Why is local food important?

* **Sustainability** – During hard economic times people can thrive with a resilient local food community in place. Local food also is better for the environment.
* **Transportation and Energy** - Local food has less distance to travel and less energy is wasted from using oil-derived fertilizers (ammonium nitrate) and toxic pesticides.
* **Health and Safety** - Local foods are fresher, more nutritious, pass through fewer hands and are produced with fewer hazardous pesticides and other chemicals.
* **Community** - You know who your food producers are because they live close to you or they are your friends or family or yourself!
* **Economy** - Local food keeps money in the community and brings more money into the community through *agricultural tourism* (also called *agritourism*).
* **Less Waste** - Local food is more efficient because it not only requires less energy to produce and transport, but you can use “ugly” produce and compost food waste.

Dangers of the industrialized global food system:

* *Industrial agriculture* and *mono-crops* (large fields of a single type of crop such as corn, soy, canola, cotton, and more)
  + Industrial agriculture degrades soil and pollutes soil, water, and more.
  + Deforestation for production of mono-crops including corn and palm trees.
  + Why? To put it simply: *economic efficiency* (profit)
  + Nature is not simple and mechanical the way industrial processes are. Nature is complex and its strength comes from diversity.
* *Factory farming* in *CAFOs* or “*confined animal feeding operations*”
  + Cattle raised in CAFOs are vulnerable to disease and require medication to fend off disease and are fed grains like corn and soy when they evolved to eat grass
  + CAFOs produce highly toxic waste pools full of manure that emit the greenhouse gas methane and are breeding grounds for bacteria and pests
* *GMOs* (*genetically modified organisms*)and hazardous chemical inputs (fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, etc.) -- Major GMOs are corn, soy, canola, cotton, and alfalfa
  + Health and environmental effects of GMOs largely are unknown. Few reliable long-term (more than 3-4 months) scientific studies have been conducted.
  + GMOs could be either good or bad, but the chemicals they’re used with often have adverse effects. These chemicals include:
    - Atrazine
    - Glyphosate (Roundup)
    - 2-4D (a component of Agent Orange)
    - Neonicotinoids (neonics) - Suspected contributor to the catastrophic loss of entire hives of bees (important pollinators) known as "colony collapse disorder".
    - Non-agricultural pesticides like naled sold as "Trumpet" used to control mosquito populations may also be killing off bees.
* *Food waste*
  + It is not simply that there isn't enough food to feed everybody but that a lot of food is wasted and does not reach those who need the food most.
  + Why? To put it simply: *economic pressures* (again, profit)
    - There is little to no economic incentive to use, sell, or even donate "ugly" produce or food past the “sell by” date (not the freshest, but still edible).
    - It is easier to throw food away than to donate it, feed it to animals like pigs or chickens or compost it.
  + Growing your own food can help reduce food waste. Also, eat "ugly" food or less than fresh food and compost your food scraps and inedible (rotten) food.
  + Encourage your local farmers to sell "ugly" produce by asking if they have any edible but non-standard produce.
  + Food and packaging that ends up in landfills contributes to climate change by emitting methane and other hazardous substances when it decomposes.

A few films to watch:

* **Growing Cities** (available on Hoopla Digital through the Pueblo Library)  
  growingcitiesmovie.com
* **Cowspiracy** (available on Netflix)  
  cowspiracy.com
* **Just Eat It** (Available on Amazon Prime and iTunes)  
  foodwastemovie.com
* **GMO OMG** (Available to check out at Pueblo library)  
  gmofilm.com
* **Edible City** (available on vimeo.com)  
  Ediblecitythemovie.com
* **Ingredients**  
  Ingredientsfilm.com
* **Plant This Movie** (available on Hoopla Digital through the Pueblo Library)  
  www.plantthismovie.com

A few books to read (all are available via the Pueblo library--some as audio books):

* **The Omnivore's Dilemma** – By Michael Pollan
* **The Good Food Revolution** – By Will Allen
* **Farm City** – By Novella Carpenter
* **Your Farm in the City** – By Lisa Taylor/The Gardeners of Seattle Tilth
* **Food and the City** – By Jennifer Cockrall-King
* **The Vertical Farm** – By Dickson D. Despommier

To learn more about local food and how you can help LocalFood Pueblo on its mission to promote and increase access to local food, visit lfpueblo.org, email us at lfpueblo@gmail.com

or find us on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/lfpueblo