



## Ways to access healthy fruit and vegetables

### Grow your own:

#### How to get started growing your own vegetables.

- **Buy your seeds**  
Seed packets will give you sowing instructions  
[Buy seeds here](http://www.organiccatalogue.com) [www.organiccatalogue.com]
- **Choose your spot.**  
Vegetables like sun, though lettuce, kale and chard will tolerate partial shade.
- **Prepare your soil.**  
Use well-rotted compost. A healthy soil will ensure you have nutritious vegetables.
- **Try no dig gardening.**  
This is a method that supports healthy soil micro-organisms.  
[More information here](http://charlesdowding.co.uk) [charlesdowding.co.uk]
- **Quick to mature vegetables.**  
Dwarf green beans, radish, spinach and salad greens can be sown in situ, straight into the soil outdoors, and are ideal if you have nowhere to raise seeds indoors.
- **Bypass growing from seed.**  
You can choose to buy young plants instead of growing from seed.  
If you opt for plants they generally come with planting guidelines.  
[Buy plants here](http://www.organiccatalogue.com) [www.organiccatalogue.com]
- **Short of time?**  
Stick to low maintenance crops like beetroot, squash and kale.
- **Start simple.**  
Begin with just a few vegetables you love to eat.
- **Install a water butt.**  
This will give you easy access for watering.
- **Unplanned plants.**  
Dandelion, chickweed and nettles can all be eaten.
- **Talk to local gardeners.**  
They will have valuable experience of local soils and weather.

## Sign up for a Box Scheme:

The Soil Association provide a list of national box schemes that deliver fresh fruit, veg and other groceries to locations across the UK.

Riverford has been growing 100% organic produce for over 30 years with a commitment to sustainability in its farming, ownership, packaging and more. It is an employee-owned, certified B Corp business, dedicated to paying the Real Living Wage.

## Join a Community Gardens:

- **Benefits of a community garden?**

Some of the benefits of developing a community garden include the improvement of nutrition, physical activity, and overall mental health for participants. Increasing the number of neighbourhood gardens can also support the environment by positively affecting the issue of climate change.

- **What is the goal of a community garden?**

Many cities and organisations provide opportunities for residents to become involved with community gardens. The goal is to provide better access to healthy food and to promote social activities that could possibly reduce the crime rate.

- **Physical and mental health benefits**

Gardening involves a host of physical activities, including lifting bags of soil and other products, digging, and harvesting, all of which can boost muscular strength, cardiovascular fitness, and mobility. Because a community garden is a supportive environment, gardeners can undertake tasks aligning to physical fitness and health conditions.

Study after study has shown that being in the midst of plants, trees, flowers, and herbs has a plethora of therapeutic effects on mental health. Some studies indicate that regular gardening can help reduce risk of dementia by 50%. Two studies of people in their 60s and 70s found that gardeners were around 40% less likely to develop dementia. This is thought to be linked to the fact that gardening boosts oxygenation and provides gardeners with a light cardiovascular workout. The increased blood flow feeds all the organs, including the brain.

[More information here](#) [National Library of Medicine: PubMed]

- **Find and volunteer at a community garden near you**

More information below:

<https://www.goodtogrowuk.org/map/>

<https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/projects>

<https://londonfarmsandgardens.org.uk/community-gardens-and-growing/>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/resources/community-garden>

<https://www.edenprojectcommunities.com/ideas/plant-community-garden>

## Link up with a Community Supported Agriculture Farm:

Community supported agriculture (CSA) is a partnership between farmers and consumers in which the responsibilities, risks and rewards of farming are shared.

Over the last 20 years, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) has become a popular way for consumers to buy local, seasonal food directly from a farmer. A farmer offers a certain number of "shares" (aka "memberships" or "subscriptions") to the public. Typically the share consists of a box of vegetables. Interested consumers purchase a share and in return receive a box of seasonal produce each week throughout the farming season.

[More information here](https://communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk) [communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk]

## Well known Community Farms

- **Fordhall Community Land Initiative - Shropshire**  
England's first community owned farm, Fordhall is an Industrial and Provident Society with charitable status. Fordhall is currently owned by over 8000 shareholders from across the UK and indeed the world! The farm, based in North Shropshire has been chemical free for over 65 years. <https://www.fordhallfarm.com>
- **The Community Farm - Bristol**  
Based just outside Bristol, overlooking the gorgeous Chew Valley Lake, the farm was conceived in 2009. A group that included Better Food Company's founder Phil Haughton, saw a need to get local food into Bristol whilst providing a way for people in and around the city to reconnect with the land and their food. <https://www.thecommunityfarm.co.uk/>
- **Tablehurst Farm -Sussex**  
A Community farm in Forest Row, since 1996. Tablehurst community coop is committed to biodynamics and community engagement. <https://www.tablehurstfarm.org.uk/>
- **Plaw Hatch Farm - Sussex**  
A 200-acre community-owned farm on the edge of the Ashdown Forest near Sharpthorne. It has been a biodynamic farm for forty years and is owned by the same charitable trust as Tableshurst. <https://www.plawhatchfarm.co.uk/>

## Check out where to buy local Food:

Love British Food is the national campaign promoting British food, and it has a local food directory: <https://www.lovebritishfood.co.uk/local-food-directory>

## Useful links:

### Mach Maethlon

Mach Maethlon is a marriage of three community food and gardening projects in West Wales: *Edible*

*Mach* – providing free food for all the community in public growing spaces in Machynlleth, *Dyfi Landshare* – linking landowners and growers to make access to land for food production, and *Green Isle Growers* co-operative – producing chemical-free food in the Dyfi Valley area.

Katie Hastings is a co-founder of Mach Maethlon where she runs a farm start training programme and works with businesses to increase the amount of locally produced food they are buying. Katie is Wales Coordinator for the Gaia Foundation's Seed Sovereignty Programme and grows wheat and oats as part of the Machynlleth Grain Growers and has produced vegetables for many years.

<https://machmaethlon.org/>

### **Ecological Land Cooperative**

Membership organisation creating small clusters of affordable residential smallholdings and work with our tenants to gain planning permission to build low-impact dwellings, and provide infrastructure such as barns and water supply.

<https://ecologicalland.coop>

### **Farms to Feed Us**

A social enterprise run by volunteers. Activists, farmers, journalists, and economists with a goal to connect people with farmers, fishers, and food producers to imagine and nurture a regenerative food future.

<https://farmstofeedus.org>

- buy organic food whenever you can
- eat seasonally
- source your food as locally as possible
- join a box scheme
- grow your own (garden, allotment or community garden)
- support food & farming campaigning organisations

Greencuisine Trust works to bring about a transformation in the way we eat. Through practical food experiences the Trust highlights the connections between our well-being, natural resources, the environment, and our planet.



[daphne@greencuisinetrust.org](mailto:daphne@greencuisinetrust.org)  
[www.greencuisinetrust.org](http://www.greencuisinetrust.org)  
[instagram.com/greencuisinetrust/](https://www.instagram.com/greencuisinetrust/)  
[facebook.com/GreencuisineDaphne/](https://www.facebook.com/GreencuisineDaphne/)

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