

Farm- to- Buffet: A New Era Has Arisen With Change in Attitudes

Naima Shaikh¹ and Narendra Savaliya²

¹ Ph.D. Research Scholar, ASPEE Agribusiness Management Institute, Navsari Agriculture University, Navsari.

² Founder & CEO of E -Agro Tech Pvt. Ltd.

Corresponding author: shaikhnaima92@gmail.com

ARTICLE ID: 025

Abstract

The farm-to-buffet movement has arisen more or less concurrently with changes in attitudes about food safety, food freshness, food seasonality, and small-farm economics. Direct farm selling provides a link between urban consumers and rural food producers that can be valuable in developing sustainable communities. Directly to consumers seems to be gaining popularity among farm producers. Direct selling can have positive economic and social impacts on farmers and rural and communities. Direct purchases from farmers provide city residents with a source of inexpensive fresh produce and an opportunity to get in touch with their rural roots. This fact helps preserve small farms and sustain rural communities. Reducing the distance food travels (food miles) cuts down on associated fossil fuel consumption, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. Local food is more nutritious, fresher, and less processed. It give an ability to talk with producers when purchasing food allows people to ask questions. Opportunities for new innovation in direct selling in India may be E-Retailing, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and U-Pick/Pick-Your-Own/Cut or Choose-Your-Own farm operation.

Keywords: Local food, Agriculture, Digital Revolution-Marketing, Fruits, Internet selling, Selling, Vegetables,

Introduction

The farm-to-buffet movement has arisen more or less concurrently with changes in attitudes about food safety, food freshness, food seasonality, and small-farm economics. What does it mean to eat locally? Although perceptions of what makes up “local food” differ by region (due in large part to varying climates, soil types, and populations), most researchers accept

that eating locally means minimizing the distance between production and consumption, especially in relation to the modern mainstream food system. There are two primary forms of “local” when it comes to food: direct-to-consumer (farmer to you) and Direct-to-retail/foodservice (farmer to restaurants, hospitals, schools, and organizations). Direct farm selling provides a link between urban consumers and rural food producers that can be valuable in developing sustainable communities. Farmers, extension workers, and government officials look to direct selling as a means of identifying alternative income sources, preserving small farms, strengthening economic and social ties between farms and urban residents.

As Per Farmers Perspective

Direct sales to consumers can benefit small farms and rural communities by channelling a larger share of urban residents’ spending on food and recreation back to the communities where food is grown. Most food moves from the farm gate to the consumer through a highly efficient food marketing system that takes advantage of scale economies and specialization to keep processing and distribution costs low. Selling directly to consumers seems to be gaining popularity among farm producers. Prices received for produce sold directly to consumers can be substantially higher than typical wholesale prices. Small farms also often turn to direct sales because they may be snubbed by wholesalers who deal only with large volume producers. For larger farms, direct selling is an important sideline operation or a means products that do not meet the quality or size required by wholesalers. The outward spread of suburbs and residential development of formerly rural farming communities has spurred direct marketing by reducing the physical distance between farms and consumers. As suburbs grow, residential and commercial development often results in the break-up of larger farms into smaller pieces, and more exurban commuters’ start up part-time hobby farms.

Benefits to Farmers/Rural Community

Direct selling can have positive economic and social impacts on farmers and rural and communities. The clearest Impact is the direct flow of income from consumers to farms. By selling directly to consumers, farmers retain the value added to their products through variation and marketing activities that are usually by urban-based wholesale and retail establishments. A larger share of the consumer’s retail food revenue returns to the rural communities where food is grown.

As Per Consumers/Society

Direct purchases from farmers provide city residents with a source of inexpensive fresh produce and an opportunity to get in touch with their rural roots.

Perspective

Local Produces VS. Locality Produces

The terms sound similar, but local produces is the better choice if attempting to purchase and consume goods in or near your geographic location. Locality produces have a brand associated with one locality/region, but often source out nationally and/or internationally.

Why Should People Buy Locally?

Freshness, support to the local economy and knowing where the products came from are the three reasons why people prefer to buy agricultural produce locally. Other reasons for purchase locally grown produces include: higher/better quality, fresher products, and positive relationships with producers, and opportunity to purchase unique/ special products.

Benefits to Consumers/Society

Economic

Did you know that when farmers sell directly to you, they retain a greater portion of the value added costs typically captured by large firms (“middlemen”) further down the supply chain? This minor fact helps preserve small farms and sustain rural communities. When restaurants, hospitals, and other entities source and advertise local foods, this is a proven successful strategy to attract employees and patients.

Environmental

Eating locally helps preserve local and small scale farmland. Supporting local food helps preserve cultivar genetic diversity. Farmers who engage in direct selling are more likely to use environmentally friendly production practices. Reducing the distance food travels (food miles) cuts down on associated fossil fuel consumption, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Mental and Physical

Local food systems are linked to reduced food safety risks through production decentralization. Eating locally is correlated with improved nutrition, increased likelihood of making healthier food choices, obesity prevention, and reduced risk of diet-related chronic disease. This is mainly because the food is more nutritious, fresher, and less processed.

Social

One of the biggest benefits of supporting local is that you gain insight into your food's story through talking with the farmers who grew made it. The ability to talk with producers when purchasing food allows you to ask questions about pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones, animal treatment, fertilizers, and any other queries you may have about how your food was produced. Getting to know your local producers gives you a stronger sense of place, relationships, trust, and pride within your community.

Opportunities For Innovations In India

E-Retailing

E-retailing is a practice of selling produces on the internet. The current environment in India has the potential to enhance the growth of the online retail in India. Increase in the number of Internet users and online buyers, Smart phone revolution and Mobile Internet, Increase in transaction by Debit cards, Credit cards, Net and mobile banking, Rising disposable income and rapid urbanization, IT hub, Convenience Factor, Payment Mode, Product Comparison, Cost and Time Saving are some of the key factors that can contribute to the growth of online retail in India. Convenient allowing consumers to shop from the comfort of their homes at any time of the day.



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) has appear as a new form of direct selling. CSA usually involves a cooperative arrangement in which consumers pay nearby growers a fixed amount of money at the beginning of the growing season and over the course of the season receive a bag each week containing whatever produce is being harvested at that time. In some CSA arrangements, customers pick up their

produce at the farm, while in others a central distribution point is established in town. It may reduce customer sensitivity to cosmetic defects. It can help build sense of community and farm brand.

U-Pick/Pick-Your-Own/Cut or Choose-Your-Own

U-Pick/Pick-Your-Own/Cut or Choose-Your-Own farm operation is a type of farm gate direct marketing (farm-to-table) strategy where the emphasis is on customers doing the harvesting themselves. A PYO farm might be preferred by people who like to select fresh, high quality produce themselves at lower prices. These operations occur when consumers visit the farm where a product is grown and go to the field to pick, cut or choose their own product. Reduced harvest and handling labor. It gives potential for large transactions and to sell lower-quality produce.



Conclusion

Many growers choose to direct sell their products because it allows for better potential profit margins compared to selling wholesale. Direct farm selling provides a link between urban

consumers and rural food producers that can be valuable in developing sustainable communities. Direct selling can have positive economic and social impacts on farmers and rural and communities. Eating locally is correlated with improved nutrition, increased likelihood of making healthier food choices, obesity prevention, and reduced risk of diet-related chronic disease. There is opportunities for innovation in this area like e-Retailing, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and U-Pick/Pick-Your-Own/Cut or Choose-Your-Own.

