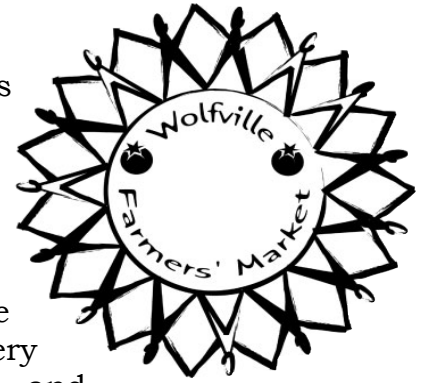


# What is Sustainability?

... it's a word used more and more by a wide variety of organizations (including us) for an even wider variety of purposes. The term originated in the United Nations 1987 "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development." There the Bruntland Commission defined sustainable development which "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."<sup>1</sup> Basically, sustainable endeavour is indefinitely possible: Not that the goal is to have every endeavour to continue on forever, but that it should be possible to, and we should leave a few resources for the future members of our community. It's about multi-generational respect, responsibility, and accountability.



We at the market do hope to promote sustainable practises, and without intentionally setting out to, we are rather sustainable. We've grown healthily through careful planning and input from a large number of stakeholders. We provide services with little requirement of energy; the local products for sale travel short distances. We give back; while we we provide space for local economy to function and grow, we love to host the community in a vibrant weekly celebration. However, the sustainability of our community is only as strong as the conversations we hold. We cannot chose a sustainable path unless we've painted a future goal together. What does sustainability mean to you, and how does the Wolfville Farmers' Market fit in?

<sup>1</sup> United Nations. 1987. "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development." General Assembly Resolution 42/187, 11 December 1987.

## Why buy local food?

- **Taste (and nutrients).** Food shipped across the continent is grown and harvested to handle shipping conditions, not to be juicy and delicious. Perhaps what you're tasting are all the additional nutrients retained in freshly picked produce grown on local healthy soil. Our smaller scale, locally produced meat, eggs and milk come from animals who are able to live closer to their evolutionary roots, ensuring yummier and healthier results<sup>1</sup>.
- **Efficiency.** Smaller farms manage to grow more food per acer than large industrial style operations<sup>2</sup>. Increased attention, intercropping, efficient use of water, nutrients and oil, and agricultural diversity all lead to increased yields. Local food is also more energy efficient, not requiring large amounts of fossil fuel for transportation, refrigeration, processing, and packaging.
- **Shake that hand that feeds you.** Knowing the face of the farmer who grew your meal is of incalculable value. In addition to the feel-good factor and recipe ideas, there is more incentive to be accountable for the safety of the food you produce if you meet the people you sell it to.
- **Use it or loose it.** If you believe in continuing the tradition of producing food in Kings county we must ensure the value of our farmland. If our local smaller scale farms out-competed by industrial far-flung operations, that land will fall to disuse, and may attract development for other purposes. Once built on soil can no longer grow food. These local farms also need our dollars. A farmer receives about 3.5 percent of each dollar spent on their product at the grocery store, or 90 percent of that same dollar sold directly to a customer at a Farmers' Market or farm stand<sup>3</sup>.
- **Pay it Forward.** Smaller scale local businesses are far more likely to re-invest their profits and operating costs in the local economy<sup>4</sup>. Spend your dollars locally and you're likely to see a portion of that same dollar return to you.



<sup>1</sup> Pollan, Michael, *Omnivores Dilemma* (New York: 2007)

<sup>2</sup> Bill McKibben, *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future* (New York: 2007) p 66.

<sup>3</sup> *The Issues: Buy Local*. Sustainable Table. Online at: [http://www.sustainabletable.org/issues/buylocal/index\\_pf.html](http://www.sustainabletable.org/issues/buylocal/index_pf.html)

<sup>4</sup> *Plant your dollars close to home and watch your community grow*. Food Routs Network . Online at: <http://www.foodroutes.org>