

# FOOD MILES

Food in the United States travels an average of 2000 kms and changes hands half a dozen times before it is consumed (The Packer, 1992)

How much distance does your food travel from the land where it was produced, into the marketplace, to the corner store, before it reaches your plate?

If food products must travel 2000 kms, they must be sufficiently durable to withstand shipping. That, at the cost of palatability and nutritional content. The denatured, deflavored, industrial tomato is but the best known exemplar of a process that has affected many fruits and vegetables. These processed foods depend on artificial colours, flavours, stabilizers, emulsifiers, sweeteners and preservatives.

Let's get closer to our food chain by growing within the city itself. Urban agriculture gives the city a chance to close the ecosystem loop and move towards sustainable cities. And let's also consume fresher and more nutritious food.

Source: [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

**The distance from which their food comes represents their separation from the knowledge of how and by whom what they consume is produced, processed, and transported.**

## FOOD SHED

To describe sustainable food systems, defining the origins and destinations of food within a particular bioregion — the food shed — helps one to visualise the actual ecological impact of what we eat.

The foodshed concept uses the analogy of a watershed to describe the area that is defined by a structure of supply. Food comes to most of us now through a global food system, which is destructive of both natural and social communities. While corporations which are the principal beneficiaries of a global food system now dominate the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of food, alternatives are emerging which together could form the basis for foodshed development.

For example In a New York supermarket, you can find tomatoes from Mexico, grapes from Chile, lettuce from California, apples from New Zealand. But the chances of finding city-grown tomatoes, grapes, lettuce, strawberries, or apples in the same supermarket is pretty dim, even when those crops are in season locally. What is eaten by the great majority of North Americans comes from a global everywhere! And metropolitan India is fast catching up.

Source: [www.foodshed.wisc.edu](http://www.foodshed.wisc.edu)

## FOOD CIRCLE

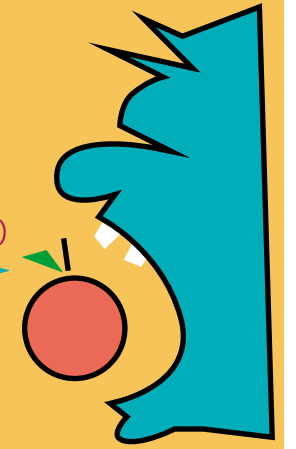
The Food Circle is a production-consumption-recycle model. A celebration of cycles, this model mirrors all natural systems and is based on the fact that all stable, biological and other systems function as closed cycles or circles, carefully preserving energy, nutrients, resources and the integrity of the whole.

It links the many people involved in food production together in interdependent, holistic ways. When we conceive of our food system as a circle, we acknowledge that we are connected with every other person in that circle through the act of food production. Practically, a Food Circle is concerned with promoting the consumption of safe, regionally grown food that will encourage sustainable agriculture and help to maintain farmers, who will sustain rural areas.

The goal of a Food Circle is to develop a community-based, sustainable food system by reshaping the relationships that surround food. Our dominant food system is globalized and industrialized, while Food Circles seek to create a personalized and sustainable food system. The Food Circle philosophy is built on four fundamental principles borrowed from Green thinking and systems theory. In sum, a Food Circle is about knowing the person who grows our food or who eats the food we grow.

Source: Food Circle Networking Project: <http://foodcircles.missouri.edu>

**London city's ecological footprint is 125 times its surface area, requiring the equivalent of the entire productive area of Britain to sustain itself each year**



WHERE ON EARTH DID THIS COME FROM?



RUHANI KAUR / CSE

**Dependence on a globalised food economy is also disconnecting us from nature.**

MADE IN INDIA!



AMIT SHANKER / CSE

