

# HEALTHFUL EATING

## Seven Smart Farmers' Market Suggestions

(NAPSA)—A healthy, well-balanced diet is a critical part of overall health and can help prevent many chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.

Fortunately, eating a healthy diet can be easier and more fun than many realize. Adding fruits and vegetables from your local farmers' markets can help.

“As a physician, I know that a diet built around fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables is the cornerstone of preventive medicine and a key to people's overall health,” said Preston Maring, M.D., a physician at Kaiser Permanente and a champion for locally grown food who has worked to develop one of the first hospital-based farmers' markets at Kaiser Permanente medical facilities. “One of the best ways to include fresh produce in your diet is to shop at local farmers' markets. Eating locally grown food is good for us, our children, the farmers who grow it, as well as the environment.”

Dr. Maring has developed seven simple suggestions to help you at the farmers' market and at home:

**1. Get Inspired**—Introduce new vegetables and fruits into your diet or reinvent an old dish using different produce; let the vegetables and fruits in season inspire new creative meals.

**2. Follow a Better Diet**—When shopping at farmers' mar-



**Farmers' markets can help you enjoy fresh, tasty, healthful food—and have fun finding it.**

kets, it will become easier to manage a healthy diet and improve overall nutrition and well-being. A healthy diet based on foods from a farmers' market can keep blood pressure and cholesterol from climbing and lower the danger of developing diabetes.

**3. Cook for Your Health**—Shopping at farmers' markets leads to cooking at home. It's more economical and much easier to take charge of exactly what's in your diet.

**4. Support The Community**—When buying from a farm or farmers' market, you're helping ensure that the farm is economically viable and that local produce will be available year after year. Small farms have played a leading role in reintroducing many varieties of fruits and vegetables

that were virtually abandoned when large-scale agriculture came along.

**5. Encourage Sustainable Agriculture**—Small farms have been leaders in adapting sustainable agricultural techniques that protect water and build healthy soils and using growing techniques that do not require as many chemical fertilizers and pesticides as some large operations do.

**6. Eat by Season**—The most beautiful, best-tasting and most economical foods are usually the ones that are in season. The farmer has spent months nurturing the vegetables and fruits to the moment of perfect ripeness.

**7. Change Food Systems**—Around the country, farmers' markets are booming as community-supported agriculture programs let customers buy produce from local farms—providing farmers more stable revenue and consumers the best of the harvest.

Dr. Maring's work to increase access to locally grown food helped inspire a new cookbook, “Eating-Well In Season: The Farmers' Market Cookbook.” With an introduction by Dr. Maring, all the recipes use easy-to-find ingredients for healthful and nutritious meals. Additional recipes by Dr. Maring can be found at [recipe.kaiser-permanente.org](http://recipe.kaiser-permanente.org). Information about more Kaiser Permanente programs and green efforts can be found at [www.kp.org/green](http://www.kp.org/green).