

Ways to Eat Closer to Nature



What is eating “closer to nature?”

For me, it's minimizing how far your food travels. Fresh ingredients on your plate. Humanely raised meats, sourced as close to home as possible. Eating as many plants as possible. Growing some herbs or a tomato plant to get your feet wet if you're new to this, or planting trees and raising chickens for eggs if you're not.

Here are 5 ways to start eating a little 'closer to nature.'

1. Grow something.

Literally anything. Don't overcomplicate it. You can buy a starter plant at the hardware store for between \$3-5, put it in a pot with some dirt, and stick it on your balcony. I'd recommend starting with peppers or tomatoes. Most fruits and veggies need about 6-8 hours of direct sun a day, depending on where you live. Plastic pots will dry out much faster than ceramic ones. Add a watering ball or a pan underneath if you think you'll forget to water it at first.

2. Know where your food comes from.

If you can't or won't or don't want to grow any food yourself, try to pay attention to where your food comes from and how far it travels. To cut out third party mark-up, try to find seasonal local farm stands. They're often run by small families and farms and have reasonable prices on produce since you're buying direct from them. Plus, you'll be astounded at the difference in flavor when your produce is actually fresh.

3. Join a CSA.

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture, and it's a win-win for farmers and consumers. Think of it like this - you buy a “share” at the beginning of the season, paid directly to the farm. They then have all that funding from all of their members to prep their soil, plant their crops, and maintain them. Once they're ready for harvest, you start receiving a box or a bag each week with a good mix of what they've grown in it. Sometimes they even partner with other farms to mix up what's provided. You're supporting a local farm, eating locally, and you didn't have to grow a thing.

4. Buy local eggs.

Or get chickens! Just kidding. Raising chickens isn't for everyone, and I get that. But I promise you, somewhere nearby, there's a homesteader with more eggs than they know what to do with, trying to sell them - and they're probably cheaper than the ones at the grocery store. If you don't know of anyone, ask around. I bet someone does.

5. Eat seasonally.

Tomatoes don't grow in winter. Sweet potatoes aren't a spring vegetable. Learn what grows in each season, and stick with those types of produce when shopping. Your food will taste fresher and your body will thank you.