

*"I was asked by the publisher of the Out & About Magazine to write this article although I don't believe she ever published it"*



## **EATING YOUR WAY TO A HEALTHIER YOU AND A CLEANER ENVIROMENT**

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I remember the first time I heard an ad on the radio for the freshest Chilean Produce. Chile is thousands of miles away and produce is shipped to the US by boat. How fresh could it be? Produce begins to lose vitamins and flavor as soon as it is picked. Doesn't it make sense to buy locally grown produce rather than produce shipped to California from Chile? Three weeks on a boat isn't my definition of fresh.

We live in one of the richest agricultural regions in the world. Why should the shelves at our local stores be stocked with imported produce? Our society has become spoiled. If we learned to eat with the seasons our bodies would be healthier and so would our planet. What's in season? Go to your local Farmers Market to find out.

If you have to shop at the store, find out where the produce is coming from. If the label doesn't read product of the USA but instead reads "distributed" by a company in the USA, walk away. If there isn't a label, ask the produce manager. Also don't forget to check the frozen food aisle. This year my husband and I were in Whole Foods and discovered few of the frozen fruits and vegetables were actually grown in the US. Most came from China and Canada. Organic produce from China! What's going on?

A report written by the Natural Resources Defense Council November 2007 wrote "**What You Can Do to Help Keep Our Air Clean and Yourself Healthy?** By choosing local produce, you reduce the fuel consumption and global warming pollution associated with transporting food, help lift your local agricultural communities, strengthen the local economy, and protect the environment, all by eating fresher, tastier fruits and vegetables". It went on to say "California Air Resources Board estimates in 2005 2,400

*premature deaths and 28,000 hospital admissions for asthma and other diseases were attributable to direct and indirect exposure to diesel pollution from freight transport activities within the state”.*

Changing how you shop for your food can make a real difference. Learn more at:

[www.nrdc.org/foodmiles](http://www.nrdc.org/foodmiles)