



# A “Good Food” Checklist for Families

Nourishing Eaters and the Earth, One Bite at a Time!

By Angie Tagtore, Food & Society Policy Fellow, Environmental Nutrition Solutions

**O**ur food choices directly influence our family’s health and profoundly influence the health of the planet. It starts with soil, the earth’s life-support system. Science proves that healthy soil grows healthy food. Science also proves that eating healthy food nourishes healthy people and healthy people live in healthy communities. Therefore, to keep our families healthy and communities vibrant, we must have “good food.” “Good food” is healthy, green, fair, accessible and supports optimal health of all eaters, now and in the future.

Using this checklist, have each family member select a “Good Food” activity to accomplish in the next month and grow from there. Consider establishing a family pledge to eat food that meets “Good Food” criteria. Keep track of your progress and celebrate your successes. While nourishing the eaters in your family, you too can nourish the earth, one bite at a time!

## At Home We Will...

- Learn more about the health, social, economic and environmental benefits of eating fresh, local, and seasonal foods
- Buy fresh, local food directly from farmers markets, farms, road stands and U-pick farms - [www.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets](http://www.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets)
- Shop at a local food co-op - [www.coopdirectory.org](http://www.coopdirectory.org)
- Prepare meals rich in fresh, locally-grown and seasonal foods - [www.eatwellguide.org](http://www.eatwellguide.org)

- Purchase a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) share - [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)
- Select more locally-grown fruits and vegetables and less red meat to conserve natural resources and energy- [www.EatingGreen.org](http://www.EatingGreen.org)
- Eat fresh, whole foods and minimally-processed foods that have fewer than five ingredients - [www.med.umich.edu/umim/clinical/pyramid/index.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/umim/clinical/pyramid/index.htm)
- Choose foods that have not been sprayed with pesticides, herbicides or fungicides - [www.foodnews.org](http://www.foodnews.org)
- Select meat and dairy products from animals that have been humanely-raised on pasture and fed a grass diet and not treated with antibiotics or hormones - [www.ucsusa.org](http://www.ucsusa.org) and [www.americangrassfed.org](http://www.americangrassfed.org)
- Purchase fish and seafood that were caught or farmed in ways that preserve the environment - [www.mbayaq.org](http://www.mbayaq.org)
- Seek food from farmers and processors who do not exploit anyone or anything and whose workers are paid a fair wage - [www.slowfoodusa.org](http://www.slowfoodusa.org) and [foodjustice.org](http://foodjustice.org)
- Select fair-trade products such as coffee, tea and chocolate - [www.fairtradefederation.org](http://www.fairtradefederation.org)
- Support local food processors including meat lockers and canning facilities
- Start a container or patio garden
- Maintain a kitchen or backyard garden - [www.kitchengardeners.org](http://www.kitchengardeners.org)
- Plant native fruit trees in the yard
- Work with neighbors to establish a Victory Garden - <http://groups.ucanr.org/victorygrower> and [www.pbs.org/wgbh/victorygarden](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/victorygarden)
- Complete a Master Gardener course - [www.ahs.org/master\\_gardeners](http://www.ahs.org/master_gardeners)
- Grow food for a CSA farm or a farmers market
- Establish an organic family farm - <http://attra.ncat.org/organic.html> and [www.agmrc.org/agmrc/informationtoolkit/](http://www.agmrc.org/agmrc/informationtoolkit/)
- Share homegrown food and recipes with others - [www.macsac.org/atoz.html](http://www.macsac.org/atoz.html)
- Take a food preservation course and learn ways to store the season’s harvest - [www.uga.edu/nchfp](http://www.uga.edu/nchfp)
- Teach children and others how to prepare delicious meals using fresh, seasonal foods - [www.kids-cooking-activities.com](http://www.kids-cooking-activities.com)
- Show children where food is grown and schedule farm tours to learn more about farming in the community
- Compost fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells and coffee grounds
- Use a reusable coffee filter or unbleached coffee filters that can be composted
- Purchase or construct a garden composter or start a worm composter - [www.composters.com](http://www.composters.com)
- Test the soil and learn about organic methods to build soil humus - [www.extension.org/pages/Soils\\_and\\_Composting:\\_Soil\\_Testing](http://www.extension.org/pages/Soils_and_Composting:_Soil_Testing)
- Collect rainwater to use in the garden

A "Good Food" Checklist for Families (continued)

- Use leftover water from steaming or boiling vegetables to water plants
- Take reusable cloth bags to the grocery store and the farmers market - [www.reusablebags.com](http://www.reusablebags.com)
- Select products with minimal packaging, are environmentally-friendly and can be recycled
- Buy in bulk when possible and limit single-serving packages
- Implement a reduce, reuse, recycle program - <http://earth911.org>
- Reuse glass jars for food storage
- Use plates and flatware that can be washed versus styrofoam, plastic or paper products
- Purchase or make cloth napkins
- Fill reusable stainless steel drinking bottles with tap water when traveling or exercising- [www.coopamerica.org/pubs/realmoney/articles/plastics.cfm](http://www.coopamerica.org/pubs/realmoney/articles/plastics.cfm)
- Join the local Slow Food chapter - [www.slowfoodusa.org](http://www.slowfoodusa.org)
- Stay current on food-related news and articles - [www.thefoodtimes.com](http://www.thefoodtimes.com)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

At School We Will...

- Make fresh, healthy food choices the easiest choices
- Request the school to become a fast food-free zone and to provide fresh, healthy school meals to all students - [www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org](http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org)
- Link farmers with schools and begin a Farm to School Program - [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org)
- Start a school gardening program or adopt a school garden - [www.kidsgardening.com](http://www.kidsgardening.com) and [www.garden.org](http://www.garden.org)
- Implement a reduce, reuse, recycle program - <http://earth911.org>
- Initiate a school composting program - [www.css.cornell.edu/compost/schools.html](http://www.css.cornell.edu/compost/schools.html)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

At Work We Will...

- Encourage the cafeteria to adopt a seasonal menu system and to purchase fresh food directly from local farms

- Share information on recycled disposables in place of styrofoam and plastic products
- Advocate for a fast food-free workplace
- Implement a reduce, reuse, recycle program - <http://earth911.org>
- Initiate a worksite composting program
- Ask management to consider hosting a farmers market or be a CSA drop-off
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

In Our Community We Will...

- Support community gardening programs at a daycare, church, hospital, long-term care facility, hospital or community center - <http://communitygarden.org>
- Implement a reduce, reuse, recycle program - <http://earth911.org>
- Promote agritourism and ecotourism - [www.agritourismworld.com](http://www.agritourismworld.com) and [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org)
- Become a member of a local food co-op - [www.coopamerica.org](http://www.coopamerica.org)
- Promote *Buy Fresh Buy Local* initiatives - [www.foodroutes.org](http://www.foodroutes.org)
- Serve fresh, local and seasonal food at picnics, reunions and church activities
- Glean food from local farmers for food banks and pantries - [www.secondharvest.org](http://www.secondharvest.org)
- Establish a food recovery system and donate leftover food to emergency food programs - [www.foodsecurity.org](http://www.foodsecurity.org)
- Support breastfeeding campaigns - [www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Breastfeeding/lovingsupport.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Breastfeeding/lovingsupport.htm)
- Support businesses and restaurants that serve fresh, local, and seasonal food - [www.chefscollaborative.org](http://www.chefscollaborative.org) and [www.dinegreen.com](http://www.dinegreen.com)
- Ask restaurants to serve more fresh, local, and seasonal food
- Take a reusable container for leftovers when dining out
- Request food stores to buy from local farmers and processors
- Encourage point-of-sale identification of fresh, local, and seasonal food in markets
- Organize a food film festival - [www.kingcorn.net](http://www.kingcorn.net) and [www.ehow.com](http://www.ehow.com)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



To read more about nourishing your family and the earth, check out these books from your local library!

"A Slice of Organic Life" by Sheherazade Goldsmith, Dorling Kindersley Ltd, 2007

"Animal, Vegetable, Miracle. A Year of Food Life" by Barbara Kingsolver, Harper Collins, 2007

"Coming Home to Eat. The Pleasures and Politics of Local Foods" by Gary Paul Nabhan, WW Norton & Co., 2002

"It's Easy Being Green. A Handbook for Earth-Friendly Living" by Crissy Trask, Gibbs Smith, 2006

"Low Carbon Diet. A 30-Day Program to Lose 5000 Pounds" by David Gershon, Empowerment Institute, 2006

"Six Arguments for a Greener Diet" by Michael Jacobson, Center for Science in the Public Interest, 2006

"Sustainable Living for Dummies" by Michael Grosvenor, Wiley Publishing, 2007

We Will Inspire Others by...

- Sharing "The Good Food Checklist for Families"
- Writing articles or blogs about the health, social, economical and ecological benefits of "Good Food"
- Submitting a letter to the editor or an op-ed about the benefits of fresh, local and seasonal foods
- Working with local, state or federal officials on establishing vibrant local food systems
- Establishing a food policy council or serving as a member - [www.statefoodpolicy.org](http://www.statefoodpolicy.org)
- Running for an elected office
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

This is a sampling of "Good Food" activities for families. Share your "Good Food" experiences by sending an email to [angie.tagtow@mac.com](mailto:angie.tagtow@mac.com)



Environmental Nutrition Solutions

An ecological approach to food and health

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Angie Tagtow, MS, RD, LD is a Food & Society Policy Fellow working to educate consumers, opinion leaders and policy makers on sustainable food systems that promote good health, vibrant communities and environmental stewardship. Angie is an environmental nutrition consultant dedicated to assuring all eaters have access to "Good Food." Her business, Environmental Nutrition Solutions, takes an ecological approach to food and health by focusing on the public health benefits of sustainable food systems.  
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