

A SORTED AFFAIR

Locavore and Low carb diets

by Jane Bogner

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Everyone has an angle on how to lower your carbon footprint. Two recent concepts include starting a low carb (as in carbon) diet or becoming a locavore.

To start a low carb diet, calculate your foot print at www.eatlowcarbon.org. Here are ways they suggest to change your diet:

Increase your intake of fresh, seasonal vegetables. Avoid hothouse-grown vegetables.

Reduce your intake of meat and consume less dairy. Eat these foods less often and in smaller amounts. Cows produce a significant amount of Methane which is a greenhouse gas.

Buy and cook only enough to eat. More than 30 percent of food that is purchased is wasted. I would have to add that freezing leftovers for another meal saves energy and time. Just don't forget to use them.

Reduce your total food miles. This includes buying local food and limiting the number of trips to the store each week. Growing up on a farm, Mom made a list from the weekly grocery ads and made one shopping trip to town each week.

Avoid eating processed and packaged food. According to the EcoChef (www.cheffrench.com) 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions are a result of our food system.

Plant a garden and, this writer adds, start composting.

Locavore

The term locavore was coined in 2005 by four San Francisco women (www.locavores.com). The concept is to eat food grown or produced within a hundred mile radius. Eight Vallejoans are listed on their site and have opted for this new life style.

It is not easy to change our eating habits overnight. Our lives are too busy to give up the conveniences of ready-made food. So I advise you to pick one or two of the following and get started.

Buy local produce. We are lucky to have an abundance of weekly farmers' markets in the area including ones at Kaiser in Vallejo and Vacaville.

If not locally produced, try to buy organic. Making this choice protects the environment and your body from harsh chemicals and hormones.

If not organic, then family farm. VALCORE Board member Ellie Wells and Chamber CEO Rick Wells participate in a Community Supported Agriculture (www.localharvest.org) program. Eatwell Farm, located in Dixon, delivers boxes of fresh produce (including free-range eggs) to a central Vallejo location. Ellie has signed up for a box every other week.

If not a family farm, then a local business. People who operate local bakeries or coffee shops have chosen to help the local economy. Keep them here by buying from them.

Shop at farmers market before the supermarket.

Branch out. At the Vallejo farmers' market there are many Asian farmers. Ask them how to cook unfamiliar items and buy a little to try. We should ask our market manager to have cooking demos for this wonderful fresh produce.

Feed the freezer. Make meals from your local produce and freeze them for the night that you are running late. This is where your energy-saving microwave comes in handy. Use it for fast dinners.

Wells and I took a road trip to the East Bay recently to check out reuse facilities. One stop was the Ecology Center in Berkeley (www.ecologycenter.org). We picked up a copy of Edible East Bay and found shelves of information, books and items that are earth friendly. If you are down in that area, stop in; you will be pleased that you did.

VALCORE Recycling Board Secretary Jane Bogner's "A Sorted Affair" is published every other week in the Times-Herald. For recycling information call VALCORE Recycling at 645-8258 or visit www.VALCORErecycling.org.

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