

Smart Shopping

From Farm To Store To Table

New England Grocery Retailer Focuses On Locally Grown Produce

(NAPSA)—Good news for New England shoppers looking to feed their families locally grown produce and vegetables: A community-focused grocery store chain is once again partnering with independent and family farms to offer locally sourced produce. Stop & Shop, which has been serving customers in New England for over 100 years, has partnered with more than 35 farmers in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut to provide customers with a variety of the season's freshest fruit and vegetables including corn, tomatoes, peppers, squash, cabbage, lettuce, potatoes, eggplant, apples, pears and peaches.

Buy Local

By partnering with local farmers, the process of providing their stores with the freshest produce is expedited. Produce is picked at the local farm, packed, and is then ready for delivery to local Stop & Shop stores. Very often, the produce is on shelves the very next day after being picked.

Each farm's name is featured on store signage, making it easy for customers to know exactly where the produce was grown. "It's all part of our commitment to providing customers with the freshest produce available," said Jack Keane, director of produce for Stop & Shop. "We have been proudly partnering with local family-owned farms and independent farmers for decades."

Why Eat Locally Grown?

As Dr. Vern Grubinger of the University of Vermont explains, there are good reasons for buying locally grown food:

1. Local food tastes and looks better because the crops can be picked at their peak.

2. Local food can be better for you. The shorter the time between the farm



Fresh, local produce can be on the farm today, on your table tomorrow.

and your table, the less likely it is that nutrients will be lost.

3. Local food preserves genetic diversity. In the modern agricultural system, plant varieties are chosen for their ability to ripen uniformly, withstand harvesting, survive packing and last a long time on the shelf, so there is limited genetic diversity in large-scale production. Smaller local farms, in contrast, often grow many different varieties of crops to provide a long harvest season, an array of colors and the best flavors.

4. Local food supports local families. When you buy their produce, you help support the farmers and their families.

5. Local food benefits the environment and wildlife. Well-managed farms provide ecosystem services: They conserve fertile soil, protect water sources and sequester carbon from the atmosphere. The farm environment is a patchwork of fields, meadows, woods, ponds and buildings that provide habitat for wildlife.

6. Local food is an investment in the future. By supporting local farmers today, you help ensure there will be farms in New England tomorrow.

Learn More

For further facts on enjoying locally grown food, visit www.stopandshop.com.