Where Can you Find Locally Grown Food in Kalamazoo?

It’s everywhere, from our very own College cafeteria to farm stands to some of our best downtown restaurants. Check out www.localharvest.org to find CSAs, markets, local food vendors, and farms in our area. A few good places to start looking include:

1. **KALAMAZOO FARMERS’ MARKET ON BANK ST.**
   Between Lake St. & Stockbridge Ave. Saturdays 7AM-2PM (May-November); Tues. & Thurs. 7AM-2PM (June-October)

2. **THE PEOPLE’S FOOD CO-OP**
   436 S. Burdick St., downtown Kalamazoo www.peoplesfoodco-op.org

3. You might also choose to participate in Community Sponsored Agriculture, purchasing a share that will provide you a weekly box of produce—or even a weekly dairy share—from a local grower.

What We Do

Farms to K seeks to raise awareness, build relationships, and provide more local food on campus through the following activities:

• Providing opportunities for all stakeholders to share information and ideas about local food advocacy.

• Organizing local food tasting events for the campus community that highlight the variety of the local harvest.

• Bringing together K College students and alums with interest and experience in agriculture, sustainability, and food production.

• Working through our campus organization and through service-learning courses, to understand and develop the infrastructure needed for a large scale local food movement in Kalamazoo.

• Linking our efforts to the work of other environmental organizations on campus (including ENVORG and DIRT) and to the work of others concerned with community food security, fair labor practices, wellness, and sustainable living.

• Connecting with other colleges and institutions in the area who are developing similar campaigns.

• Carpooling to the Farmers’ Market in season.

Reasons to Support Local Foods

**FOR TASTE**

Food (found in supermarkets) travels on average

1,300 miles.

Fruits and vegetables can spend 7 to 14 days in transit. Many of these fruits and vegetables are grown to travel, not for taste.

(www.foodroutes.org/whycare2.jsp)

**FOR THE ECONOMY**

While corporate growers have almost doubled their profits since 1990, in 2002 farmers earned the least they have since 1940. Local farmers also spend money within the local economy.

(www.foodroutes.org/whycare3.jsp)

For more information on local foods visit:

- www.fairfoodmatters.org
- www.foodroutes.org
- www.foodsecurity.org/index
- www.sustainabletable.org/issues/eatlocal
- www.slowfoodusa.org
- www.realfoodproject.org
- www.100milediet.org

A Brief History

Farms to K College has its roots in a service-learning project undertaken by the "Commitments" first-year seminar taught by Professor Amelia Katsanski in Fall 2005.

While exploring what it means to be committed to place, the seminar explored the local food system and assessed the possibility of starting a Farms to College program at Kalamazoo College.

For their final project, Commitments students sponsored a roundtable discussion among the constituencies who would need to work together to make such a program possible. Our food service manager, student organization representatives, faculty, staff, community partners, and local growers decided, at this meeting, to move forward with the project and to form an organization through which they could work together.

Supported in a variety of ways by Kalamazoo College’s Student Commission, the Mary Jane Underwood Stryker Institute for Service-Learning, and Fair Food Matters, Farms to K continues to raise awareness of the local food movement on campus and to build the infrastructure and partnerships needed to achieve our overall goals for the College cafeteria.

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What is Farms to K?

Farms to K is a group of Kalamazoo College students, faculty, administrators, and staff joined by local farmers, our Sodexo food-service manager, and the community advocacy group Fair Food Matters.

We have been working since Fall 2005 to build relationships between the College and local farmers to increase the amount of locally-grown food served in our cafeteria and to develop and support the local food system while fostering sustainable agricultural practices and safe and fair working conditions.

Our goals grow out of our understanding that making the choice to buy and eat locally-grown foods is healthier for our bodies (by providing food grown for flavor and nutrition rather than the ability to withstand shipping), our community (by strengthening our economy and maintaining our rural heritage), our environment (by using less fossil fuel for food production and transport and encouraging sustainable land management and labor conditions) and our spirits (by nurturing connections between us, the food we eat, and the people who produce it).

Not Just At K...

While the initiative to bring local food to K College’s campus comes from the college and the community, it’s an idea shared by others at colleges across the nation, as well as at schools and other institutions. The Community Food Security Coalition’s Farms To College website lists over 100 programs at colleges throughout the United States, 17 of which are in Michigan. Programs can be found at private colleges and public universities, in small and large communities, and with both self-managed and contracted food-service management. More Information: farmtocollege.org or farmtoschool.org

Contact us or visit our website to learn more about Farms to K or become involved in our activities.

www.kzoo.edu/farmstok

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Feeding our college and nourishing our community by committing to locally grown food.