

The Farm Fresh Atlas At A Glance

During the past three years, the Farm Fresh Atlas statewide team has partnered with the Survey Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls to conduct a survey with farmers and producers listing in five of our regional Farm Fresh Atlases. More than 180 Wisconsin farms were represented in the responses, which covered everything from demographics to marketing. This survey was made possible with a grant from the USDA's Farmers Market Promotion Program. Here are a few statewide highlights:

THE RESPONDENTS



60%
female



66%
have at least a
4-year degree



40%
have been
farming 21+ years

40% are between
ages 25 and 44

50% are 55 years
or older

50%

of respondents sell

1/2

of their output at

farmers' markets
on-farm stores
restaurants
retail shops

80%

of producers
said the Farm
Fresh Atlas
increased sales



80%

of respondents have
listed in the Atlas
multiple years



**\$1.4
million**

total value added to
Wisconsin economy
because of the Atlas

75%

of producers
said the Farm
Fresh Atlas
increased profits

M
A
R
K
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G

Word of
Mouth

98%



Social Media
& Web

75%

57%
Farmers'
Markets



54%



FARM FRESH
ATLAS™

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FROM THE DIRECTOR: *Committing to a beautiful farm future*



Around here, we have farms on the mind.

Next year's Farm Fresh Atlas is starting to come together, giving us a great opportunity to reconnect with

farm friends all over the region. We have wrapped up the first year of our vegetable processing pilot a month earlier than projected given this rainy summer's impact on broccoli and cauliflower.

In September, Wisconsin hosted Farm Aid, a benefit concert dedicated to sustaining family farms as a valued economic driver and an inextricable piece of our culture. REAP had the privilege to be a featured non-profit in the concert's Homegrown Village. Despite the rain, the day was filled with hope and inspiration and a reminder that as Neil Young said: "We have to keep letting farmers know that we believe in them."

That message is something REAP champions every day. And we did so the very

The concept that "the big get bigger and the small get out" speaks more to the flawed present that is and not to the beautiful future that can be.

next day, when we welcomed 90 supporters to Raleigh's Hillside Farm to celebrate the bounty and resilience of our own foodshed at Heritage on the Hillside, a REAP benefit dinner put on by Heritage Catering.

Just days later, national Farm to School Month was upon us - celebrating the benefit of locally grown food in our schools. This year, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue kicked off Farm to School Month with a visit to Madison, where he hosted an "Apple Crunch" with local schools, agencies and NGOs, and also spoke at the World Dairy Expo. With his visit came headlines outlining his bleak words about the future of small farms in the U.S.

As an organization with its boots on the ground for 20-plus years, that message struck us as wrong. The concept that "the big get bigger and the small get out" speaks more to the flawed present that is and not to the beautiful future that can be. USDA programs have helped build REAP's impactful initiatives like Farm to School and the Farm Fresh Atlas. Secretary Perdue's USDA recognizes the importance of farming at all scales and policy makers created a balance of incentives, grants and regulations targeting each scale. If the only current successful model for farming is a large scale industrial one, the solution lies in rebalancing policy, not eliminating small farms.

REAP commits to championing the kinds of policies and programs that build a resilient agricultural economy and a healthy and educated population. We commit to keep building that future and believe the role of government is to commit to that beautiful future for all residents.

Sincerely,

Helen Sarakinos,
Executive Director

GIVE THE GIFT OF LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Rise & Shine Gift Box, \$35



Holiday Host Gift Box, \$50



Wisconsin Survival Package, \$30

Are you looking for holiday gifts that are delicious, local and impactful? Our annual Taste of Wisconsin holiday gift boxes are back, featuring award-winning products sourced and made right here in our beautiful state.

This year's boxes include the **Rise & Shine** breakfast-inspired box, **Wisconsin Survival Package** filled with everything you need to get through a Midwest winter (lip balm and chocolate included!), and the **Holiday Host**, a collection of delicious snacks and treats perfect for your next party. We are again selling the coffee table book *Love Wisconsin: Stories From The*

Place We Call Home, a beautiful celebration of Wisconsin people and their stories.

Every dollar spent on these boxes stays in the local economy, supporting farmers and producers committed to crafting high-quality products while caring for the land, animals and people. Funds raised also support our work to make good food, grown well, accessible to all.

To purchase gift boxes, call (608) 310-7836 or visit reapfoodgroup.org/shop. Orders are due Friday, Nov. 8 with delivery or pick-up ready the week of Dec. 9.

SOURCING WITH INTEGRITY: HOW TO TELL THE REAL DEAL

A big part of what makes our corner of Wisconsin the envy of so many is the deep network of businesses, growers and organizations committed to nurturing a food system that stewards our planet and treats people and animals with dignity. How do you know a producer who claims to be sustainable, local and ethical is the real deal?

To help local chefs, restaurants and other businesses build a supplier base and sourcing plan rooted in trust, transparency and traceability, our Farm to Business Director Brianna Fiene has pulled together a few simple, impactful tips.

Trusted references, affiliations or associations are always a good place to start. Organizations like REAP Food Group, FairShare CSA Coalition and the Dane County Farmers' Market have standards and verification systems and personal relationships with farmers. Farms that list in the Farm Fresh Atlas commit to a pledge to specific good food production practices and values.

Look for third party certifications. Whether it is organic, grass-fed, pasture-raised, fair trade or other certification or label, it indicates that a third party has verified that farmer is doing what they claim and cares enough to follow through. These are important and trusted processes farmers go through to prove the integrity of their product to the buyer. Third party labels and audits are a good indicator that what you are sourcing is accurately represented.

Verify claims made about farming practices/products. Asking for proof of certifications and processing information is essential. If you are buying meat that has been pre-processed, inquire as to where it was done and make sure to follow-up with the processor.

Arrange a farm visit. Keep in mind that farmers are busy and you will want to schedule a day and time in advance. This provides an educational opportunity for you and a chance to get to know your supplier on a personal level. It's also important



Lauren and Kyle Rudersdorf lead a tour of their Raleigh's Hillside Farm during REAP's Heritage on the Hillside dinner in September.

in maintaining transparency and building trust. According to Megan Minnick, purchasing manager at the Willy Street Co-op, "If the farmer/producer is not willing to have buyers tour their farm or facility, it is a really good sign that something fishy is going on, since nearly every local producer I've ever worked with is eager to have visitors and show off their operation."

They are not buzzwords. Identification of a grower's practices through labeling, packaging and communications is an easy thing to keep an eye on. Specifics are good. Being vague about what the product is, where it is produced/processed, production practices, etc. is a red flag. Think of this as a performance indicator.

If the price seems too good to be true, it probably is. Just like you, these farmers are doing their best to serve the community and environment. Farmers and producers who follow sustainable and ethical practices are paying more for everything and this is reflected in their prices.

THANK YOU, FUNDERS!

Sappi Global - \$22,000

Sappi's Ideas that Matter grant program recognizes and supports designers who use their skills and expertise for social good. We are thrilled to announce our partnership with Madison-based designer Emily Julka, who - along with REAP - was awarded an Ideas that Matter grant for a print project to expand the reach and impact of the Farm Fresh Atlas.

Aimed toward consumers facing financial and structural barriers to fresh, local food, this bilingual brochure will feature information on how to find local farms and farmers markets using the Atlas, what local food is and why it matters, market shopping tips, using EBT/FoodShare and incentive programs, stretching food dollars, and seasonality.

We are grateful to Sappi for supporting our efforts to improve fresh food access for Wisconsin residents.

Madison Community Foundation - \$5,000

With a mission to enhance the common good through philanthropy, the Madison Community Foundation has awarded REAP a grant to grow our fundraising capacity to support our expanding program goals. This grant will strengthen our capacity to positively impact health and academic outcomes for Madison students. We are honored to be a part of their investment in our community.

Help Us Reach Our \$40,000 Goal

We're an ambitious bunch here at REAP and it's what fuels our dedication to building a strong local food system in Southern Wisconsin. More important than ambition is the support of donors, supporters and members like you.

You can help us start 2020 strong with a donation to our \$40,000 year-end fundraising campaign. It's a big goal but we are confident in the passion and dedication our donors, supporters and members have for our work.

Keep an eye on our social media channels, newsletter and your mailbox this giving season, and help us continue this important work!

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THANK YOU TO OUR FALL EVENT SPONSORS



REAP Food Group works to transform communities, economies and lives through the power of good food. You can support our work by donating online at reapfoodgroup.org/give. Every annual donation above \$45 makes you a REAP member.