

## *The cost of eating right*

According to nutrition studies, Americans do not even come close to the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables in their diets. One of the barriers may be the perceived higher cost of fresh produce compared to packaged foods.

Actually, although fruits and vegetables may be a dollar to several dollars per pound, each pound provides several *servings*. For example, although a pound of peaches may cost a dollar, it provides 4½ servings, which comes to 22 cents per serving.

An Economic Research Service (ERS) study in 2004 concluded that a consumer could meet the recommendation of three servings of fruits and four servings of vegetables per day for 64 cents, which is about 12 percent of the average amount spent on food per person.



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<http://farmersmarkets.msstate.edu>

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# Farmers' Markets:

Great Source for Local Produce



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## *Farmers' markets:*

### **Win-Win-Win-Win**

Farmers' markets are a winning proposition for the grower, the consumer, the community in which they operate, and the environment.

- Growers benefit because retail sales prices are much higher than wholesale prices.
- Consumers benefit by getting extremely fresh produce that is likely richer in vitamins and often costs less than store-bought produce.
- Communities benefit because buying local keeps dollars circulating within the local community.
- Buying local decreases "food miles," or the distance food is transported across the country or from other countries.

## *What is local?*

What exactly is "local" produce?

Most people think of local produce as those fruits and vegetables grown within their town or county, or from within a specified radius. Some people use local to refer to anything grown within their state.

Some major grocery store chains consider any produce grown in the United States to be local.

Most farmers' markets require produce to be grown within the same county or neighboring counties. Including surrounding counties is often important since there may not be enough local growers within the county to support a farmers' market on their own.



One of the fastest-growing segments of fresh fruit and vegetable sales in Mississippi, as in the rest of the country, is direct marketing.

Direct marketing is when a producer sells his or her produce directly to the consumer via on-farm retail sales, roadside stands, community supported agriculture (CSAs), buying clubs, pick-your-own farms, or farmers' markets.

At the end of the 2014 season, Mississippi had 85 farmers' markets. Nearly every county in the state has a market, and there are even a few with two or more.

To locate farmers' markets in your area, visit

<http://www.mdac.ms.gov/bureaus-departments/farmers-market/markets-mississippi>

