News
EarthBeat



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PAUSE

REFLECT

Wendell Berry's suggestions for eating responsibly from "The Pleasures of Eating:"

> "What can one do?
>
> Here is a list, probably not definitive:
>
> 1. Participate in food production to the extent that you can. If you have a yard or even just a porch box or a pot in a sunny window, grow something to eat in it. Make a little compost of your kitchen scraps and use it for fertilizer. Only by growing some food for yourself can you become acquainted with the beautiful energy cycle that revolves from soil to seed to flower to fruit to food to offal to decay, and around again. You will be fully responsible for any food that you grow for yourself, and you will know all about it. You will appreciate it fully, having known it all its life.
>
> 2. Prepare your own food. This means reviving in your own mind and life the arts of kitchen and household. This should enable you to eat more cheaply, and it will give you a measure of 'quality control': you will have some reliable knowledge of what has been added to the food you eat.
>
> 3. Learn the origins of the food you buy, and buy the food that is produced closest to your home. The idea that every locality should be, as much as possible, the source of its own food makes several kinds of sense. The locally produced food supply is the most secure, the freshest, and the easiest for local consumers to know about and to influence.
>
> 4. Whenever possible, deal directly with a local farmer, gardener, or orchardist. All the reasons listed for the previous suggestion apply here. In addition, by such dealing you eliminate the whole pack of merchants, transporters, processors, packagers, and advertisers who thrive at the expense of both producers and consumers.

5. Learn, in self-defense, as much as you can of the economy and technology of industrial food production. What is added to food that is not food, and what do you pay for these additions?

6. Learn what is involved in the best farming and gardening.

7. Learn as much as you can, by direct observation and experience if possible, of the life histories of the food species.

The last suggestion seems particularly important to me. Many people are now as much estranged from the lives of domestic plants and animals (except for flowers and dogs and cats) as they are from the lives of the wild ones. This is regrettable, for these domestic creatures are in diverse ways attractive; there is such pleasure in knowing them. And farming, animal husbandry, horticulture, and gardening, at their best, are complex and comely arts; there is much pleasure in knowing them, too."

ACT

Practice one of Berry's suggestions today. Cook a meal. Research and reach out to a local farmer. Find a farmer's market near you using the National Farmer's Market Directory and buy local food this weekend.

Lenten Daily Food Reflections

pause | reflect | act

***Editor's note**: These daily reflections on food, faith, climate and our lives will provide spiritual sustenance for the Lenten journey. They are inspired by the Lenten Food Waste Fast at the Ignatian Solidarity Network.*

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This story appears in the **Lenten Daily Food Reflections** feature series. View the full series.