



ATTRA
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

ATTRA is a program of the National Center for Appropriate Technology



Environmental benefits of local food systems

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Ag Environmental Impacts

- Pollution from heavy use of ag inputs
 - Decreased soil fertility
 - Water pollution: fish kills, eutrophication, dead zones, polluted drinking water
- Reduction of pollinators
- Lost biodiversity
- Soil loss/erosion
- CAFO waste pollution into air, water, and land
- Antibiotic overuse leading to antibiotic resistance



What is Local Food?

- Literally = food produced relatively close to where it is sold
- Not a reliable indicator of sustainability, nor are food miles
- Good food system:
 - Source/farm identified
 - Fresh and delicious
 - Healthy, ethical, environmentally & socially responsible
 - Pasture-raised animals for eggs and meats
 - Sustainable and organic
 - Regenerative and beyond organic
- Local food sales estimated to be \$20 billion in 2019





PIG GESTATION CRATES



Putting the "Factory" in Factory
Farming since 1969



Pollution: water & air quality





**Sustainable
grazing:
increases soil
health & cycling
nutrients, builds
soil organic matter
& soil function,
decreases soil
erosion & nutrient
loss into streams**

**Increasing soil
fertility &
decreasing
pollution**



**More ethical,
producing a
healthier
product**



**The
Guardian**





Diversified cropping,
IPM, increasing
biodiversity, habitat
for pollinators

Monoculture, high
use of chemical
inputs, lack of
biodiversity and
habitat for pollinators



Integrated Pest Management



Support for Pollinators





Soil Conservation vs. Soil Erosion

Healthy Soil Ecosystems



Local Food Systems Supporting Rural Communities



Housing Developments and Urban Sprawl

Local Good Food Systems' Environmental Benefits

- Carbon sequestration in soils
- Increasing soil health & fertility
- Decreased use of agricultural inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides)
- Decreased pollution: soil & input run-off, eutrophication, dead zones
- Improving water quality & conservation
- Promoting biodiversity & habitat for native pollinators
- Keeping local land in agriculture vs. development





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