



Local Food, Local Meat



BC consumers are excited about locally produced food. They shop at farmers' markets and grocery stores that offer products from farmers in their communities, participate in "Community Supported Agriculture", commit to a "100-Mile-Diet", and talk about "slow food".

- Buying local food supports rural communities. It keeps food dollars in the local economy and creates jobs.
- Buying food produced close to home reduces "food miles" - the distance the food travels from where it was produced until it arrives on your plate. This means less traffic, less fuel consumption, less pollution, and fewer greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change.
- Buying local food often allows you, the consumer, to interact directly with the farmer. This means you can find out exactly where and how your food was produced and make informed choices about how you spend your food dollars.

BC's farmers produce a wide range of food products, including meat, fruits and vegetables, milk, eggs, and processed foods such as jams or bread.

Meat in the Local Food System

Meat, eggs and dairy products are an important part of most people's diets. This makes livestock farming a key contributor to food production in your community. Local meat production is, however, impossible without the necessary infrastructure for slaughtering livestock and processing the meat. Local meat needs local slaughterhouses.



A small community slaughterhouse.

BC slaughterhouses are typically small and fit well into their communities. They provide a service for their local and regional farming community, as well as supply butcher shops, grocery stores, restaurants and, of course, consumers.

Local Meat Is Safe Meat

Food safety is important. In BC, the Meat Inspection Regulation requires that any slaughterhouse that offers slaughter services for livestock owners or that produces meat for sale must have a government license. This means that all meat, including the chicken you buy at the local farmers' market or the roast from the farmer down the road, must meet food safety standards. Ask your vendor! Know what you are buying and enjoy safe local meat!



For More Information:

The **BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport (MHLS)** is responsible for provincial leadership and direction that includes food safety and food security. The Meat Inspection Regulation, enacted under the Food Safety Act (2004), governs the slaughter of animals in provincially licensed abattoirs. www.hls.gov.bc.ca/protect/ehp_foodsafety.html



The **BC Center for Disease Control**, an agency of the **Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA)**, is responsible for issuing licences to slaughterhouses in BC and for administering the inspection service to these facilities to ensure that the meat they produce is safe to consume.

www.bccdc.org/content.php?item=144

The Population and Public Health Program of the PHSA plays a provincial role in promoting and supporting food secure communities in BC.

The **BC Food Processors Association** is a not-for-profit organization representing the food processing industry, including slaughterhouses. It administers the Meat Industry Enhancement Strategy, a joint government – industry initiative to enhance licensed meat processing capacity in BC. www.bcfpa.ca/mies.html

To find a farmers' market near you, visit the website of the **BC Association of Farmers' Markets** at www.bcfarmersmarket.org

The **BC Food Systems Network** and nationally, **Food Secure Canada**, are non-profit organizations that work on issues related to food security and local food systems. Visit their websites at www.fooddemocracy.org and www.foodsecurecanada.org

100-Mile-Diet - www.100milediet.org

Community Supported Agriculture –

A good article here: www.sustainabletimes.ca/articles/CSAfarms.htm

Slow Food - www.slowfood.ca/about.php

The **Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture** at Iowa State University does research and provides resources on food systems and food miles:

www.leopold.iastate.edu/research/marketing.htm#miles

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