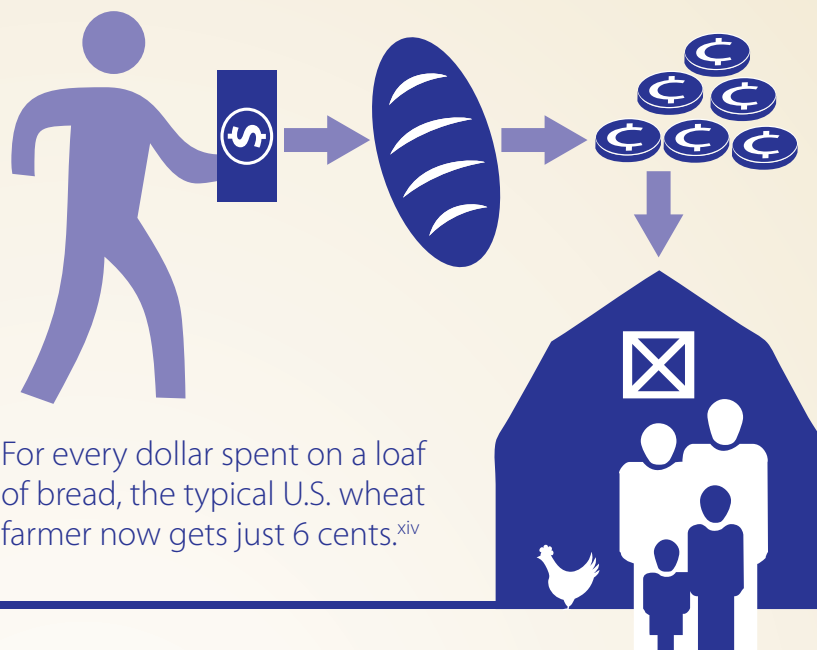


# Montana's current food system is ripe with opportunities

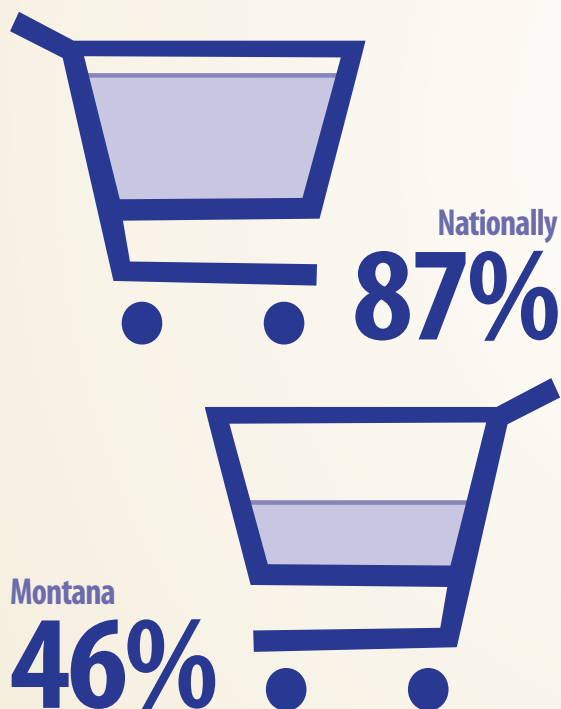
## We can do better for our producers and working lands...

- A typical food product travels 1500 miles before reaching the consumer. This trade is subject to volatile international markets beyond the control of our communities or state, much less individual farmers, ranchers, or consumers.<sup>x</sup>
- 5 million acres of important farm and ranchlands in Montana are under pressure from development.<sup>xii</sup>
- Due to a number of factors, Montana is losing about 250 ranches a year.<sup>xiii</sup>



## ...And we can do more to build healthy kids and communities!

- 153,193 Montanans received food from a food bank in 2011. That is over one out of every seven people in the state.<sup>xviii</sup>
- 54,000 Montanans live in food deserts: low income areas where residents must travel more than ten miles to the nearest grocery store.<sup>xvi</sup>
- The USDA recommends 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. On average, Montana kids consume just 1.3 servings of fruits and veggies each day; for adults, the average is 1.6 servings of fruits and vegetables.<sup>xix</sup>
- Montana's current adult obesity rate is 24.3 percent, up from 18.8 percent in 2003 and from 8.4 percent in 1990.<sup>xxi</sup>
- If we continue at our current pace, doctors predict that by 2030 over 126,000 Montanans will have diabetes, and more than 270,000 will suffer from hypertension.<sup>xxi</sup>



In Montana, residents of only 46% of counties have ready access to nutritious and affordable food. Nationally, residents in 87% of counties can easily access healthy food.<sup>xvi</sup>

**A healthier future is possible! Keep reading to learn more...**

## Food System Factsheet

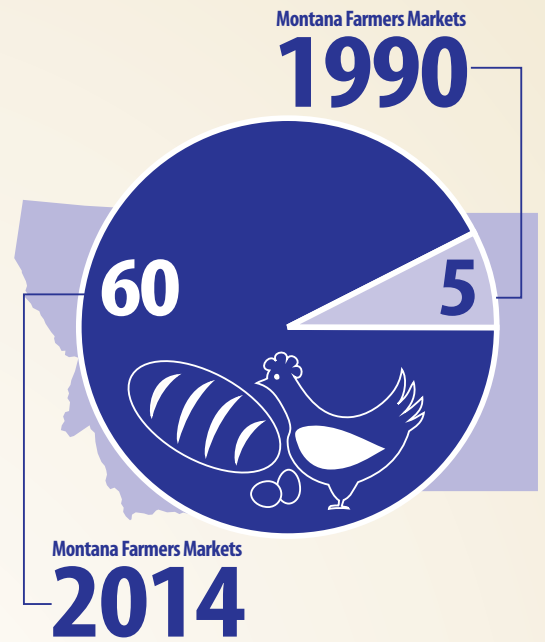
**GROW MONTANA**

Strengthening Our Food and Agricultural Economy

[www.growmontana.ncat.org](http://www.growmontana.ncat.org) NCAT A project of the National Center for Appropriate Technology

# Montana-based food systems: a realistic vision to strengthen communities, economies, and health

- In 1950, 70% of the food Montanans ate was grown in Montana.<sup>ii</sup>
- Through the 1930's, food processing was our state's number one employer.<sup>iii</sup>
- We still have a strong agricultural base to work from in Montana! In 2000, agriculture comprised about 36% of Montana's economy, more than mining, gas and oil combined.<sup>iv</sup>
- Montana is the #1 producer of organic dry peas and organic spring and durum wheat in the nation, and we rank in the top ten for honey, flax, lentils, beef, and more.<sup>v</sup>
- The number of jobs in food product manufacturing has increased every year in Montana since 2004. Today, it's the third largest manufacturing sector in Montana and accounts for 10% of the value of all manufacturing in the state.<sup>vi</sup>
- In 2003 the University of Montana's Dining Services began buying directly from Montana producers; in 2012 UM Farm to College purchased over \$1 million of food from within the state.<sup>viii</sup>
- In 2012, Montana K-12 public schools purchased over \$950,000 worth of local food products through farm to school programs across the state.<sup>vii</sup>



Montana's farmers markets grew from 5 in 1990 to over 60 today.<sup>ix</sup>



If each household in Montana spent just \$10 a week on Montana-grown food products, we would re-direct \$186 million dollars each year to local farmers and ranchers.<sup>i</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Based on 357,296 households. Montana Office of Rural Health. Retrieved from <http://healthinfo.montana.edu/msu/MTstate.html>.

<sup>ii</sup> Palmer, Warren. 1983. The Montana Food System: First Lessons in Sustainability. Cornucopia Project of Rodale Press. Emmaus, Pennsylvania.

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> MSU Extension Service, "Making Life Even Better" 2004 Annual Report. Retrieved from <http://extn.msu.montana.edu>.

<sup>v</sup> Montana Department of Agriculture. 2014. Ag Facts. Retrieved at: <http://agr.mt.gov/Consumer/AgFacts>

<sup>vi</sup> Polzin, Paul. 2011. The State of Montana Manufacturing, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812.

<sup>vii</sup> United States Department of Agriculture. Farm to School Census: Montana. Retrieved at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/census#/state/mt>.

<sup>viii</sup> Kidston, Martin. "UM Farm to College Program hits \$1M milestone" The Missoulian. 22 September 2012.

Retrieved at: [http://missoulian.com/news/local/um-s-farm-to-college-program-hits-m-milestone/article\\_45cbfe06-0533-11e2-a45d-0019bb2963f4.html](http://missoulian.com/news/local/um-s-farm-to-college-program-hits-m-milestone/article_45cbfe06-0533-11e2-a45d-0019bb2963f4.html)

<sup>ix</sup> Farmer's Markets: Enriching Communities Across Montana. AERO 2003 for number in 1990. For most recent number, Montana Department of Agriculture,

2013 Montana Farmers Market Directory. Retrieved at: <http://agr.mt.gov/Producer/FarmersMarkets>

<sup>x</sup> Pirog, Rich, et al. 2001. Food, Fuel, and Freeways: An Iowa perspective on how far food travels, fuel usage, and greenhouse gas emissions. Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

Retrieved at: <http://www.leopold.iastate.edu/pubs-and-papers/2001-06-food-fuel-freeways>

<sup>xi</sup> American Farmland Trust. [www.farmland.org/rocky\\_mountain/montana.htm](http://www.farmland.org/rocky_mountain/montana.htm).

<sup>xii</sup> Missoulian "Keeping tradition alive a challenge for Montana ranch families" E8 April 27, 2005.

<sup>xiii</sup> Halweil, Brian. Eat Here: Reclaiming Homegrown Pleasures in a Global Supermarket. W.W. Norton & Company, New York (2004).

<sup>xiv</sup> Montana Food Bank Network. Hungry in Montana 2012. Retrieved at: <http://mfnb.org/learn/research-and-reports>

<sup>xv</sup> Montana Food Bank Network. 2012. Fact sheet: Childhood Hunger in Montana. Retrieved at: <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/cacfp>

<sup>xvi</sup> Centers for Disease Control. 2013. State indicator report on fruits and vegetables, 2013. Retrieved at: [www.cdc.gov/nutrition/downloads/State-Indicator-Report-Fruits-Vegetables-2013.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/downloads/State-Indicator-Report-Fruits-Vegetables-2013.pdf)

<sup>xvii</sup> F as in Fat: a partnership of Trust for America's Health and the Rober Wood Johnson Foundation. State Summaries: Montana. 2013. Retrieved at: <http://fasinfat.org/states/mt>

This project is in partnership with



Join us in building a robust and healthy Montana Food System! For more information, contact Stephanie Potts, Grow Montana coordinator, at [stephaniep@ncat.org](mailto:stephaniep@ncat.org) or call (406) 494-4572 x 8688.