

# **BUY LOCAL AND EAT SEASONAL**

## **EARTH FIRST**

**By Nick King**

### **Buy Local and help fight Climate Change.**

This weekend marks the beginning of F.O.O.D. Week, where locals and visitors celebrate our wonderful local produce. Congratulations to F.O.O.D. Week organizers for their “100 mile diet. Local Eating for Global Change” theme.

Accessing local produce is an effective way of reducing our collective carbon footprint through the reduction of fossil fuels required in the transportation of food from the paddock to our plates. Buying local produce also stimulates the local economy, allows us access to healthy fresh food, and gives everyone the opportunity to connect with our food sources.

### **100 mile diet all year round**

This year, F.O.O.D. Week has published a “100 mile Directory”, which is a list of local food producers, with details of what they produce and how to get in touch with them, so the hard work has already been done for those who want information about year round availability of local produce. The “100 mile Directory” is included in the Orange F.O.O.D. Week Official Event Program, which is available at the Visitors Information Centre.

### **The Seasonal Eating Challenge**

To achieve the goals of carbon emissions reduction, supporting local producers and improving our diet, many of us are taking the challenge of eating seasonally, which means buying food that is produced locally and in season as much as possible. The organizers of F.O.O.D. Week have given the seasonal eating movement a great start. Below are some guidelines which can assist with a seasonal eating plan.

### **Use your 100 mile directory**

The 100 mile directory provides contact details for producers of locally grown products. Contact them; ask them about the availability of their produce and how it can best be accessed on a regular basis.

### **Visit Your Local Farmers’ Market**

Orange has a year round Farmers’ Market held at Orange Showground on the second Saturday of each month. A comprehensive range of local seasonally available produce is always available. Speak to the stallholders about their products.

### **Encourage local retailers to stock local produce**

When shopping at grocery outlets ask the proprietors whether they stock locally produced foodstuffs and if not why not? If the demand is there, local shopkeepers are more likely to retail local seasonally available produce.

### **Buy in Bulk, freeze, dry, preserve**

Locally produced food items will obviously be abundant seasonally. When planning a seasonal diet consideration can be given to the various methods of storage for out of season use. Local producers can be consulted as to the most appropriate method of storage.

### **Grow your own**

This approach is about as local as you can get. It requires surprisingly little space, expense and energy to seasonally supplement your diet through some good old fashioned veggie gardening. Depending on the resources available, growing some of your own food can range from a few herbs in a pot or window box to a substantial backyard vegetable garden.

### **Join a community garden**

Orange has a growing community garden movement, centred at the ELF Community garden situated at Orange Showground. Through joining this project, participants can learn to grow their own food and share in the produce grown at the garden.

Best of luck with your seasonal eating plan.

### **Green dates for the calendar**

F.O.O.D. Week April 17-22

Earth Day April 22