

Remember the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repair

I love this time of year with the beauty of the red, orange and yellow foliage of autumn; however, I also have a feeling of sadness as we prepare for the colder climate ahead.

By November 1st the local outdoor farmer's markets close down, and I miss my weekly visits to buy their products.

In the United States, foods travel an average of 1,300 miles from the field to the table, using a large amount of fuel during their transport. Purchasing locally cuts down on the distance food travels, thus reducing the consumption of oil and carbon emissions nationwide.

The benefits of buying organic are obvious (no pesticides or herbicides). When consciously

buying locally, you ensure that more of your money spent on food goes to the farmer. Buying local also keeps your dollars circulating in your own community. Farmers Markets have experienced a growth over the years and are continuing to increase. I recently read that the organic food industry has risen from sales of \$1 billion in 2001, to \$24 billion in 2018.

Why not take the time to set new, environmentally friendly, traditions as we celebrate Thanksgiving this month? Check with the farms in your area for your traditional turkey. Ask if any hormones or antibiotics have been pumped in the bird. Also, ask if it's range free, which means the turkey is allowed to go outdoors and see the light of day. If the farm passes all these tests, then order a fresh turkey to be picked up, usually the day before Thanksgiving. If this is not an option, try finding an all-natural turkey at a local market. The Lexington Co-op on Elmwood Ave in Buffalo usually stocks such turkeys. Remember to place your turkey order well ahead of time to ensure you have one to cook.

To liven up your Thanksgiving dinner, add a few decorative touches on the table. Purchase a tablecloth of a seasonal color, which you can wash and reuse for years to come. Use cloth napkins, silverware and glasses - all of which can be washed, thus reducing waste in landfills.

Fresh local vegetables are always the best so look for seasonal veggies such as butternut squash, peas, green onions, potatoes and sweet potatoes. If you are too overwhelmed to bake, go to an organic bakery and order fresh pies.

Remember that going green on Thanksgiving doesn't have to be complicated. Stick to the dinner basics and get the children to help decorate. From

cooking an organic menu to making your own decorations, Thanksgiving is an opportunity to get the whole family involved in a green lifestyle.

An organic Thanksgiving feast is not only healthy and tasty, but can also help the environment. Free-range turkey, fresh vegetables from local farmers, and treats from the organic bakery are just a few choices for your healthy cornucopia of food this year.

Make a commitment to recycle. Make sure you are properly recycling all the paper and plastic used at your Thanksgiving festivities. Decorating your living and dining space with soy candles is an eco-friendly option, and you'll find plenty of fragrant pillar or floating candles to

complement your table.

Teach your children to carry the work of conservation forward; the next generation must absorb

its lessons. Encourage them to read on the subject, and persuade their teachers to include ecological studies in their curricula. Above all, show them by example how to reuse, recycle, avoid waste, and care.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Don't forget - "Together we can make a difference!"

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