

LOCAL MATTERS

Local Matters offers one-stop shopping for local-food information and planning in the Columbus area. Its three core programs – focusing on children, neighborhoods and markets – were created to support each other and to have a measurable impact on the community.

Local Matters is a not-for-profit organization working to improve the quality of life for children and adults by promoting healthful nutrition, increasing access to fresh, wholesome, local foods and by advocating for more-equitable food policies. Its mission is based on the belief that food connects us to some of the most important issues of our times and that food also gives us a common language through which we can discuss these issues. Its unofficial motto: “Everybody eats!”

Local Matters is a leader in helping to create a new paradigm to address pressing issues like obesity, diabetes, climate change, peak oil and the creation of new jobs through the lens of food. Its strategy combines education, strategic community collaborations and innovations within the current food system in a thoughtful and intentional way.

The core programs build a foundation for a comprehensive solution to these issues:



- The **Local Food to School** program includes the “Food is Elementary” curriculum, a 28-week nutrition education project. Focusing on pre-K-2nd grade, the program reaches over 1,000 children, teachers and parents each week. The curriculum teaches vulnerable children in schools and the CDC-Franklin County Head Start programs about where their food comes from; what healthful, wholesome food is; and how to cook it. It also includes a Nutrition Wellness Education Planning Group facilitated by Local Matters staff and made up of teachers, staff and community members which can support a school wellness policy.
- Local Matters’ **Urban Agriculture** program strives to provide better access to local, healthy food in the community. It does this by assisting the community in efforts to grow food closer to where people live; teaching adults how to prepare it; and adapting the “Food is Elementary” curriculum for them. This program compliments the Local Food to School program by helping to ensure that children in the program have access to eat fresh, healthy food at home and at school.
- The **Farm to Fork** program creates market opportunities for local farmers and improves distribution channels for locally grown food, making it available to all communities on an equal basis by working with its partner, The Greener Grocer. The Greener Grocer buys much of its produce from local farmers and is home for three Veggie Vans – mobile farm markets on wheels. The Veggie Van is one example of how Local Matters both supports local farmers and provides healthful-food access throughout the community. Each Veggie Van is equipped to accept EBT cards (Food Stamps) via wireless credit card machines and offers cooking demonstrations during its neighborhood stops.

Local Matters also publishes an on-line local food guide called **Fresh Connect**. It lists restaurants that buy from local farmers, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) opportunities, retail outlets selling local food, a map of the over 140 community gardens in Columbus and stories about community members who are passionate about creating a local Foodshed.

For more information about Local Matters and how you can be “Localicious,” visit www.local-matters.org or call 614.263.5662.