

Tips for

SUSTAINABLE EATING

The food we eat not only affects our bodies, it impacts the planet as well. In the United States, food typically travels around 1,500 miles from where it was farmed to your plate. This has big implications for the local economy, our resources, and the size of our carbon footprint.

Being mindful about how and where food is grown, processed, transported, consumed, and disposed of can lead to making more sustainable choices, but it can also be a lot to digest (pun intended!) Use these simple guidelines to eat more sustainably:



BUY LOCAL

Choosing locally-produced food reduces impacts to the environment associated with transporting food from far away. And buying local improves Austin's economy by supporting local farmers, ranchers, and other food producers. Want to support local farms by buying their produce? Consider joining a CSA! (That's Community Supported Agriculture.)



EAT MORE WHOLE FOODS

Processed foods often require more energy to make, create more packaging waste, and contain preservatives, colorings, and artificial flavorings that our bodies don't need. Shop the perimeter at the grocery store for produce, meats, and dairy, and skip the center aisles filled with processed food. Then, break out your favorite recipes and commit to home cooking.



TRY 'MEATLESS MONDAYS'

Going meatless at least once a week can reduce your risk of chronic, preventable conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and obesity. In addition, prioritizing plant-based foods helps reduce your carbon footprint and saves precious resources like fossil fuels and fresh water.

It takes approximately 1,850 gallons of water to produce a pound of beef and only 39 gallons of water to produce a pound of vegetables.



TAP INTO YOUR TAP

Most bottled water is just filtered tap water, and it costs a lot to ship it around the country — not to mention all that wasted packaging. Don't pay more for what you can easily do at home. Look into purchasing a filter for your faucet or water pitcher and invest in a reusable bottle to save hundreds of dollars per year!



SELECT SMART SEAFOOD

Humans take half a billion fish out of the ocean each day. Unsustainable fishing practices and high levels of mercury and other heavy metals in the fish we eat are hurting our oceans and our health. When buying fish, ask where it comes from and how it's caught or farmed, or download the free Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch app for guidance. As a rule, eat smaller fish.



WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Austinites waste 200 million pounds of food each year! Food that ends up in landfills releases methane — a greenhouse gas that is more destructive than carbon dioxide. Before you go out to grab a bite, shop the fridge to eat what you already have at home. You can also freeze, can or dehydrate surplus food to avoid spoilage.

Try backyard composting or chicken keeping instead of tossing fruits and veggies in the trash. The City of Austin offers a \$75 rebate on a home composting system or chicken coop to help reduce your food waste.

OFFICE OF
SUSTAINABILITY

CITY OF AUSTIN