



Why Start a Local Meat Buying Club?

Health

Local meat is fresher and sold without the addition of additives to enhance shelf-life. Farmers raising animals outdoors on pasture avoid the use of synthetic antibiotics or hormones. Nutritional benefits may include lower fat content and higher “beneficial” fats. For example, grass fed beef has been found to contain half the fat content per serving and double the Omega-3 fatty acids compared to feedlot beef.

Energy & the Environment

The average meal travels 1,500 miles before it reaches your table. Local meat has not been shipped long distances thus cutting down on fossil fuel use and green house gas emissions.



Animal Welfare

Farmers who raise animals outdoors or in comfortable bedded pens provide their animals with the opportunity to breath fresh air, socialize freely, and engage in natural behaviors.

Taste

Local, pasture and grass-fed meat simply tastes better.

Open Space

Buying meat from local farmers supports their businesses and helps protect farmland from urban sprawl and development.

Community

Working together with your neighbors, friends, and colleagues you can connect with farmers and help strengthen local communities and economies.

Support for Farmers

While buying local meats directly from farmers may not be less expensive than store-bought products, you can rest assured that the vast majority of the money you spend supports local farmers and food businesses. (In contrast, less than 25 cents of every dollar typically spent on food actually ends up in the hands of farmers.)

Start a Farm-to-Fork Meat Buying Club!

Identify One or More People to:

- Organize the first order
- Communicate with the farmer(s)
- Coordinate a drop-off point
- Coordinate payment

Identify a Farmer(s)

NC Choices can provide you with the names of farmers who raise and sell local meat products. Some farmers raise multiple species of livestock whereas others specialize in just one type (e.g., poultry or hogs). All NC Choices farmers have their animals slaughtered at local, small-scale USDA-inspected facilities. Meat



products are frozen and vacuum sealed at the slaughter facility immediately after processing to ensure freshness and safety.

Choose farms that are “local” to cut down on transportation costs.

Organize the Club's Order

Farmer(s) will provide the club with an order form listing meat cuts and prices. Pull together an order of at least \$500 and determine how frequently the club will order. Because meat products are frozen, orders can be placed once per quarter or as frequently as once per week. The decision rests on how much meat the club consumes and how much freezer space club members have at home.

The club can also decide to place an order for specific events (e.g., sausage for church breakfasts).

Select a Drop-Off Point

Frozen meat products must be stored in a freezer to ensure food safety and to allow all club members to pick it up at their convenience. Small freezers can be purchased for approximately \$250.

Club members should bring coolers the day of the delivery to keep the meat frozen during transport.

“Meat” the Farmer

Organize a taste test and work with one or more farmers to sample their products.

