

LETTERS

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Getting stuffed locally at Thanksgiving

This year Thanksgiving will not just be about filling our bellies with as much good food as possible and being thankful for the abundance of food. This year we are going to go local. My family is giving the 100-mile Thanksgiving a try.

Trying to eat local for one special meal is an easier commitment than what Alisa Smith and James McKinnon were ready to do. They coined the term 100-Mile Diet, which is a new and at the same time very old way of feeding ourselves responsibly and in a sustainable way.

Smith and McKinnon, both Vancouverites, introduced the idea of eating only food that hails from within a 100-mile radius of your home. Sounds easy at first thought and then not so easy on second thought.

For example, for Thanksgiving we can get our turkey from my in-laws' neighbour. That's easy. The farmers market will provide all the squashes and potatoes we can possibly manage to eat. We won't have any problems finding pumpkins either for the inevitable pumpkin pie.

However, spices, such as cinnamon and salt, or essential pie ingredients like flour will pose some problems.

When I mention my idea and my troubles finding certain crucial ingredients locally, people question why I am doing this to myself or my family.

There are many reasons for eating more local food. Here are some: support our local economy and the whole community benefit; support sustainable farming practices like organic farms; and reduce food miles — imported food has on average 100 times more CO2 emissions than food purchased at a farmers' market (FoodShare, Toronto, April 2005). Know the food you purchased is truly fresh and, therefore, more nutritious.

I challenge everyone who reads this to give the 100 Mile Thanksgiving or a close proxy a try, share some of the goodness with a local food bank, and please write me with your experiences. Happy Thanksgiving to all.

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