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**CATEGORY:** FOOD, COMMUNITY, HAMPTON ROADS



**Buy Fresh Buy Local Hampton Roads is a non-profit group dedicated to promoting local produce, meats and seafood to save family farms, encourage healthy eating, support the local economy and help the environment.**

Buy Fresh Buy Local publishes yearly food guides to help consumers find Buy Fresh Buy Local partners that strive to have the freshest local food available. Partners include markets, co-ops, farms, specialty products, meat and seafood producers and restaurants.

Buy Fresh Buy Local volunteers attend many public markets throughout the year to hand out guides and tout the advantages of local foods. Volunteers give presentations at civic organizations and schools to promote healthy eating. Buy Fresh Buy Local also sponsors Farm to Feast Weeks in which participating restaurants serve a special menu of local vegetables, meats and seafood.

Every month the group also publishes an e-newsletter that updates subscribers on what's going on in the local food world. The newsletter and other information can be found on the Buy Fresh Buy Local Hampton Roads website: [www.buylocalhamptonroads.org](http://www.buylocalhamptonroads.org). Buy Fresh Buy Local also can be found on Facebook and Twitter.

Buy Fresh Buy Local is supported by donations, grants and partner and individual memberships. It is affiliated with Food Routes, a national non-profit organization dedicated to reintroducing Americans to their food.

**Buy Fresh Buy Local Hampton Roads** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that pursues innovative ways to help connect people to their local food sources including farm stands, markets and restaurants. By doing this, we are helping preserve farms and farmland, boost our local economy, encourage sustainable practices, and carry on the area's great local food traditions. Here are some highlights of what we have accomplished since we began in June 2009:

- Became the 75th Buy Fresh Buy Local chapter, the fifth in Virginia. There are now eleven.
- Researched, compiled, narrated, edited, printed and distributed three food guides, a combined total of 170,000 copies, available at 240+ locations.
- Held a series of showings of the movies *Fresh* and *Locavore*, in Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and on the Eastern Shore, with panel discussions.
- Our website [buylocalhamptonroads.org](http://buylocalhamptonroads.org) is active and updated often. Coordinated listings with statewide Buy Local website.
- Established Facebook, Twitter, and Gmail accounts, monitored daily. Built an online mailing list of 2000+ people for our monthly E-newsletter. Featured in more than 20 articles in print and online publications, numerous mentions in non-profit newsletters and a TV spot on the local news.
- Attained 501(c)(3) designation as a tax-exempt charitable organization.
- Presented 60+ outreach programs, at farmers markets, schools, and with community groups across Hampton Roads, from Isle of Wight to the Eastern Shore.
- Partnered with other regional non-profits, including Lynnhaven River Now, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Va Aquarium's Sensible Seafood program, and Back Bay Restoration Foundation.
- Attended two state conferences on local foods and sustainable practices.
- Hosted the national gathering in September 2010 of Buy Fresh Buy Local chapters across the country in Virginia Beach.
- Designed our own Hampton Roads label and masthead and used this branding to create bumper stickers, T-shirts, banners and point-of-purchase materials. Created handouts and recipe cards using seasonal ingredients.
- Sponsored two successful Farm to Feast Weeks, August and November 2010, showcasing local chefs who featured locally grown and harvested produce, honey, meat and seafood.
- Raised significant amounts of money from corporate sponsors, government agencies, farmers, restaurants, seafood purveyors, individual donors, and volunteers who gave their time, skill, and stamina to see this project launched.