

Farm to Workplace

 Healthy Local Food
Is Good Business



HEALTH AND WEALTH IN YOUR REGION:

Anchor institutions and regional food procurement

THE ISSUE

Businesses, hospitals, schools and places of worship all serve to anchor towns and cities by driving economic development, creating jobs, and/or facilitating community engagement. While these “anchor institutions” make intentional and targeted investments in community development, they often look beyond their own communities and regions to meet their food procurement needs. But what if they treated food purchases as investments in local and regional businesses, economies, and the environment.

Anchor institutions can increase social and economic impacts in their regions while providing constituents with fresh, nutritious food—the fuel of vibrant communities. Procuring food from regional farms and small processors not only provide constituents with fresh and sustainable food; it leverages institutions’ substantial buying power to improve both the viability of family farms and the resiliency of rural economies.

Procuring food locally is more than an investment in the land and community—it is an upgrade in food service. Produce at the peak of ripeness and flavor satisfies customers’ tastes while demonstrating the institution’s transparency, community connections, and dedication to serving constituents. Good food—food that is healthy, green, and affordable—can distinguish anchor institutions as leaders in food service quality, wellness, community development and revitalization.

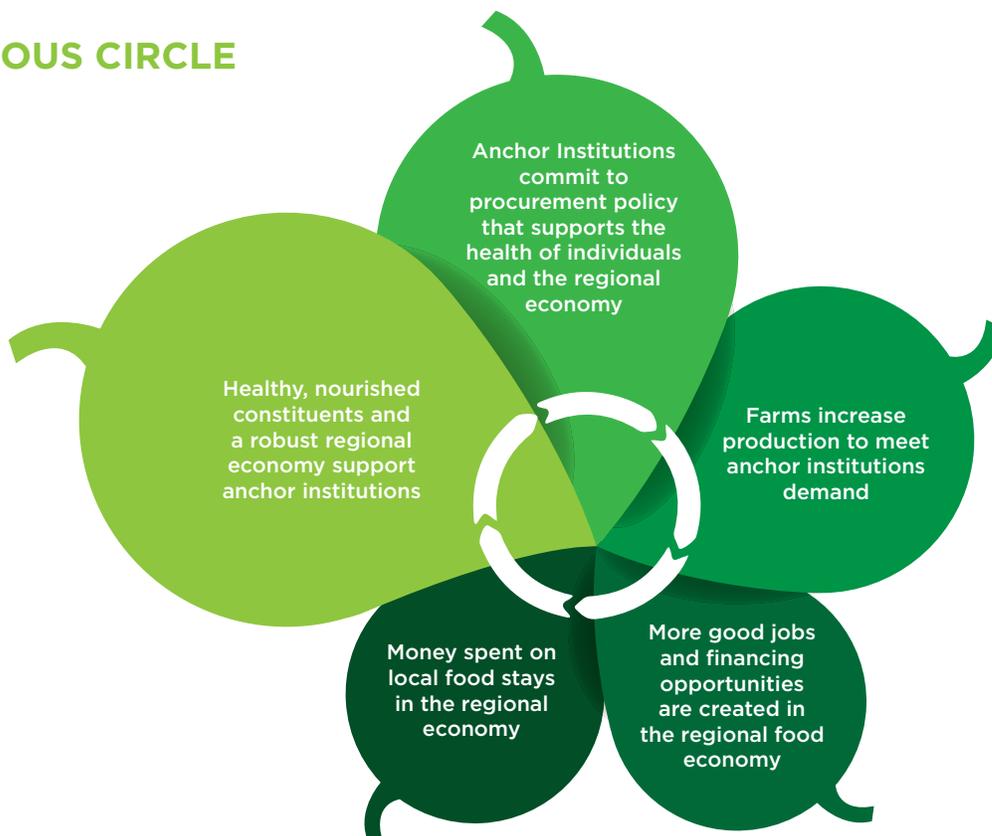
VIRTUOUS CIRCLE

How Institutional Procurement Can Drive Regional Economies

When anchor institutions actively decide to drive regional economic development, they do more than redirect their spending: they invest in the people and infrastructure that make the institution itself stronger and more influential.

The graphic below shows the virtuous circle of economic development and rural wealth creation as a result of implementing regional food procurement policy changes.

THE VIRTUOUS CIRCLE





BRINGS FRESH FOOD TO YOUR SETTING

Fruits and vegetables are healthy and taste great. Grocery stores provide one option for purchasing produce, however many of us are looking for ways to buy locally grown produce in other convenient settings. The Pee Dee FoodHub can help anyone who would like to obtain locally grown fruits and vegetables, eggs, and specialty foods. Produce will be delivered to their worksite, place of worship, neighborhood or any gathering place through partnership with various local growers.

A diet high in fat and cholesterol increases the risk for coronary heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. In 2009, approximately four out of five adults in South Carolina, 82.6 percent, did not eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables, which is higher than the nationwide prevalence rate of 76.6 percent.

Health, taste and variety—Eating fruits and vegetables is one of the most positive health habits adults and children can have. Unfortunately, less than one in five South Carolinians eat five or more servings a day of fruits and vegetables. People who eat more fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet can reduce the risk of

- chronic diseases
- stroke
- type 2 diabetes
- some forms of cancer
- heart disease
- obesity

Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables provides a wide range of nutrients and fiber. Eating plenty of produce is a great way to eat smart while adding color, taste and variety to our diets.

Healthy environment- The average meal in the United States travels 1,300 miles before reaching your plate. A head of lettuce traveling from California to South Carolina uses 36 times more fossil fuel energy in transport than it provides in food energy.

Supporting local growers helps:

- reduce energy consumption
- improve the environment
- sustainable farms conserve soil
- keep water sources in our communities clean
- provide a habitat for wildlife

Keeping farmers on the land also preserves open space and helps our rural communities remain vibrant places to live.

Healthy economy- It has been estimated that every \$1 spent on locally produced foods returns (or circulates) \$3-\$7 within the community. Consumers buy produce (and other goods) from local farmers, who buy farm supplies from local businesses. Those businesses help to sustain our communities by employing individuals and in turn their income is reinvested in the local communities. This helps encourage a thriving community and increases economic health. Also, when farmers have direct access to consumers, they are able to keep more of each dollar earned from their sales because the middle-man is eliminated. This increases profits to producers and keeps their farms competitive with the traditional retail chain stores. Purchasing local produce not only improves the local economy, it also helps consumers stretch their food dollars and get high quality fruits and vegetables.

WHY CHOOSE GOOD FOOD?

HEALTH

More than one-third of U.S. adults are obese and diet-related conditions are among the leading causes of preventable death in the United States. Workplaces can model healthy behavior by replacing high-fat, high-sodium processed foods with fresh, minimally processed foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and sustainably raised meats, eggs and poultry.

SAFETY

Shortening the supply chain—the number of steps between the producer and the consumer—improves the likelihood a food-borne illness. Unlike “conventional” industrial foods, local source-identified foods can be easily traced back to the farmer or producer who produced it.

STRONGER LOCAL ECONOMY

Anchor institutions are economic engines in communities. By purchasing food locally, anchor institutions multiply their impact on the local economy, supporting agriculture and small food processors, while retaining money and creating sustainable jobs in the region.

BETTER WORK ENVIRONMENT

Employees work long hours and need good food at work and at home to stay healthy and care for others. Farm share programs delivered to the workplace make it easier for staff to bring fresh, healthy food home. Combined with healthier choices, staff can be healthier and happier with good food at home and at work.

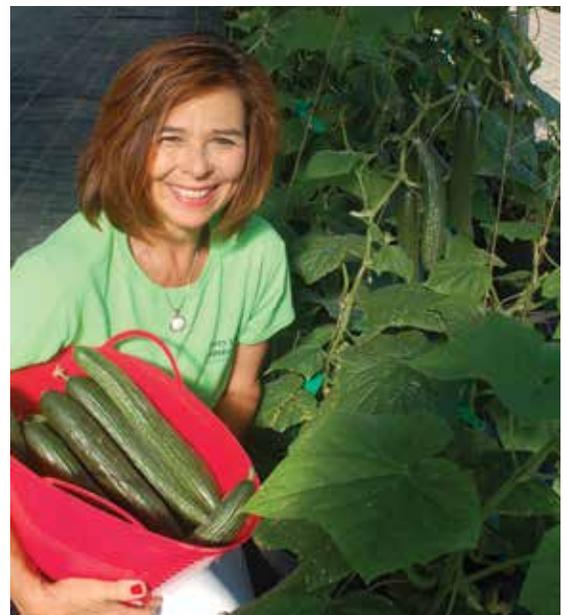


Carolina Farm Share operates as a unique CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) which is a production and marketing model whereby consumers buy shares of a farm's harvest in advance. Carolina Farm Share is offered through the Pee Dee FoodHub. Consumers become Carolina

Farm Share members by paying an agreed amount at the beginning of the growing season, either in one lump sum or in installments. The cost of the 6 month farm share is to be shared by a representative of the Pee Dee FoodHub. By paying at the beginning of the season, Carolina Farm Share members share in the risk of production and assures the farmer that his product is purchased within the community. This model allows the farmer to concentrate on good land stewardship and growing high quality food while the Pee Dee FoodHub handles the marketing, aggregation, sales and delivery.

As a Carolina Farm Share member you will receive a variety of freshly picked vegetables and fruits (sometimes organic), eggs, and other local specialty products bi-weekly over a six-month period. The Pee Dee FoodHub is offering a spring and fall share. Members will eat healthy, sustainably produced food and have the satisfaction of knowing where it came from and how it was grown. Carolina Farm Share members will also have access to social and educational activities, recipes and much more to further strengthen their connection to the land and with the farmers who feed them.

For more information contact:



Courtesy South Carolina Living Magazine

Resources

Center for a Livable Future of Johns Hopkins University. Maryland Food System Map. www.mdfoodsystemrnap.org

The Democracy Collaborative, democracycollaborative.org

Institute for a Competitive Inner City. "What Works for Cities: Anchor Institutions and Food Systems: A Recipe for Economic Growth" and "Anchor Institutions and the Food Cluster in Baltimore." www.icic.org/research-and-analysis/research-library

Real Food Challenge. "Real Food Calculator." calculator.realfoodchallenge.org

SPUR. "Locally Nourished: How a Stronger Regional Food System Improves the Bay Area (2013)."

USDA. Farm to School Local Procurement Resource Round-up. www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/procuring-local-foods

<https://growingsmallfarms.ces.ncsu.edu/growingsmallfarms-csaguide/>

<http://eatsmartmovemore.org/>

<http://www.scdhec.gov/>