



## Senior Locavore

A locavore is someone committed to eating locally grown, seasonal foods. The efforts of locavores can be important—and delicious—steps toward healthful eating, helping the environment, and supporting local farmers. Ready to try it out?

### Steps

1. Explore the benefits and challenges of going local
2. Find your local food sources
3. Cook a simple dish showcasing local ingredients
4. Make a recipe with local ingredients
5. Try a local cooking challenge

### Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to prepare a meal of seasonal and locally grown dishes.

### SIDEBAR

"Shipping is a terrible thing to do to vegetables. They probably get jetlagged, just like people."

—Elizabeth Berry, author, farmer, and gardener

Every step has three choices. Do ONE choice to complete each step. Inspired? Do more!

### Step 1 Explore the benefits and challenges of going local

In this badge, your challenge is to cook with local foods. In the industrial food chain, the typical food travels 1,500 miles before being eaten. In a local food chain, the number of miles between where food is grown and where it's eaten ("food miles") is much lower. But how far can a food travel and still be "local"?

In this step, find out how others define local—and why going local might be important to them. After your interview, trade informed ideas with your Senior friends about the benefits and challenges of being a locavore. End the step by expressing your opinion about what's local and why it matters—perhaps in an article, collage, or short presentation.

### CHOICES — DO ONE:

**Interview someone who cooks.** This might be an amateur or professional chef, a restaurant worker, or a neighbor who loves to cook. How do they address the local question in their kitchens?



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OR

**Interview someone in the food delivery chain.** It could be a farmer, transportation worker, or grocery store manager. How far does the farmer's food travel to reach a table? Where does the grocery store source its produce?

OR

**Canvas your friends and family.** Make a survey of at least five questions to give in person or online (there are many free and simple survey websites). You might ask: "Where have you heard the word locavore, and what does it mean to you?", "Do you get any produce or meat from a local farm?", "Have you ever tried to buy local—how easy or hard was it?"

### SIDEBAR

#### More to Explore

**Blind Taste Test!** Choose three fruits or vegetables, such as tomatoes, carrots, strawberries, or apples, and compare the taste of a locally grown version and one from farther away. Each sample should be at the same state of ripeness. Blindfold your friend, give her the samples, and ask her to describe the texture and taste of each. Then switch roles. Which do you think tasted best?

What Is Local?

How consumers define a "local" product:

Within 100 miles of my home: 50%

Within my state: 37%

Within my region (for example, New England): 4%

In the USA: 4%

—Source: The Hartman Group survey

#### Step 2 Find your local food sources

You may be able to find local foods at your grocery store, health food store, or farmers' market. Or you might be close to a farm or live in a community with the option to invest in a box of seasonal farm foods every month. Explore what the local options are in your area.

CHOICES — DO ONE:

**Create a food calendar showing when 10 foods are in season.** It could be as simple as a list of months and food that grows in your area at that time, or you could decorate a monthly calendar with drawings. Find local sources for the foods you choose and include them on your calendar. OR Draw your food-radius map. Get a map of your area, and draw a circle that will encompass the radius you consider local, be it 5 or 100 miles. Now find 10 sources (farms, orchards, dairies, ranches) in your radius, and label them on your map.

OR

**Draw your food-radius map.** Get a map of your area, and draw a circle that will encompass the radius you consider local, be it 5 or 100 miles. Now find 10 sources (farms, orchards, dairies, ranches) in your radius, and label them on your map.

OR

**Choose 10 foods in your house and find local equivalents.** Select 10 foods you buy regularly—maybe eggs, cheese, lettuce, or fruit. Does your family purchase them from local sources? If not, make a list of places to get these foods or alternatives from local sources.

### Step 3 Cook a simple dish showcasing local ingredients

Locavores often praise the fresh flavors of local ingredients— when a tomato sauce really tastes like tomatoes should, or an apple tart radiates the essence of apple. Try a recipe in one of these categories to showcase local ingredients.

CHOICES — DO ONE:

**Make two different dishes that showcase the same ingredient.** For example, you could make a carrot coleslaw and carrot juice, strawberry soup and a strawberry smoothie, a raspberry coulis (a French word for sauce!) and a raspberry tart, or tomato sauce and tomato salsa.

OR

**Create two salads with at least three ingredients each.** What about a kale, carrot, and beet coleslaw (with a vinaigrette from local grapes!) and a mixed-lettuces salad? Or a colorful fruit salad and a panzanella (Italian bread salad) with local bread, tomatoes, and basil could be fun. Herbs count as ingredients!



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OR

Create a simple, local-ingredients meal. This could be a pasta primavera with different local veggies, a chicken stew with local chicken and herbs, or a simple meat loaf with local ground meat and mashed potatoes.

For More FUN: Make a dessert to go with it—perhaps a local pear tart or baked apple!

TIP: During this step, notice the look, smells, and flavors of your ingredients. What do you like about them? How does your dish taste

### SIDEBAR

#### More to Explore Locavore Badge Challenge.

There's nothing more local than growing food yourself. Talk to a community gardener, knowledgeable friend, or neighbor about what you might grow and how to grow it. Then use your bounty in one or all of the dishes you cook to earn this badge. Here are a few ideas!

- Herbs, such as chives, mint, or oregano. All can be grown indoors or out, in gardens or in small pots.
- Tomatoes, which can be grown outdoors—or indoors with enough sunlight.
- Strawberries in a pot placed on a patio, balcony, or window ledge

### SIDEBAR

#### Green Bean Salad

Serves 4

Ingredients:

$\frac{3}{4}$  pound fresh green beans, tips trimmed

1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved

3 cloves garlic, smashed and chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup basil leaves, sliced thin

Juice and zest of 1 lemon

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil

Black pepper

Salt

Directions:

1. In a steamer, steam the green beans until al dente or just about done. (Probably about 3 minutes.)

2. While the beans are cooking, combine all other ingredients except salt in a large bowl and mix well.
3. When the beans are finished cooking, place the hot green beans in the large bowl on top of the mixture. Do not stir. Cover and let sit for 5 minutes. This will cook or warm the other items and the green beans will finish cooking at the same time.
4. After 5 minutes, add salt and gently stir the mixture. Serve warm or let stand and serve room temperature.

## Step 4 Make a recipe with local ingredients

Make something that's local in two ways: It's both a personal, community, or family recipe, and it's sourced with local ingredients. (Use as many local ingredients as you can; it's possible you won't be able to find every single ingredient where you live.) Find your recipe in one of these ways.

CHOICES — DO ONE:

**Talk to a chef who specializes in locally grown foods.** Check out restaurants, cafés, or delis in your area that serve locally grown dishes. Ask one of the chefs to share a recipe. (Learning where they source it would be useful, as well. Some chefs include this information on their menu or website.)

OR

**Make a recipe local.** Pick your favorite recipe from a friend or family member. If you love pepperoni pizza, maybe you can find local cheese, pepperoni, and tomatoes. If your grandmother has a fantastic recipe for moussaka, use local eggplants, tomatoes, and ground meat.

OR

**Talk to someone who knows local foods.** You might ask a community gardener, farmer, or staff of a store that stocks local foods. The people who know the ingredients best often have great recipes to recommend.

## SIDEBAR

### Strawberry Basil Tart

Serves 10

Ingredients:

For crust (or use a pre-made pie crust):

1½ cups all-purpose flour  
2 tablespoons sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
1¼ sticks unsalted butter, chilled and cubed  
1 egg yolk  
3–6 tablespoons ice water

For filling:

2 lbs. strawberries, de-stemmed and cut in half  
½ cup sugar  
1 teaspoon cornstarch  
¼ cup fresh-squeezed orange juice and zest of 1 orange  
¼ cup fresh basil leaves, sliced thin, for garnish

Directions:

1. Mix together flour, sugar, and salt in a large bowl until well combined.
2. Using your hands, add butter and crumble into the flour (you could also use a food processor) until the crust mixture resembles a coarse meal. Add the egg yolk and the ice water, and mix together gently until dough is moist.
3. Form dough into a flat disc, wrap in plastic, and chill for at least 1 hour.
4. Mix together strawberries, sugar, cornstarch, orange juice, and zest. Let soak for at least 1 hour.
5. Roll out dough on a piece of floured parchment paper until it forms a large circle, about 16 inches in diameter.
6. Place rolled dough (still on parchment paper) on a large, thick cookie sheet with sides. Strain berries and place them in a big pile in the center of the dough.
7. Bake (on parchment paper) in a preheated 375°F oven for about 40 minutes, or until crust is golden brown and crispy.
8. Sprinkle tart with the basil garnish, if desired.

## Step 5 Try a local cooking challenge!

Put your growing knowledge of local foods to the test in one of the following ways.

Whichever choice you do, invite Girl Scout friends, family, and maybe even your growing network of local food producers to enjoy your delicious creations with you—and give you tips for what to try next.



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CHOICES — DO ONE:

**Prepare a three-course meal.** Make an appetizer or salad, entrée, and dessert using locally grown food.

For More FUN: Have an “eat local” three-course potluck, where Senior friends each bring their locally sourced dishes to share.

OR

**Cook a dish starring something from scratch.** Try making pasta or bread with local eggs and flour, or yogurt, cheese, or ice cream with local dairy. Then create a dish around that ingredient. For instance, pasta from scratch with local tomato sauce, or homemade bread with local jam.

OR

Pretend you’re a Girl Scout from 1920. Find out what foods can be canned, dehydrated, or repurposed. This way, you can keep it local all year, even in the dead of winter. Then try pickling, making jams or jellies, drying fruit, or making applesauce and apple butter. To learn about safe preserving techniques, go to the National Center for Home Food Preservation. (Girls canned to earn their Canner badge in 1920 and their Food Raiser badge in 1963.)

### SIDEBAR

#### **Vegetable Marinara**

Makes approximately 5 cups

Ingredients:

9 medium tomatoes, chopped

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 small yellow onion, chopped fine

1 carrot, chopped fine

1 red pepper, de-seeded, de-stemmed, and chopped fine

1 green pepper, de-seeded, de-stemmed, and chopped fine

1 teaspoon chili flakes

1 teaspoon dried oregano

2 tablespoons salt

1 tablespoon black pepper

¼ cup broccoli, chopped

¼ cup zucchini, chopped



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¼ cup mushrooms, chopped  
1 cup fresh oregano, chopped  
½ cup fresh basil, chopped  
½ cup fresh parsley, chopped  
½ cup fresh oregano, chopped (extra for garnish)

### Directions:

1. Place all ingredients except ½ cup oregano in a large pot and bring to a boil. Then turn down to a low simmer for about 45 minutes, stirring regularly until all tomatoes are broken down.
2. With a handheld food processor, blend all ingredients in the pot until totally smooth and all ingredients are well blended. If you don't have a handheld processor or mixer, put cups of sauce into a blender and blend in batches.
3. Cook blended sauce on low for another 10 minutes, adding more salt to taste.
4. Add fresh oregano. Boil sauce on a low boil uncovered for another 10-20 minutes, or until desired thickness. Add remaining chopped oregano for garnish.
5. Serve over hot cooked pasta.

For More FUN: Make meatballs!

### SIDEBAR

#### **Pumpkin Walnut Bread**

Makes 1 loaf

### Ingredients:

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour  
¾ teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon ground allspice  
¼ teaspoon ground cloves  
¼ teaspoon ground ginger OR 1 ¼ teaspoons pumpkin-pie spice  
¼ teaspoon salt  
2 eggs, at room temperature  
1 ⅓ cup water  
1 ½ cups sugar  
1 cup canned pumpkin puree  
½ cup vegetable oil  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 cup chopped walnuts

Directions:

1. Position an oven rack in the center of the oven, and preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs and water.
3. Butter a loaf pan. If using a muffin tin, butter or spray cups with nonstick cooking spray, or use paper muffin liners.
4. In a large bowl, mix together flour, baking soda, spices, and salt.
5. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs and water.
6. Add the sugar and blend well.
7. Add the pumpkin puree, vegetable oil, and vanilla. Blend well.
8. Add pumpkin mixture to dry ingredients and fold until smooth. Add walnuts and fold until well mixed.
9. Scrape into a loaf pan or muffin tins and smooth out the top.
10. Bake for 95 minutes, until bread is firm to the touch and a toothpick comes out clean. Allow to cool completely before cutting.

## SIDEBAR

### Local Salad with Fruit & Nuts

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 4 cups spinach\*
- 1 cup fresh strawberries, de-stemmed and sliced thin\*
- ¼ cup red onions, sliced thin
- ½ cup almonds, sliced or chopped\*
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup white wine, rice, or champagne vinegar
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper

Directions:

Toss together spinach, strawberries, onions, and nuts.

In a separate bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar, juice, zest, salt, and pepper.

Pour over the spinach mixture, toss, and serve.

\* This recipe can be altered however you'd like! You could substitute a local lettuce for spinach, use a different nut, or swap your favorite apple for strawberries.

## SIDEBAR

### Colorful Middle Eastern Salad

This is a lovely, fresh, and light salad that's great with falafel and pita, chicken, beef, or veggie kabobs—even with a hamburger. (You could add some Middle Eastern spices to the hamburger meat mixture—like cumin, nutmeg, allspice, cinnamon, anise, or cardamom—for a perfect pairing.)

4 cucumbers, peeled, halved, and chopped, with seeds scooped out

1 red bell pepper, de-seeded, de-stemmed, and chopped

1 red onion, chopped

1 bunch fresh parsley, chopped fine

Juice of 1 lemon

2 teaspoons salt

#### Directions:

1. Mix all ingredients together gently.
2. Serve!

**Add the Badge to Your Journeys** Leadership Journeys invite you to grow the network of people you know in your community. Use your locavore skills to bring these people together to enjoy some truly happy meals—while trading ideas about how you can help each other and the world.

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Preserving local foods to give as gifts
- Preparing healthful locavore meals for family and friends
- Creating recipe cards based on local, seasonal food to hand out at a farmers' market

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