

DIGGING IN TO THE MEAT AND POTATOES

A GUIDE TO BUYING WITH CONFIDENCE
AT FARMERS' MARKETS



It's great to eat local food, but when you buy at a market stand, are you sure the food is grown locally? Is it being grown in a sustainable way?

- Where is your farm? How big is your farm?
 - Did you grow/raise this product yourself?
 - How long is your growing season?
 - Will you have product available in the cold months?
 - Can I visit your farm/do you offer farm tours?
 - Do you have third party certification as a local farmer?
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- Are your animals pasture-raised? Free-range? Free-run? Antibiotic-free? No added hormones?
 - Are your animals grass-fed? Corn-fed? Grass-finished?
 - What breeds do you raise?
 - Are they considered heritage breeds?
 - Why do you choose those breeds?
 - How many sheep, cattle, beehives, etc. do you have on your farm?



Here are some questions to start a conversation at the farmers' market.

CULINARY — GROWING PRACTICES

- What varieties of (this crop) do you grow?
 - Are they considered heirloom varieties?
 - Why do you choose these varieties?
 - Are you certified organic, or do you use sustainable practices?
 - How do you approach land stewardship on your farm?
 - How do you approach soil conservation?
 - How do you protect the water sources on your farm?
 - How do you protect pollinators on your farm?
 - What pest control methods do you use?
 - What weed control methods do you use?
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- What's the shelf life of this product?
 - What's the best way to store this product?
 - Do you have any processing tips, cooking tips, or recipes for this product?

The **National Farmers Union-Ontario's** Local Food Advocates Network brings together both professionals and community members who understand that local food can help us educate young people, improve health, and give us a deeper connection to nature.

Advocates know the important role farmers play in producing local food but can sometimes be overwhelmed with the options available at local markets.

The NFU-O and Peterborough Regional Farmers Network have worked together to create a handy guide to questions you may have for your local farmer.

To see more resources for Local Food Advocates, visit nfontario.ca



Possibility grows here.



NATIONAL
FARMERS
FOUNDATION