

## WHY SHOULD I CARE

“Eating locally isn’t just a fad like the various diets advertised on late-night TV-it may be one of the most important ways we save ourselves and the planet”

Dr. David Suzuki, chair  
The David Suzuki Foundation

I care about where my food comes from because I’m allergic to some of the pesticides and chemicals spread on the fruit when they are transported from far away countries. By buying your fruits and veggies at your local market, it gives you a chance to develop a relationship with who you get your foods from, rather than getting foreign foods, like blueberries from Chile, and not knowing who handles them. When you are buying your food from your local super market, do you stop and ask questions like, what pesticides were used on this food? Was this genetically modified? Or how did this animal grow up? How far has this food travelled?

Like I said before, I’m allergic to some of the pesticides coats some fruits like melons, so I have to be conscious as to what I eat. I think everyone should, allergy or not. When you are eating locally or organically, you don’t have to worry about what was added to your foods or how it could affect you either now or later in life. Studies have shown that chemicals and pesticides added to food can cause birth defects and cancer.

When you are eating meats like chicken, pork, any meat really, you should think about if that animal grew up in a box or was it a free range animal. Did that animal have the freedom to act like a regular animal or if its feet ever touched real earth? Or had it ever seen actual sunlight? Internationally known requirements demand animals are provided freedom from hunger and thirst, discomfort, pain or disease, fear, distress and freedom to express NORMAL behavior. Few Canadian intensive livestock operations follow all, let alone any, of these regulations.

I feel lucky to have access to fresh vegetables and fruit right in my backyard. I love being able to help my parents make a meal where all the vegetables are ours that we grew. For eggs, we can just go to our friends who raise chickens and I don’t think we’ve had to go to the store for eggs in over 2 months. We get tons and tons of fresh berries and fresh fruit for pies to freeze for later years. I just love the ability to go right outside my house and get the freshest things available.

Eating healthier shouldn’t be something you feel obliged to do. So make a choice, care about where you and your kid’s food came from, or keep eating mystery foods. Having access to fresh fruits and vegetables is important and should be important to everyone. Knowing where and how your meats grew up is also important because you need the minerals and proteins and irons in the

meats and you don't want that animal to have been beaten and abused just to get to your plate.

This article was written by Aydon Coray, a Grade 7 student from Stuart Woods School. This was the winning article that was part of a contest for "Why should I care about eating locally grown food" which was sponsored by TSCFC.