

Farmer's Markets

By Wendy Lovas

Summer. Nothing quite brings this season to life like strolling through all the fresh fruits and vegetables in the stalls of your local farmers market. Growing up, our summer trips to the beach were never complete without a stop by Elmer's for some wonderful, fresh corn and tomatoes. All your senses are fully engaged by the bountiful harvest you have to choose from. This is definitely not something that can be experienced in your grocery store that trucks in produce from around the world whether it's in season or not.

Aside from the quality and taste of what you can purchase at a farmers market, there is the added bonus of possibly speaking to the actual farmer who grew it. This is a link in the food production chain that has been broken by huge agribusiness. It's impossible to have this connection on a day to day basis with the huge volume of food that is necessary to feed the people in this country, so it's nice to be able to change that – even if it's just for the tomatoes you're purchasing that were grown locally.

Increasingly, some farmers markets include locally grown, grass-fed meat and dairy as well as produce. This sustainably raised meat is not only very healthy for you, but the methods used to raise the animals are more humane and much better for the planet. Be sure to also try their farm fresh eggs!

Some of the bigger markets will also attract vendors that complement the idea of locally grown and produced items that you can't find in your local grocery store like locally produced honey, handmade soaps, herbs and plants, fresh cut flowers, arts and crafts. There are tons to see and you will support the local economy and the planet by buying from these vendors.

We in the Plano area are fortunate to have several markets to choose from. For a list along with information on how to get there and when they are open, visit www.eatgreendfw.com/area-farmers-markets.