

## Four Steps to Sustainability

Fortunately, there are easy actions we can take to support a sustainable food system.

**Think Local – Buy Local:** There are obvious choices of buying vegetables and fruits food during the height of growing season from local farms. Don't forget the less obvious local choices: eggs, Maryland wines, meat and poultry, crabs, Christmas trees and pumpkins for example. Visit the local farmers market or join a CSA. A list of farmers markets can be found on the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Web site, [mda.state.md.us](http://mda.state.md.us) under *Maryland Products*. For CSAs visit [marylandagriculture.info](http://marylandagriculture.info). (Also see, *Food and Faith...*, p. 10 of Maryland Church News.)

**Eat Seasonally:** Buying local food keeps us in touch with the seasons. By eating with the seasons, we are eating foods when they are at their peak taste, are the most abundant and the least expensive. The rewards are plentiful when you consider health, taste and environmental impacts.

**Spread the Word:** It is very important to exercise your voice as a consumer. Ask your grocer to carry local products. Ask the restaurants you frequent to buy from local producers, including the local crab houses. Let them know it is important to you as a consumer. Additionally, schools, hospitals and workplaces can buy local products for their food needs.

**Set a Goal:** It is okay to start small – but start. Set a goal of using 10 percent of your grocery bill each week to purchase local products. Invest in a CSA – you can share extra produce with your neighbors. Set a goal to have one “locally grown” meal a week.