



# Sustainable: it's the new organic

A new approach to  
 what you put on your plate

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**A** big, green, bio-fueled bus decorated with balloons and cartoon animals dressed like characters from "The Matrix" stopped in St. Joseph recently. On board, was Diane Hatz, founder and director of Sustainable Table, a nonprofit program, sponsoring the Eat Well Guided Tour of America. The tour will stop at 25 cities across the country and end at the Farm Aid Concert in New York City on Sept. 9. The tour mission: to celebrate sustainable food and the people who produce, distribute, promote

and eat it. So what is sustainable food? Ms. Hatz explained this and the movement for us.

**What is sustainable food?**

Sustainable food is healthy for you, the community and the land. It provides a fair wage to farmers and workers, helps protect the environment, respects animals, and supports small family farms and local communities.

**Your movie, "The Meatrix" (www.themeatrix.com) warns against factory farms and use of antibiotics.**

**Why are factory farms bad? Doesn't the government regulate this sort of thing?**

The government might have some regulations on factory farms, but, from what I understand, they're rarely enforced. Factory farms cause a host of problems, including water, air and ground

pollution. This comes from the massive amounts of manure that pile up because so many animals are confined closely together in small spaces. In addition, studies have shown that factory farms don't help communities, whereas small farms do. Small farms put money back into local communities, whereas large corporate farms do not. In addition, industrial or corporate farms tend to monocrop, meaning one crop is grown over large acreages. On small sustainable farms, many crops are grown close together, and the crops are rotated each season so the soil is properly replenished. Large farms tend to use a lot of chemicals to handle pest problems and to fertilize the soil. On sustainable farms, other natural methods

are used to handle pests and to fertilize the soil.

**What's wrong with antibiotics? Isn't it important for keeping the animals healthy?**

It's not antibiotics that are the problem - it's the overuse of antibiotics and antibiotic resistance that's a problem. On factory farms, antibiotics are often given to animals to ward off disease from living in overly crowded conditions as well as to make them grow faster. The use of too many antibiotics

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**I Can't Believe  
 It's Not Crab Cakes**

2 cups coarsely grated organic zucchini  
 salt  
 1 cup soft bread crumbs  
 1 free range egg, beaten  
 1½ teaspoon Old Bay seasoning  
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard  
 1 tablespoon sustainable mayonnaise  
 Juice of ½ lemon  
 ¼ cup chopped parsley  
 vegetable oil, for frying  
 tartar sauce  
 lemon wedges

Place the grated zucchini in a colander; sprinkle lightly with salt. Let zucchini sit for about 30 minutes in the colander, allowing excess moisture to drain. Squeeze to remove additional liquid. (Zucchini should be fairly dry.) Place the zucchini and bread crumbs in a large bowl, and

mix together well. Place the egg, Old Bay seasoning, Dijon mustard, mayonnaise, lemon juice, and parsley in a small bowl. Mix well. Pour the egg mixture into the zucchini-breadcrumb mixture, and mix gently and thoroughly. Form into 8 patties the size of crab cakes. Heat a small amount of oil in a sauté pan, and cook patties on both sides, browning well. If you like, serve with tartar sauce (I jazz mine up with some chopped capers and fresh basil) and lemon wedges. A platter of vine-ripened tomatoes and sweet corn on the cob as accompaniments are my favorites. If you want to accompany this with animal protein, fish will go nicely, as will steak or even sustainably-raised pork chops.

— John Shields, Chef and Owner of Gertrude's in Baltimore. [www.sustainablefood.org](http://www.sustainablefood.org)

**Grilled Marinated  
 Flank Steak**

For the marinade:  
 1/3 cup shallots, minced  
 3 tablespoons soy sauce  
 ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil  
 2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves (or 2 teaspoons dried thyme), minced  
 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, minced  
 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice  
 2 cloves garlic, minced  
 A dash of cayenne pepper  
 1 ½ pounds sustainable flank steak

In a large bowl or a medium rectangular container, combine the shallots, soy sauce, oil, thyme, rosemary, lemon juice, garlic and cayenne pepper. Pierce the meat with a fork several times and place it in the container. Make sure to cover it well with the marinade. Let it marinate for at least 2 hours in the refrigerator. In the

meantime, preheat the grill, the griddle or grill pan. Take the meat out of the refrigerator and scrape away excess marinade. Place it on the grill and cook it, without moving, for about 2 to 3 minutes. Make a quarter turn and cook it 2 minutes longer - this will guarantee restaurant-style grill marks as well as oohs and aahs from your friends and family. Turn the steak, and repeat the same process on the other side. For medium rare, the steak should cook about 10 minutes, depending on the thickness. Meanwhile, bring the marinade juices to a boil in a small saucepan and remove almost immediately. Let the steak rest on a cutting board for a few minutes, then cut it along the grain in about ½ inch diagonal slices. Once arranged on individual plates or on a platter, pour the juices over the steak slices and serve.

— Laura Giannatempo, [www.sustainabletable.org](http://www.sustainabletable.org)

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leads to antibiotic resistance, which is becoming a bigger and bigger problem because antibiotics are becoming less effective in humans.

## **Realistically, wouldn't following the sustainable food ideal make groceries too expensive for the average family?**

I don't think so. Instead of buying boneless, skinless chicken breast, buy a whole chicken. After your first meal, make chicken stock from the bones, use the leftover bits to make chicken salad. When you use the whole animal, you can get many more meals. In addition, the recommended allowance from the USDA for meat each meal is two ounces, about the size of a deck of playing cards. If you're eating like most Americans, you're eating way too much meat. If we cut back on the quantity of meat and look more at quality, our food dollars will go further. In addition, consumers should try to avoid processed foods, which tend to be more expensive. I think if you take this all into account, you'll find sustainable food isn't that ex-



The Sustainable Table bus traveled through St. Joseph recently.

pensive when compared to processed conventional food.

## **Is it possible to eat sustainable foods in the winter when there is no farmers markets for fresh foods?**

Of course! Can or freeze your produce. It's simple to do. Also, you might be surprised at what can be grown in the winter so perhaps search out a year-round farmers market. We should learn to eat with the seasons, so we should look forward to root vegetables in the winter. There are farmers who are using things such as high tunnels to try to extend the growing season also, so you might find food growing longer in your area than you realize.

## **Why the cross-country bus trip? What do you hope to accomplish?**

I believe there's more happening in sustainable food than people realize, so we decided to go on a cross country tour to see what's happening in local communities around the country. We're hoping to show consumers that this is not a movement or trend – sustainable food is here to stay. And we've been able to see that. We're also bringing people with us on tour by videoing, blogging, taking photos and putting them up online every day.

## **Where can we find stores and restaurants locally that sell sustainable food?**

The Eat Well Guide at [www.eatwell-guide.org](http://www.eatwell-guide.org). It's an online directory of sustainable farms, stores, restaurants and other outlets that sell meat, poultry, dairy and eggs from small family farmers in the US and Canada. Just put in your zip code to get fresh tasting, wholesome food in your area!

Learn more about the tour, get ideas and recipes at [www.sustainabletable.org](http://www.sustainabletable.org). For more information on The Meatrix visit [www.themeatrix.com](http://www.themeatrix.com).