

You Can't Spell Sustainability Without Albany
July Topic: Local Foodshed

Anyone who has grown their own tomatoes knows that eating one freshly picked off the vine is a culinary moment to be savored. Same goes for other fruits and veggies. Growing your own, and/or buying locally grown food, in addition to being the most delicious, also has the environmental benefit of reduced transportation requirements. And in Albany and the surrounding area, we are blessed with wonderful growing weather.

By the time you read this, it might be too late to plant your own tomatoes from seed and have time to watch them grow from seed to fruit-bearing plant. But not to worry – there are many other ways to enjoy fantastic local produce. Perhaps we'll have a long summer, and you could head out right now to buy vegetable starts at a local purveyor such as Flowerland!

Don't have access at home to sunny planting spot? Consider the Ocean View Community Organic Garden, offering garden plots to Albany residents. Space is limited, so call the Recreation & Community Services Department at 510-524-9283 for information.

Once your zucchinis runneth over you might want to visit the local garden swap, held on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7:00 p.m. at the Ohlone Greenway under the BART tracks (northeast corner of Masonic & Marin)-across from the Community Center. Who knows, you might be able to trade them in for some beans or Meyer lemons!

For those whose taste buds long for homegrown organic veggies, but whose thumbs aren't green, here are a few other ways to enjoy the local summer bounty without getting dirt under your finger nails:

- Join a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) service. CSAs are subscriptions to local farms – you can enroll and get a box of local organic produce weekly. Several CSAs serve Albany including [Full Belly Farm](#) and [Eatwell Farm](#), both of which have a weekly pick-up spot in Albany.
- [Albany Farmers' Market](#): Every Wednesday from 3 - 7 p.m. on Solano Avenue at San Pablo Avenue.
- In nearby north Berkeley, there is a new weekly event called [Off the Grid](#), featuring eight to 10 mobile food trucks at the intersection of Shattuck and Rose. Wednesdays from 5 – 9 p.m.

For more information about locally-grown food:

- The local non-profit Sustainable Agriculture Education ([SAGE](#)) has great resources about the local foodshed, agricultural parks, and farmers' markets.
- [Buy Fresh, Buy Local](#) has resources to help you find locally grown food.

Eating locally-grown and organically-farmed fruits, veggies, and meats is a very delicious way to help support the local economy and the environment.

Dan Lieberman's monthly column for Albany Patch is written on behalf of the City of Albany's [Sustainability Committee](#). The column is intended to provide information and resources for local residents and businesses to improve their impacts on the environment in a cost-effective manner.