



NEWS

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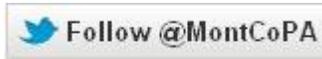
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New Local Food Guide Highlights Farmers' Markets and Farm Stands in Montgomery County

Norristown, PA (April 13, 2016) – The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC), in cooperation with the Penn State Extension and the Montgomery County Farm Bureau, has created a local food guide that lists and maps farmers' markets and farm stands in Montgomery County. These businesses contribute to the local food and farming economy.

Direct from the Farm: A Guide to Buying Local in Montco maps 12 farmers' markets and 59 farm stands in Montgomery County and provides details on the products they offer. The guide was produced as part of Montgomery County's local food initiative, which aims to provide farmers and food producers with the resources they need to better connect with consumers while improving residents' access to a diverse array of the freshest locally produced foods possible. As part this initiative, the public is invited to take part in a survey to share how local foods play a role in their lives. Learn more about the local food initiative, take the survey, and view the guide at www.montcopa.org/EatLocal.

"With the spring season upon us, it's the perfect time to look to our farmers and enjoy local food products. Montgomery County has a wealth of good food and farming and eating locally benefits our economy," said Jody L. Holton, AICP, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

Local food matters in Montgomery County, and there is much interest in supporting local growers, eating sustainably, and providing a healthy source of food for everyone, especially children. With approximately 600 farms and more than 30,000 acres of farmland – nearly 10 percent of the county's entire land area – farms and farming have a lot to contribute to the local population. Many of these farms produce meat, dairy, produce, and grains that contribute to a healthy diet while supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs.

Montgomery County has a rich history of farming and supports farms and farming through the Montgomery County Agricultural Land Preservation Program. This program purchases agricultural easements from productive farms in Montgomery County. When the easement is purchased, the farm owner keeps the land but no longer has the right to build non-agricultural buildings. The land must remain in farming in perpetuity. Currently, there are 154 farms (9,089 acres) preserved in Montgomery County under the Agricultural Land Preservation Program. For more on the program, please visit www.montcopa.org/FarmlandProgram.

For more information, please contact Anne Leavitt-Gruberger, MCPC Assistant Section Chief, at 610-278-3727 or via email at aleavitt@montcopa.org.