

Challenges to Buying Local...

A Grower's Prospective

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Buying Local - Pros

- Ripe, nutritious vegetable supply year-round
 - Crisp taste and aromatic flavors are maintained
 - Can arrive within 1-2 days of harvest
- Decreased carbon footprint
 - Fewer miles = less gasoline and greenhouse emissions
 - Less energy needed for coolers vs. freezers
 - Planted acreage increases green space



Buying Local - Pros

- Strengthening of local economies
 - Job creation and growth in your neighborhood
 - Increased domestic food production
- Develop a personal relationship with your farmer
 - School visits to check product quality and taste
 - Farm and packinghouse field trips
 - Speaker for Health Fairs/Wellness Events/ Career Days



Buying Local - Pros

- If a problem occurs, remedy is near
- Florida growers must use IPM / BMPs
 - Smart growing techniques like scouting for pests
 - Environmentally-friendly management of soil and water resources



Buying Local - Challenges

- Field to fork Food safety requirements
 - Staff dedicated to training, recordkeeping and inspections
 - Auditing is expensive
- Insurance requirements for farmers (\$1 million or more)
- Acreage and processing consideration for school district size
 - 1 Acre = 30,000 corn cobbettes / 24,000 servings of greenbeans
- Logistical constraints
 - The further you live away, the longer it will take
- Understanding weather conditions
 - If a freeze is expected, get your order in early



Buying Local - Challenges

- Student and staff food preferences
 - Increased consumption may require coordination with teachers lesson plans
 - Also, taste-testing functions for students
- Special considerations training for cafeteria staff
 - Use it as soon as possible
 - Some fresh foods require better cold chain management
 - Fresh foods can become damaged by overcooking
 - Fresh foods should be maintained in appropriate packaging



Buying Local - Challenges

- Understanding “What’s In Season”
 - http://www.florida-agriculture.com/marketing/seasonal_availability.htm
- Education on how to conduct food safety inspections



Contact Information



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