Southlands Farms are located in Vancouver but you can find CSAs in your area on Farm Folk/City Folk's website at www.ffcf.bc.ca.

Vote with Your Pocketbook

At Choices, supporting local businesses is important to us too...after all, we are locally grown ourselves! While many of us think local food equals produce, we can also help to support local business by choosing locally produced and packaged foods whenever we can. Did you know that Organicfair chocolate is made on Vancouver Island? Or that

Hardbite potato chips hail from the Fraser Valley? Take a peek on the shelves and vote local with your grocery list by supporting local food producers of all kinds. Supporting ethical animal husbandry is another important way to vote for traditional and sustainable production methods: from Paradise Valley Pork to Rabbit River eggs, Choices offers many alternatives to conventionally raised animal foods.

Celebrate with Us

Choices Nutrition Day is Saturday, March 20 at all Choices Markets locations. The Choices Markets Nutrition Team will be giving away plenty of resources that explain how eating local foods plays a part in proper nutrition and will answer any nutrition questions you might have. Join us for giveaways, yummy treats and more! If you would like to learn more about National Nutrition Month®, visit www.dietitians.ca. 

Desiree Nielsen RD is the Choices Dietitian. Have a nutrition question for Desiree? Visit www.choicesmarkets.com/nutrition or get nutrition tips on Twitter by following @ChoicesMarkets and @DesireeRD.



We're un-packed, re-stocked, and predicting a bumper crop! FarmFolk/CityFolk has dug into fresh soil in our new Granville Island office, and this spring the time is ripe to plant a membership seed and help our roots keep growing. Visit our website to sign up as a member, learn about our work, and take a trip down the aisles of our re-stocked Knowledge Pantry to learn more about sustainable food and agriculture in British Columbia. www.ffcf.bc.ca