



NORTH CAROLINA LOCAL FOOD COUNCIL

Working Collaboratively Across the State to Support North Carolina's Local Food Systems

Cooking at Home? Why not Make Buying Local your Priority?

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Learn more about the Council at: <http://www.nclocalfoodcouncil.org/>

Americans are gravitating to the familiar and the comfortable, as we cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Nothing is more comforting than making family recipes and memories using ingredients sourced from local farms, fisheries and food businesses.

Aspiring and experienced cooks at home will find that North Carolina is a leader among states in cultivating local food. Our state's food ways reflect our cultural and environmental heritage — from ingredients like creasy greens and ramps in the mountains to soft-shelled crab and hush puppies on the coast. North Carolina's food specialties have become standard in farm-to-table restaurants across the state.

Just because you're cooking at home now doesn't mean you can't enjoy the same great local ingredients — an assortment of seasonally available, locally grown and harvested meat, seafood, fruits and vegetables. There are many ways to connect to the local food supply, be it via farmer's markets, local food stores, or direct sales off the farm.

To locate local suppliers, you can start by visiting the **Got to Be NC Find Local** (<https://gottobenc.com/find-local/>). There, you can link to hundreds of local products and producers including locally made artisan products like cheese, agritourism farms, farmers markets, farm stands and growers/producers. The database, maintained by the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, is searchable by county.

The **Visit NC Farms App** (<https://visitncfarmstoday.com/>) is an excellent resource for finding places to purchase from local growers. The app will connect you to farmer's markets, pick-your-own operations, local foods shops and more. Not only that, but you'll get directions on the spot.

Prior to the pandemic, most of North Carolina's wild catch was sold in restaurants. Even though many restaurants are takeout only establishments at the moment, North Carolina seafood consumers can still find fresh and fresh-frozen seafood in local supermarkets or in seafood retail outlets. To learn more about where to find North Carolina seafood in your community and how to store and prepare it, check the **Mariner's Menu** <https://ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/mariners-menu/2020/04/how-to-freeze-seafood/>

If you're missing the favorite meat dishes you had regularly ordered at your favorite restaurants, you'll find local meat produced and processed in North Carolina at many of the state's farmer's markets. You can also connect to farmers providing local meats at **MeatSuite** (<https://www.meatsuite.com/>)

Across the state, produce growers offer a variety of seasonal products. The **NC10% Campaign** (<https://www.nc10percent.com/>) has calendars showing what is generally in season each month. There's a link to connect you to food box delivery providers too. And if you don't find a food box delivery service in your area, be sure to ask a local farm if they have added boxes as an on-farm option to meet increased demand.

North Carolina's home cooks have one of the greatest bounties of local foods available anywhere, thanks to our state's farms and fishermen. As we seek to focus on the familiar and create memories for our children, invite a North Carolina farmer or fisherman to dinner by sharing a family meal made with locally sourced ingredients.



Find out more at:

nclocalfoodcouncil.org