Local Foods Survey
2015

Funded by Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program (CEP), Inc. and the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board through the Skills Wisconsin Workforce Innovation Fund.

Prepared by the Center for Rural Communities

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Executive Summary

Rural communities across the country are looking for ways to promote workforce and development opportunities that create vibrant and resilient local economies. Strengthening community and regional food systems presents many opportunities for local economic development. In the Chequamegon Bay region, an authentic local foods movement and a thriving local foods system are taking hold. Working with Northland College's Center for Rural Communities (CRC), a group of stakeholders from the Chequamegon Food Co-op, University of Wisconsin Extension (UW-Extension), the Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program (NWCEP), Inc. and the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) conducted a survey over the spring of 2015. The survey captures the purchasing preferences, attitudes and values held by the Co-op membership toward local food. The results of the survey will assist stakeholders as they explore opportunities provided by the Chequamegon Bay regional food system for workforce expansion and economic development. Members of the Co-op were randomly selected to participate in an online or print survey questionnaire. A total of 141 Co-op members participated, resulting in a response rate of 17.1 percent.

Results of the survey show that a majority of participants express a strong preference for consuming local food. Our findings clearly indicate that local fruits and vegetables, when in season, make up an important part of many Co-op member diets. In order to identify opportunities for increased sales of local food items, we examine discrepancies between member interest in purchasing a particular local food item, the availability of that item, and awareness of its availability. For example, over forty percent of those interested in buying local non-meat protein are unaware that it is available for purchase, as are 29.3 percent of those interested in buying canned or frozen fruit. Better labeling of local products and providing more comprehensive information to Co-op members would increase sales to those looking to buy locally.

The main barrier to purchasing local food identified by survey participants is seasonal availability (84.8 percent). However, many respondents indicate that they are willing to adapt recipes to seasonal and local ingredients (between 61.8 percent and 74.2 percent agree or strongly agree). Providing more locally produced canned or frozen fruits and vegetables is one way of making local food available throughout the year. It should be noted, however, that most respondents emphasize the importance of knowing where their food is produced and by whom. They also express strong negative attitudes toward processed foods and items with a long shelf life. Therefore, local producers should take into account these preferences if they intend to sell canned or frozen food to Co-op members.

Cost is another barrier to purchasing local food identified by respondents (80.3 percent). Interestingly, we find no significant correlation between total money spent per week at the Co-op and a member's income level, or money spent per week at the Co-op and education level. Similarly, there are no correlations between the proportion of a member's food budget spent per week at the Co-op and income and education levels. There is, however, a weak positive relationship between a member's family size and total money spent per week and the proportion of the member's food budget spent per week. These results suggest that Co-op members purchase local food for non-monetary reasons and that members at varying levels of education recognize the benefits of consuming local food.

In the survey, participants were also presented with a number of statements reflecting values related to local food production. They were then asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. Only 15.3 percent agree that "agriculture is more efficient on a large scale" and less than 1 percent agree that "food is safer when produced in large scale farms." Instead, most participants favor sustainable and organic practices. For instance, variables that correlate with money spent per week and the proportion of food budget spent per week at the Co-op include: strong preferences for knowing where food is produced and by whom, organic (e.g., without chemicals, pesticides, or fertilizers; unprocessed; no GMOs) and fair trade practices, treating animals ethically (e.g., free range) and without administering chemicals or antibiotics, and producing food on a small scale. Respondents who spend larger amounts of money at the Co-op are also more likely to state that buying local food helps local farmers, is better for the environment, tastes better than non-local food, and relates to one's relative health.

Introduction

Rural communities across the country are looking for ways to strengthen and promote economic and workforce development opportunities that create thriving and resilient local economies. Community and regional food systems present an opportunity for local economic development. In the Chequamegon Bay region, an authentic local foods movement and a thriving local foods system are taking hold. Working with Northland College's Center for Rural Communities (CRC), a group of stakeholders from the Chequamegon Food Co-op), University of Wisconsin Extension (UW-Extension), the Northwest Wisconsin Concentrated Employment Program (NWCEP), Inc. and the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) created a survey which examines local food purchasing preferences, attitudes and values of the Chequamegon Food Co-op membership. Data collected for this project are intended to inform local food stakeholders on opportunities for sustainable economic development related to the local food system and to provide important information about what regional community members who are most likely to engage in local food purchasing habits think, feel, need and want as it relates to the food they purchase and eat. Funding for this survey was provided by NWCEP and NWWIB through the Skills Wisconsin Workforce Innovation Fund.

Methods

Survey construction

The survey was designed so that the results will assist stakeholders as they explore opportunities provided by the Chequamegon Bay regional food system for workforce expansion and economic development. In conjunction with representatives from the Co-op, UW-Extension, NWCEP, and NWWIB; a group of researchers and student researchers from Northland College's CRC constructed the local food consumer survey between January 2015 and March 2015. The final survey was divided into five parts:

(1) Participant demographic information,
(2) Participant purchasing behaviors,
(3) Participant food preferences,
(4) Participant attitudes towards food, and
(5) General values of the participants.

Sampling strategy and sampling frame

Members of the Co-op were randomly selected to participate in one of two ways. The first approach was to take a simple random sample of members who receive the Co-op e-newsletter. Selected members were invited to participate in the online version of the survey through a link included in the e-newsletter (n=945). The invitation link was included in five weekly newsletters (from May 4th to June 1st of 2015), 605 people opened the newsletter, and 64 people participated in the online survey (10.6 percent). The second approach was to take a systematic random sample of Co-op customers as they exited the store. Research assistants from the CRC approached every 1 in 2 members exiting the store at various days and times during May 2015. These members were asked to participate only if they were not current recipients of the weekly e-newsletter. If they agreed to participate, they were given a print survey questionnaire to take home, fill out, and return via mail. A total of 218 Co-op members were invited to participate through this approach and 77 completed and submitted the survey (35.3 percent). A total of 141 Co-op members participated in this survey for an overall response rate of 17.1 percent.

For both the online and print questionnaires, participants were prompted to share their membership number for the purposes of correlating survey responses to purchasing data. Of the 141 participants, 111 (78.7 percent) agreed to share their membership number for this purpose.

Analysis

The report presents descriptive statistics on all survey variables, including demographics, purchasing habits, attitudes and values. We used cross tabulations to explore the relationships between respondents' interest in purchasing food locally and their knowledge of the availability of different local food items. We used correlations to understand the associations between the amount and proportion of money spent at the Co-op and income, education, attitudes and values.

For scale variables, we include the mean scores to provide a visual representation of the direction of the trend.

Findings

Participants

Survey respondents range in age from 19 to 81 years old with a mean age of 50 years old. Approximately 33.3 percent of respondents identify themselves as male, 65.2 percent as female, and the other 1.5 percent as other (See Table 1). Educations levels vary widely from high school graduate (or equivalency) to graduate or professional degrees, with 35.8 percent of respondents holding a graduate or professional degree and 34.3 percent holding a bachelor's degree. Members are fairly evenly distributed across income brackets, with the highest percentage of members falling into the high income bracket of $75,000 or more at 26.6 percent (Table 1). Over 90 percent of respondents identify as White/Caucasian, followed by 5.5 percent as both White/Caucasian and Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native. The remaining respondents either chose not to answer or they indicated that they identify as more than one race but did not provide further information.

Table 1 Description of Sample

Variable	Indicator	Percentage
Sex	Male	33.3%
	Female	65.2%
	Other	1.5%
Education	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	3.0%
	Some colleges (no degree)	17.2%
	Associate's degree (including occupational or academic degree)	9.7%
	Bachelor's degree	34.3%
	Graduate or professional degree	35.8%
Income	$9,999 or less	13.3%
	$10,000-$19,999	10.2%
	$20,000-$29,999	3.9%
	$30,000-$39,999	10.2%
	$40,000-$49,999	12.5%
	$50,000-$64,999	14.1%
	$65,000-$74,999	9.4%
	$75,000 or more	26.6%

Connection to Co-op

A little under half (48.6 percent) of respondents report that they are residents of Ashland, 14.3 percent are Washburn residents, and 6.4 percent are Bayfield residents. The remaining 30.7 percent reside in other communities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois.

Table 2 Residency

Variable	Indicator	Percentage
Resident	Ashland	48.6%
	Washburn	14.3%
	Bayfield	6.4%
	Marengo	5.7%
	Cornucopia	2.9%
	Cable	2.1%
	Mason	1.4%
	La Pointe	1.4%
	Gurney	1.4%
	Port Wing	1.4%
	Out-of-State	2.9%

Approximately 24 percent of respondents were uncertain what year they joined the Co-op or they chose not to answer the question. Of those who responded, membership was initiated between 1976 to 2015.

Household Characteristics

Just under half (48.1 percent) of respondents report shopping for two people in a household, followed by 21.8 percent for one person, 11.3 percent for four people, and 10.5 percent for three (Table 3). A majority of members do not have children under the age of 18 in their household, 11.5 percent have two children in the household and 8.4 percent have one child in the household (Table 3).

Table 3 Number of people in household

Variable	Indicator	Percentage
# in HH	One	21.8%
	Two	48.1%
	Three	10.5%
	Four	11.3%
	Five or more	8.4%
# under 18	No children under 18	73.3%
	One	8.4%
	Two	11.5%
	Three	6.1%
	Four or more	0.8%

General Grocery Shopping Habits and Values

When asked “during the past year, about how often did you purchase food?”, 5.8 percent of participants report that they purchased food daily, 50.4 percent purchased food more than once per week, 21.9 percent once per week, 13.1 percent every other week, 6.6 percent one time per month, and 2.2 less than one time per month (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Frequency of purchasing food

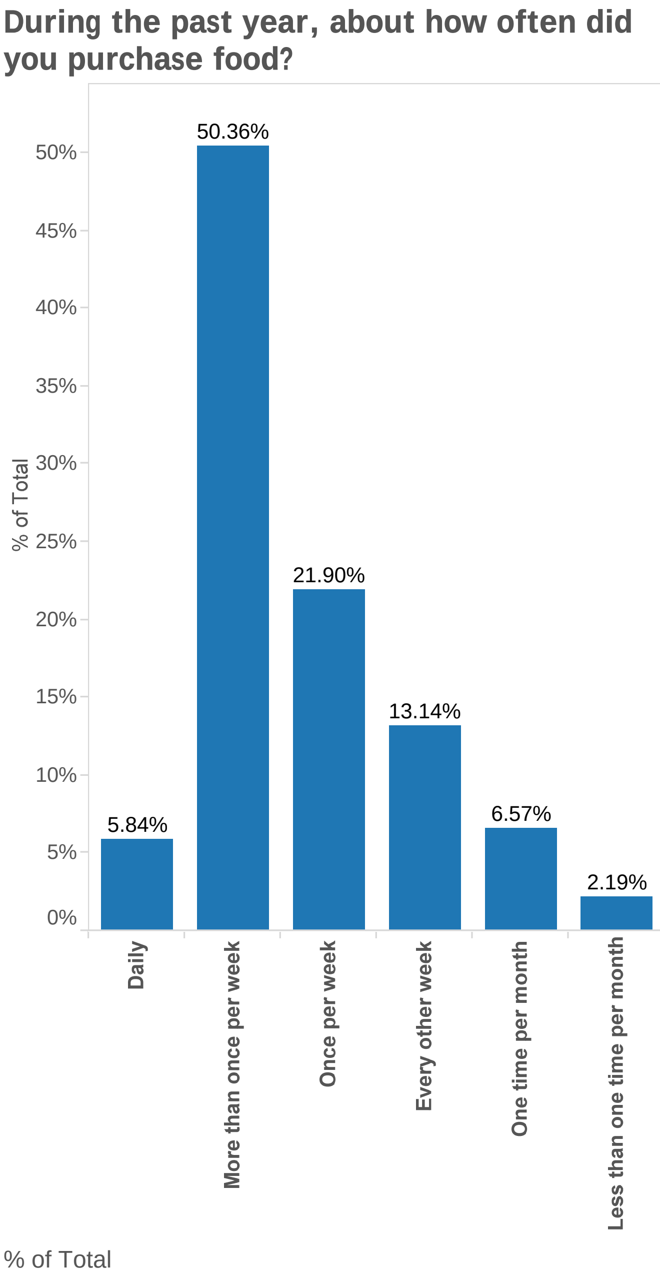
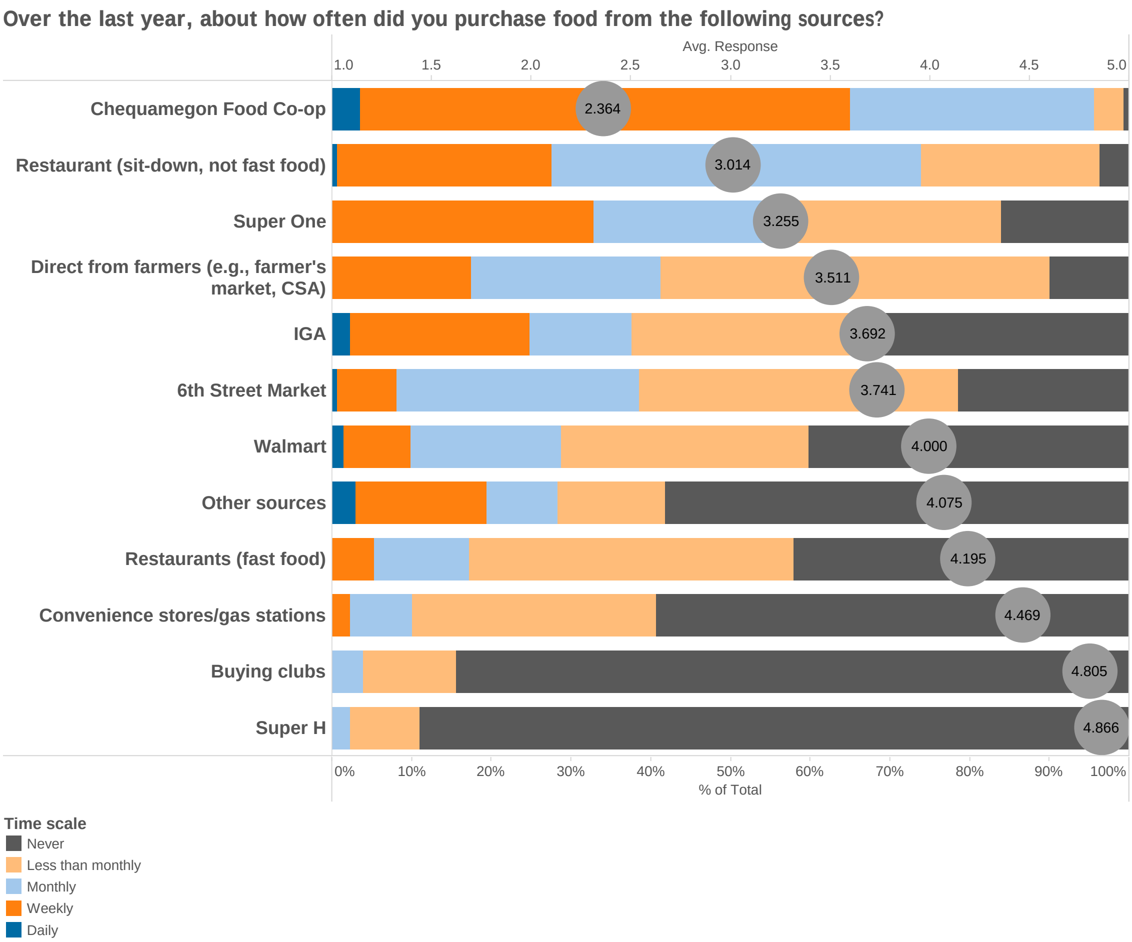


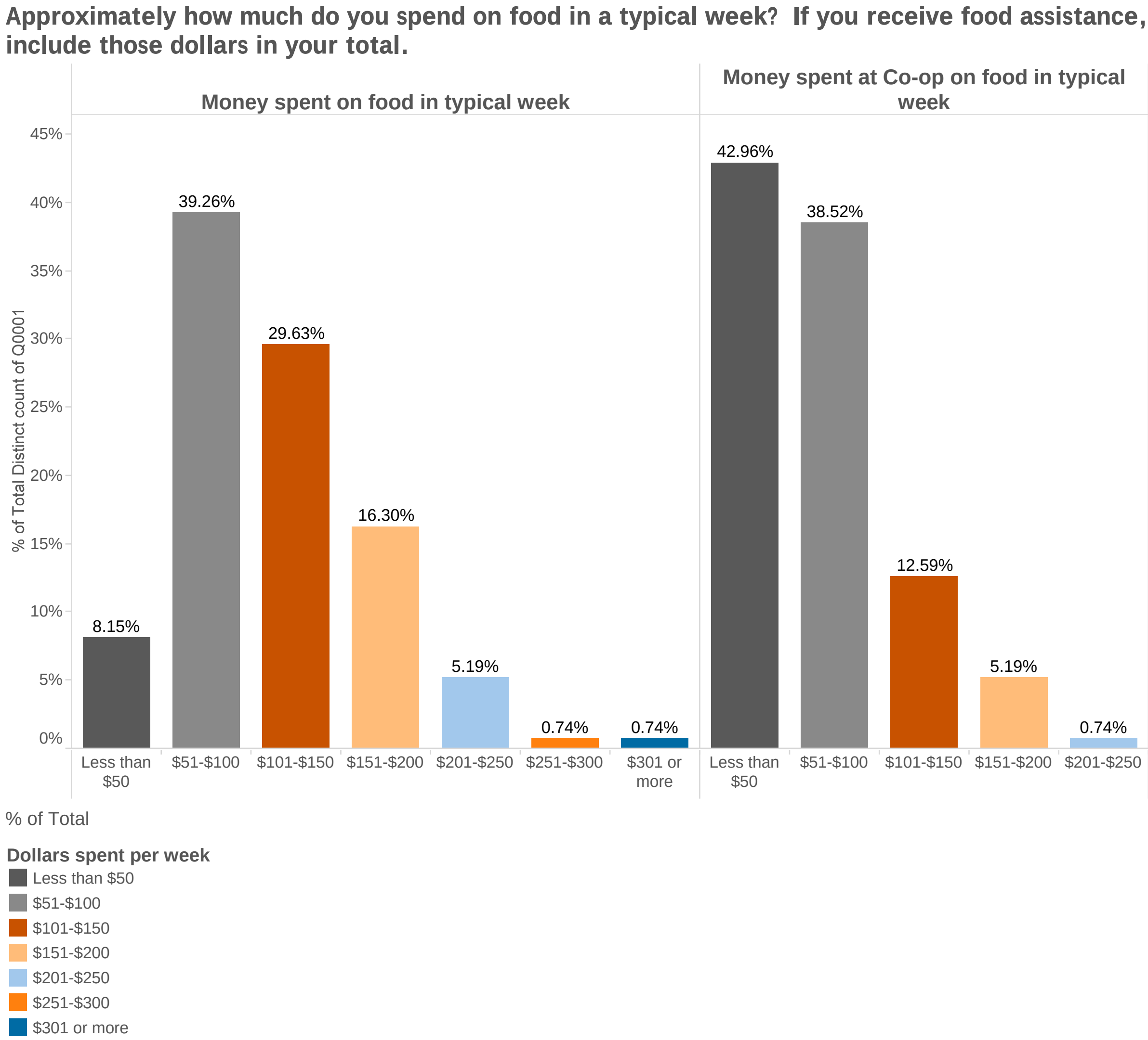
Figure 2 illustrates the percentage of respondents who shop at various locations in the region "daily" (dark blue), "weekly" (orange), "monthly" (light blue), "less than monthly" (peach), or "never" (gray). The answers are coded along a scale from 1.0 ("daily") to 5.0 ("never"), and the numbers reported in the circle for each location indicate the average response. For example, on average, respondents shop at the Chequamegon Food Co-op on a weekly basis (2.364), while respondents almost never shop at Super H (4.866). The figure is organized so that locations where respondents most frequently purchase their food are listed first and those visited least often are listed toward the bottom. Participants are most likely to shop regularly at the Chequamegon Food Co-op with 65 percent selecting either daily (3.6 percent) or weekly (61.4 percent) visits (Figure 2). An additional 30.7 percent of participants stated that they purchase food from the Co-op monthly and only 3.8 percent shop there less than monthly or never. This percentage far exceeds the other grocery stores where participants regularly shop, with 32.8 percent indicating they shop at Super One daily or weekly, 24.9 percent at IGA, 9.8 percent at Walmart, and 8.1 percent at 6th Street Market. Participants also report regularly visiting sit-down restaurants (27.5 percent daily or weekly). A notable proportion of participants report that they purchase food direct from farmers through Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) and farmer's markets with 41.3 percent indicating they do so weekly or monthly.

Figure 2 Frequency of purchasing food per location



Overall, a majority (68.9 percent) of participants report spending between $51 and $150 per week on food. However, there is wide variation across the sample with some members spending less than $50 per week and others up to $301 or more (see Figure 3). Level of spending on food is correlated with household size, income level and education level. Members in larger households spend more on average per week than those in smaller households, and members who have high levels of income and education spend more than those with low levels of income and education.

Figure 3 Amount of money spent per week on food



Approximately 43 percent of respondents report spending less than $50 per week at the Co-op, a smaller proportion report spending between $51-$100 (38.5 percent), while only 0.7 percent spend between $201-$250 (Figure 3). Over one third (38.2 percent) of respondents state that they spend nearly their entire food budget at the Co-op in a typical week (Table 4), and almost half of respondents (46.6 percent) state that they spend between half and three-quarters of their food budget. The remaining 15.3 percent spend less than half of their typical weekly food budget at the Co-op.

Table 4 Proportion of Weekly Budget Spent at the Co-op

Proportion*	Percent of Total Respondents
A quarter or less	4.6%
Between one quarter and one half	10.7%
Between one half and three quarter	46.6%
More than three quarters	38.2%

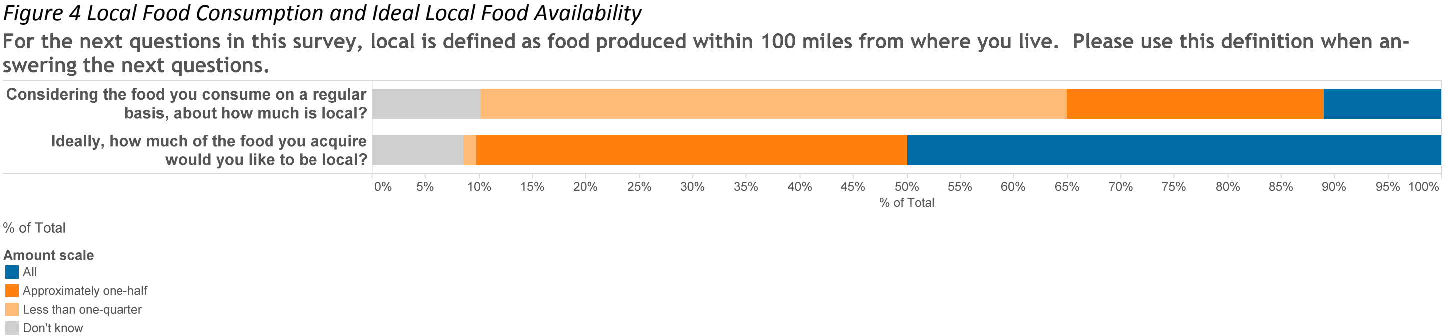
*proportion of food budget computed by taking money spent at Co-op divided by money spent overall per week.

Unlike overall spending on food, neither the amount of money spent at the Co-op nor proportion of food budget spent at the Co-op is correlated with education levels. There are weak positive relationships between household size and amount spent per week at the Co-op and proportion of food budget spent per week at the Co-op. These results suggest that Co-op members may purchase local food for non-monetary reasons and that members at varying levels of education recognize the benefits of consuming local food. Variables that correlate with amount of money spent per week and the proportion of food budget spent per week at the Co-op include strong preferences for knowing where food is produced and by whom, organic (e.g., without chemicals, pesticides, or fertilizers; unprocessed; no GMOs) and fair trade practices, treating animals ethically (e.g., free range) and without administering chemicals or antibiotics, and producing food on a small scale. Respondents who spend larger amounts of money at the Co-op are also more likely to state that buying local food helps local farmers, is better for the environment, tastes better than non-local food, and relates to one's relative health. Finally, respondents who spend more money and a higher proportion of their food budget at the Co-op express confidence in their local food knowledge (e.g., knowing which foods are local and how to search out local food opportunities), are willing to pay more for local food, feel supported by their friends and family for making local food choices, and adapt recipes to local food availability.

Local Food Habits

Fifty percent of respondents state that ideally they would like all of the food they purchase to be local, whereas only 11 percent report consuming local food on a regular basis. A majority of respondents (54.7 percent) indicate that less than one-quarter of the food they regularly consume is local. These results suggest that there are untapped market opportunities for local food.

Figure 4 Local Food Consumption and Ideal Local Food Availability

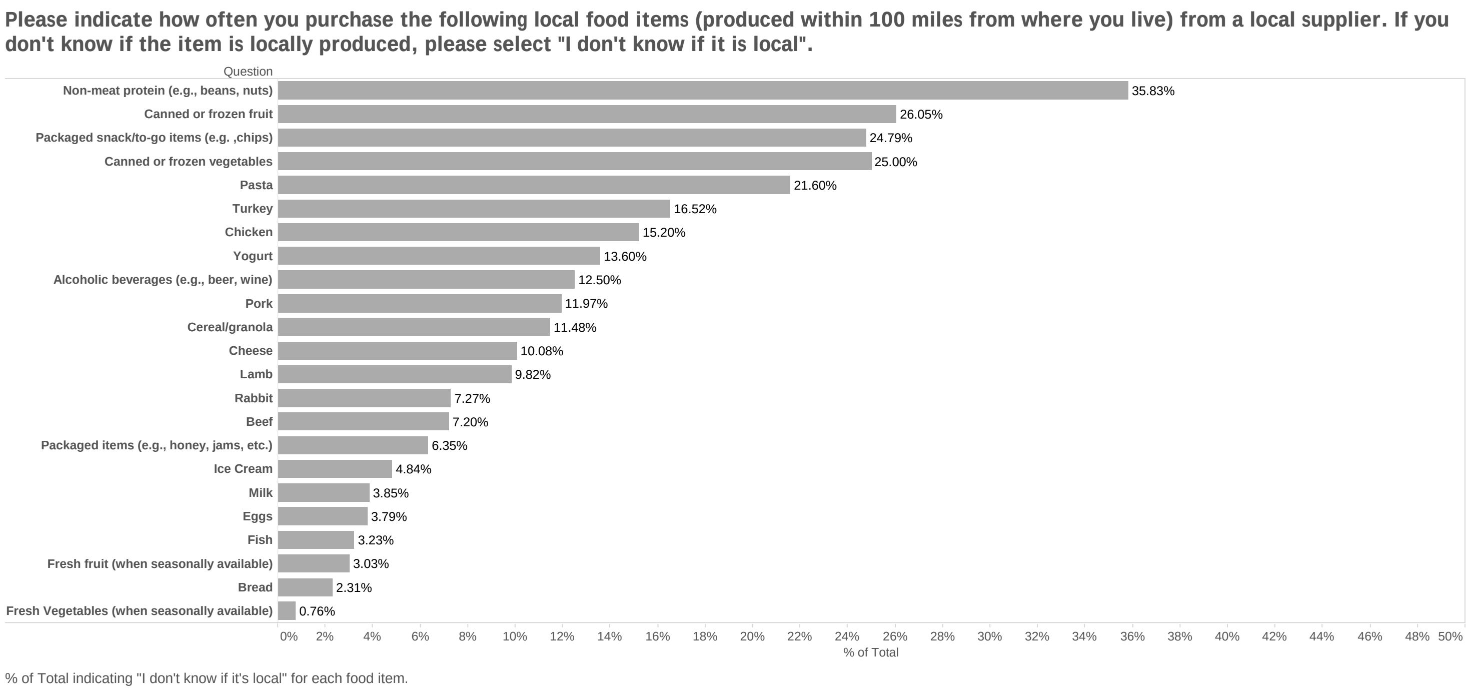


Local Food Items

Respondents were asked to indicate how often (“daily,” “weekly,” “monthly,” or “never”) they purchase local food items, defined as those produced within 100 miles from where they live, from a local supplier. They were also given the option to answer “I don’t know if it is local” if they were unsure if the item is produced within 100 miles from where they live.

The results reveal that members are knowledgeable about which vegetables, breads, fruits, fish, eggs, milk, and ice cream are produced locally, with less than 5 percent of the sample reporting that they do not know if an item is produced locally (Figure 5). Between 6.35 percent and 13.6 percent of respondents do not know if packaged items (e.g., honey, jams, etc.), meats (e.g., beef, rabbit, lamb, and pork), cheese, cereal and granola, alcoholic beverages (e.g., beer, wine), and yogurt are produced locally. Around 15 percent of respondents do not know if poultry items such as chicken (15.2 percent) and turkey (16.5 percent) are produced locally. The food items that respondents are most uncertain of are: non-meat proteins (35.8 percent), canned or frozen fruit (26.1 percent), packaged snack or to-go items (24.8 percent), canned or frozen vegetables (25 percent), and pasta (21.6 percent) (Figure 5).

Figure 5 Knowledge of Local Foods



When knowledge of local food items (i.e., knowing if an item they regularly purchase is local or not) is compared to a respondent’s desire to buy these same food items if produced locally, interesting opportunities for educating local Co-op customers or providing better labeling of products arise (Table 5). The second column of Table 5 summarizes the percentage of respondents who would purchase various food items if produced locally. Items of most interest to respondents, with over 75 percent or more indicating they would purchase these food items if local are: fresh vegetables (92.9 percent), fresh fruit (89.4 percent), eggs (88.6 percent), cheese (85.8 percent), chicken (80 percent), packaged items (e.g. honey, jams, etc.) (78 percent), fish (74.8 percent), and bread (75 percent). Only four items were indentified by fewer than half of the respondents: pasta (47.9 percent), packaged/ to-go items (44.6 percent), lamb (37.4 percent) and rabbit (23.7 percent). Of note, over two-thirds of respondents indicated they would purchase yogurt (67.1 percent), chicken (80 percent), and turkey (66.9 percent) if locally available, however, none of these are available from a local producer at the Co-op.

The items with the largest gaps between knowledge of local production and interest in purchasing the item are: non-meat proteins and canned or frozen fruits and vegetables. We find that 42.4 percent of those interested in non-meat protein items did not know if these are locally available, 29.3 percent of those interested in canned or frozen fruit and 28.4 percent of those interested in canned or frozen vegetables did not know if these are locally available. The Co-op carries all three items from a local producer, representing an opportunity for marketing and consumer education (Table 5).

Table 5 Interest and Knowledge of Local Food Items

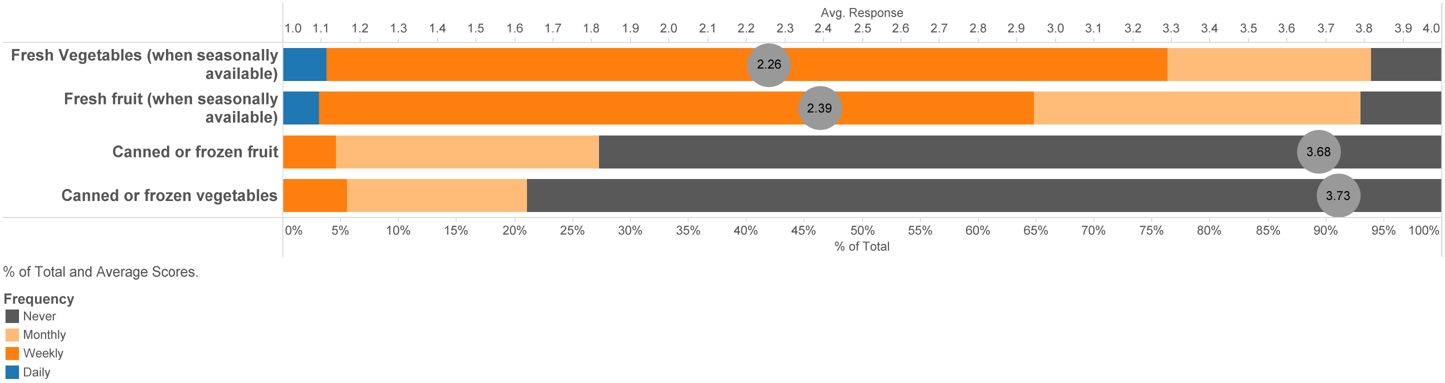
Local Item	% Would buy it if locally available	% Who would buy but don't know if produced locally	Item is available from a local producer
Bread	75	1.9	Yes
Pasta	47.9	27.9	No
Cereal/granola	53.6	14.9	Yes
Milk	73.8	3.0	Yes
Yogurt	67.1	17.0	No
Ice cream	67.1	4.6	Yes
Cheese	85.8	9.6	Yes
Fresh vegetables	92.9	0.8	Yes
Canned or frozen vegetables	56	28.4	Yes
Fresh fruit	89.4	2.5	Yes
Canned or frozen fruit	56	29.3	Yes
Beef	70	8.5	Yes
Pork	63.6	15.0	Yes
Chicken	80	14.8	No
Turkey	66.9	20.7	No
Lamb	37.4	16.3	Yes
Rabbit	23.7	9.7	No
Fish	74.8	3.0	Yes
Non-meat protein (e.g., beans, nuts)	68.6	42.4	Yes
Eggs	88.6	4.1	Yes
Packaged items (e.g., honey, jams, etc.)	78	5.7	Yes
Packaged snack/to-go items (e.g., chips)	44.6	28.6	No
Alcoholic beverages (e.g., beer, wine)	54	11.1	Yes

Respondents who reported knowing that a food item is produced locally were asked how often they purchase a given local product. Figures 6 through 10 show these results for the following food groups: fresh vegetables and fruits, eggs and dairy, grains, meats and non-meat protein, and packaged goods (Figures 6 through 10). The circle in each bar represents the average answer for each item. Lower averages correspond to higher frequencies of purchases (daily or weekly), and higher averages correspond to lower frequencies (monthly or almost never).

Fresh Vegetables & Fruits: The most common local purchases are fresh vegetables and fresh fruit. Local fresh vegetables, when seasonally available, are purchased by 93.9 percent of respondents. Similarly, 93 percent of respondents purchase local fresh fruit when seasonably available. Although local fresh vegetables and fruits are frequently purchased, canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are seldom purchased. About 72.7 percent of participants indicated they never purchased local canned or frozen fruit, and 78.9 percent of respondents indicate they never purchase local canned or frozen vegetables. These data clearly indicate that locally produced fruits and vegetables are important parts of many people's diets when in season. To provide locally produced food staples during the winter months, canned and frozen fruits and vegetables may represent an area for potential expansion. However, most respondents emphasize the importance of knowing by whom and where their food is produced, and express strong negative attitudes toward foods with a long shelf life and processed foods. We recommend local food producers consider these preferences if they decide to supply canned or frozen fruit or vegetable items if they are to be successful among Co-op members – particularly those who frequently shop at the Co-op for their food needs.

Figure 6 Frequency of purchasing local foods: fresh vegetables and fruits

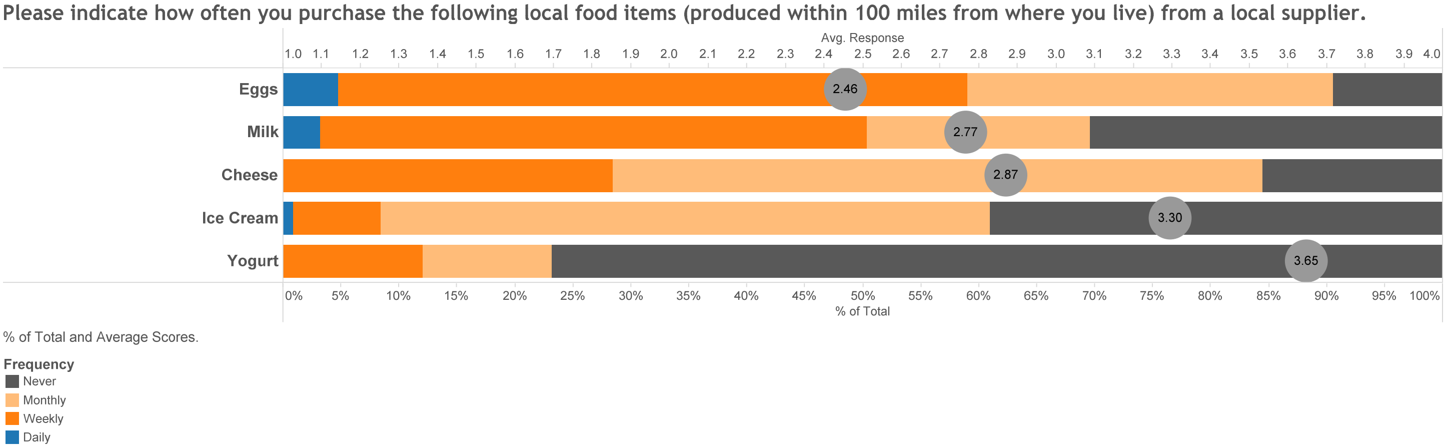
Please indicate how often you purchase the following local food items (produced within 100 miles from where you live) from a local supplier.



Eggs and Dairy: Eggs are the third most frequently purchased local item with 59 percent of respondents indicating they purchase eggs daily or weekly. Milk is also purchased locally by many respondents (69.6 percent), and almost 50 percent of those who purchase local milk do so on a daily or weekly basis. Sixty-one percent of respondents who purchase local ice cream do so at least monthly. Yogurt was rarely purchased, with 76.9 percent of respondents reporting they never purchase local yogurt.

Figure 7 Frequency of purchasing local foods: eggs and dairy

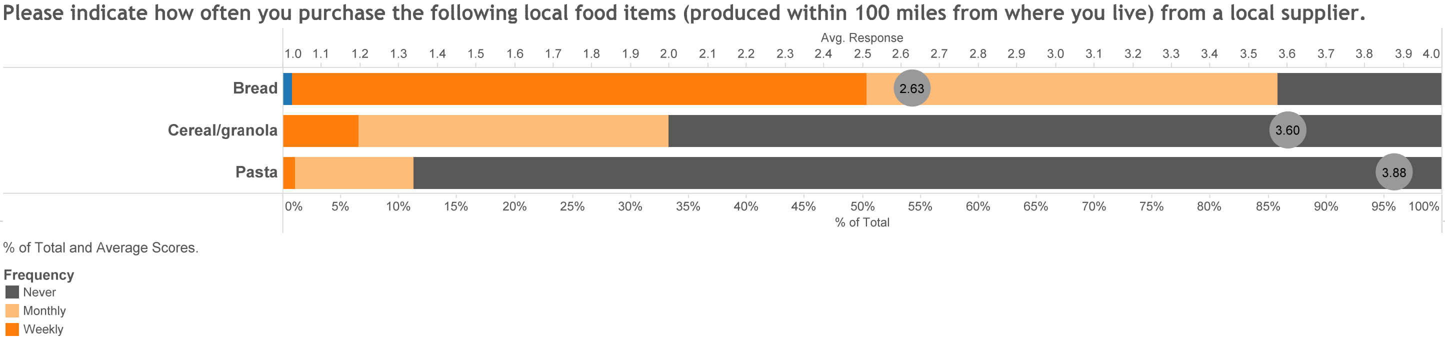
Please indicate how often you purchase the following local food items (produced within 100 miles from where you live) from a local supplier.



Grains: Bread is also frequently purchased locally, with 85.3 percent of respondents reporting that they buy locally produced bread at least monthly. Local cereal is purchased by about 33 percent of respondents, and only 11.2 percent of respondents report buying locally produced pasta.

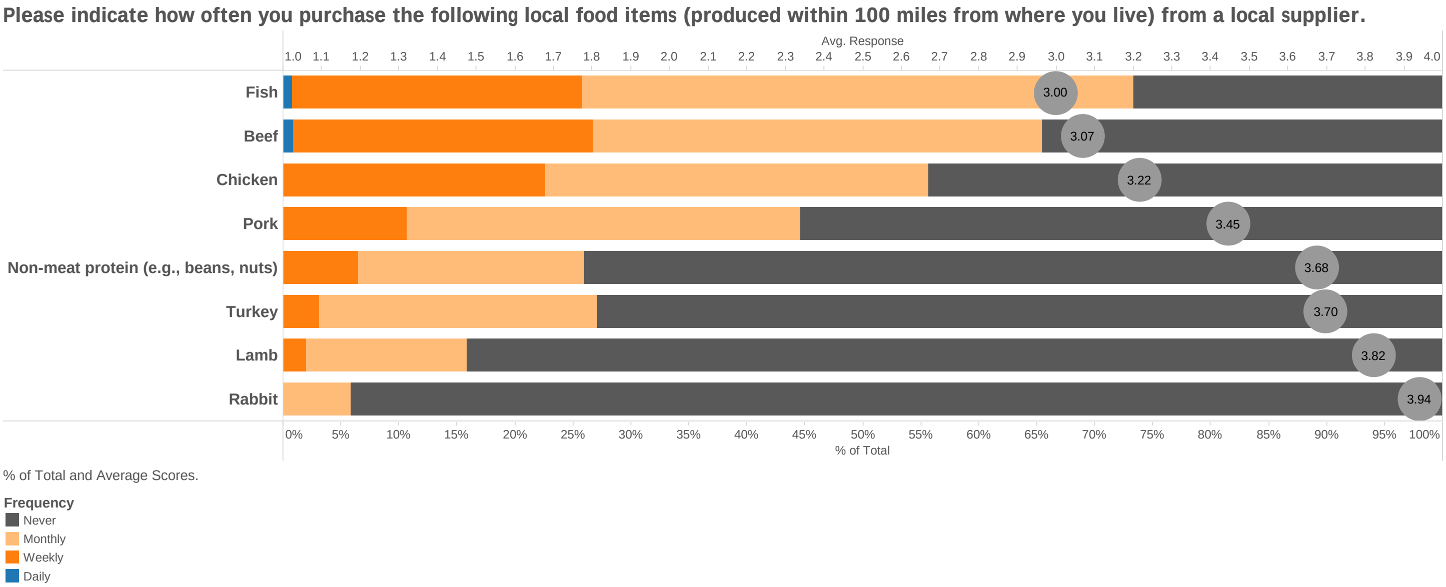
Figure 8 Frequency of purchasing local foods: grains

Please indicate how often you purchase the following local food items (produced within 100 miles from where you live) from a local supplier.



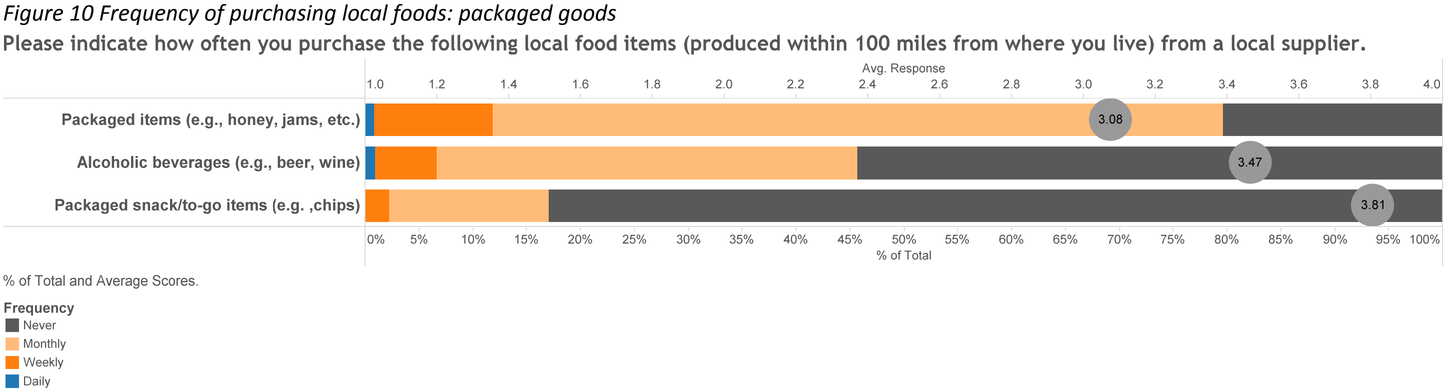
Meats and Non-Meat Proteins: Given Ashland's location on Lake Superior, it is not surprising that 73.3 percent of respondents purchase fish locally. Local beef, chicken, and pork are purchased by 65.5 percent, 55.8 percent, and 44.7 percent of members, respectively. Only 26 percent of respondents report buying locally produced non-meat proteins, such as beans or nuts, and only 27.1 percent of respondents report purchasing locally raised turkey. Lamb and rabbit are the least frequently purchased meat item; 84.2 percent of respondents indicate they never purchase lamb, and 94.1 percent of respondents indicate that they never purchase rabbit. These results reveal that many members do not include lamb and rabbit in their diets.

Figure 9 Frequency of purchasing local foods: meats and non-meat protein



Packaged Goods: Packaged items, such as jams and honey, are purchased by 79.7 percent of respondents; although most purchase these items only monthly, rather than daily or weekly. Fifty-four percent of members report that they never buy local alcoholic beverages, such as beer or wine. A large proportion of Co-op members, 83 percent, report that they never buy locally packaged snack/to-go items, such as chips.

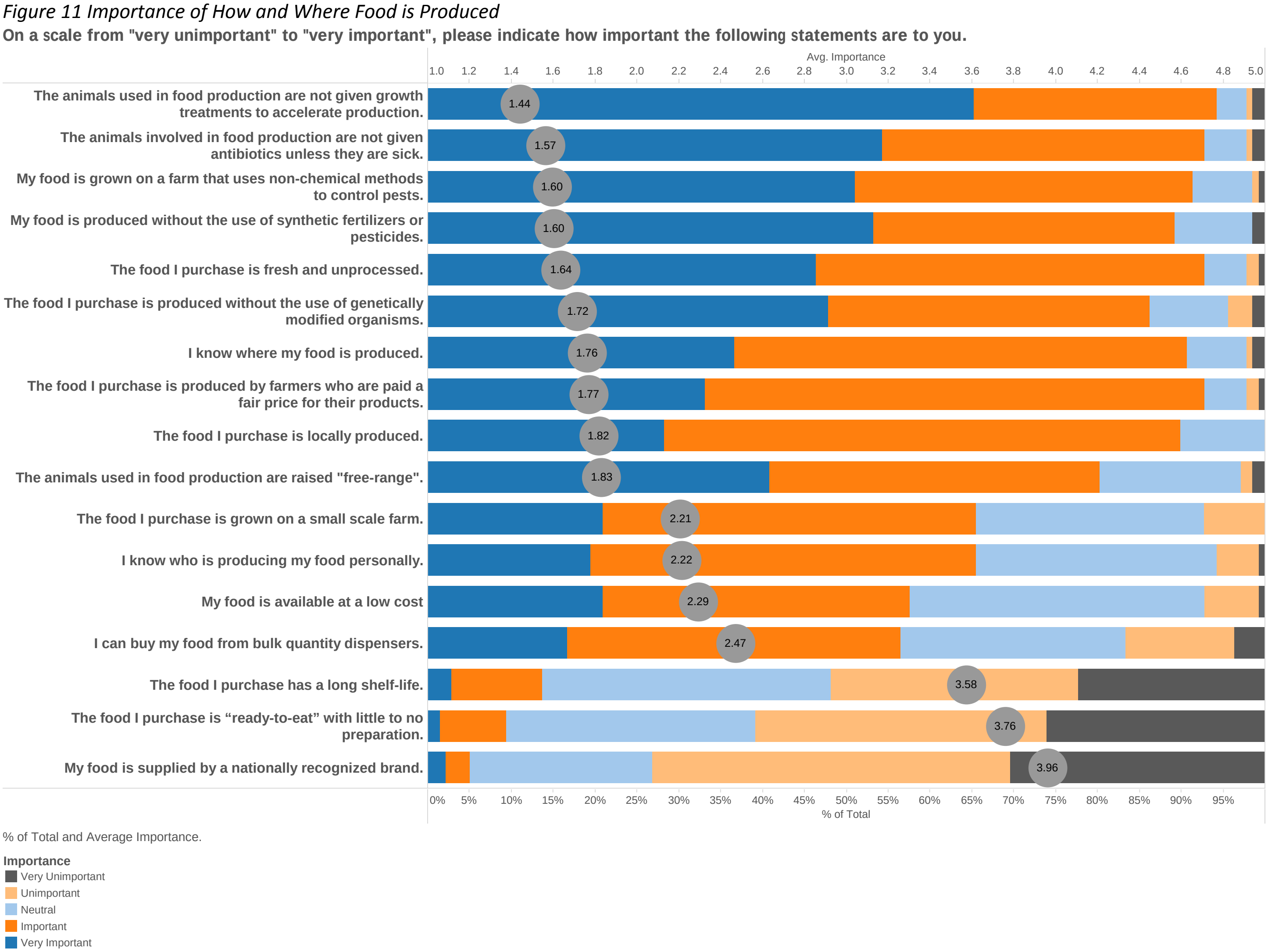
Figure 10 Frequency of purchasing local foods: packaged goods



Importance of How and Where Food is Produced

In the survey, respondents were presented with a number of statements related to food production and food products and asked to rate their importance. The chart below ranks statements by the average response, with lower average scores indicating high importance, and higher average scores indicating low importance (Figure 11). The results indicate that the majority of respondents consider sustainable and organic practices important. The statements rated most often as important are related to growth treatment-free (95.2 percent) and antibiotics-free (92.7 percent) animal husbandry, followed by produce grown with non-chemical pest control (91.4 percent) and free of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides (89.2 percent). On average, participants also place high importance on fresh, unprocessed foods, with 92.8 percent rating this as important or very important. Statements related to local food production are also rated important, including buying from a local producer (89.9 percent) and knowing the producer personally (65.4 percent). Respondents assign little importance to purchasing food with a long shelf life (13.7 percent), purchasing "ready-to-eat" food (9.5 percent), and food supplied by a nationally recognized brand (5.1 percent).

Figure 11 Importance of How and Where Food is Produced



Local Food Attitudes

Respondents were asked to rate nineteen statements about local foods, choosing from "strongly agree" (dark blue), "agree" (orange), "undecided" (light blue), "disagree" (peach), and "strongly disagree" (dark gray). The circle in each bar indicates the average response for each item in the matrix, with lower averages corresponding to greater agreement and higher averages corresponding to greater disagreement. The results are displayed in the following four figures. Figure 12 displays respondents' level of agreement with statements related to local food and its impact on the environment and economy. Figure 13 displays results related to knowledge of local food. Figure 14 depicts behavioral indicators related to food decisions, and Figure 15 shows respondents' level of agreement with statements about attitudes toward local food.

In Figure 12, the statements presented to respondents include "Buying local food helps local farmers" (76.7 percent in strong agreement), "Buying local food creates local jobs" (64.2 percent in strong agreement), "Buying local food reduces pollution" (59.7 percent in strong agreement), and "Overall, local food production is better for the environment" (58.9 percent in strong agreement). These responses suggest that Chequamegon Co-op members agree that buying local food items is both good for the local environment and the local economy.

Figure 12 Local food attitudes: environmental and economic impact

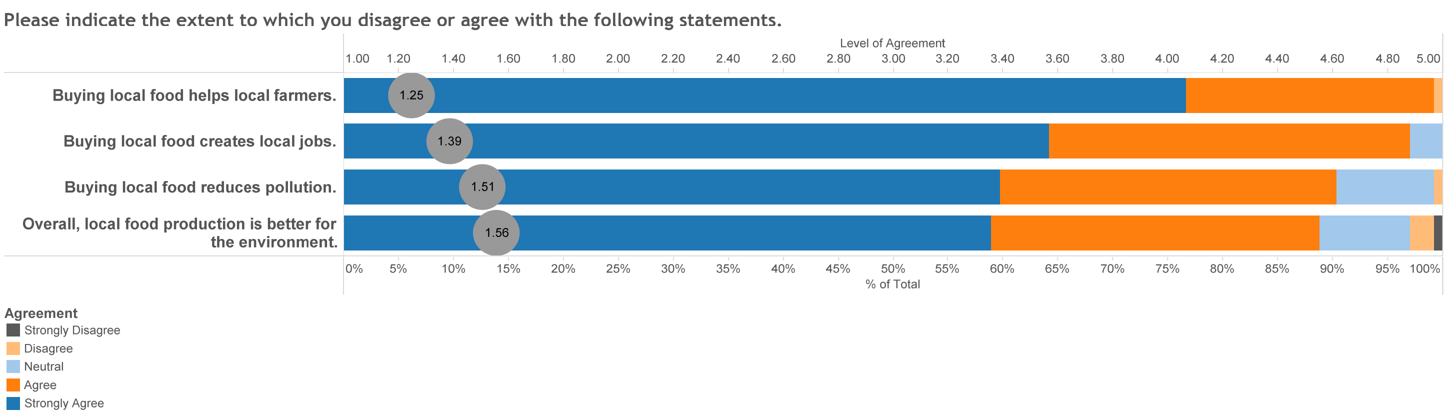
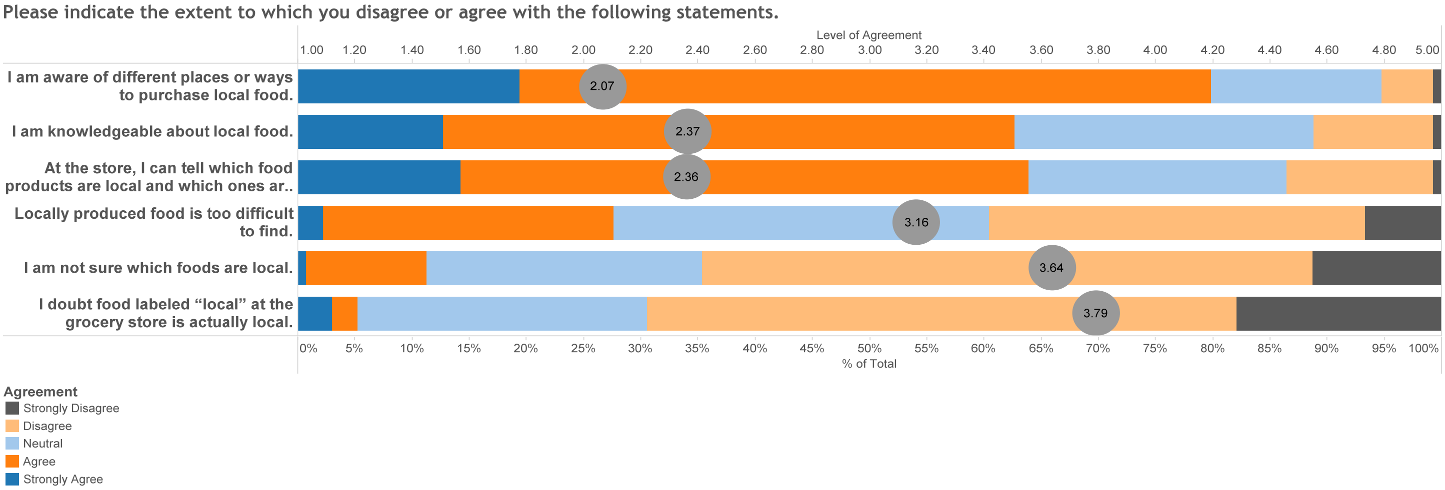


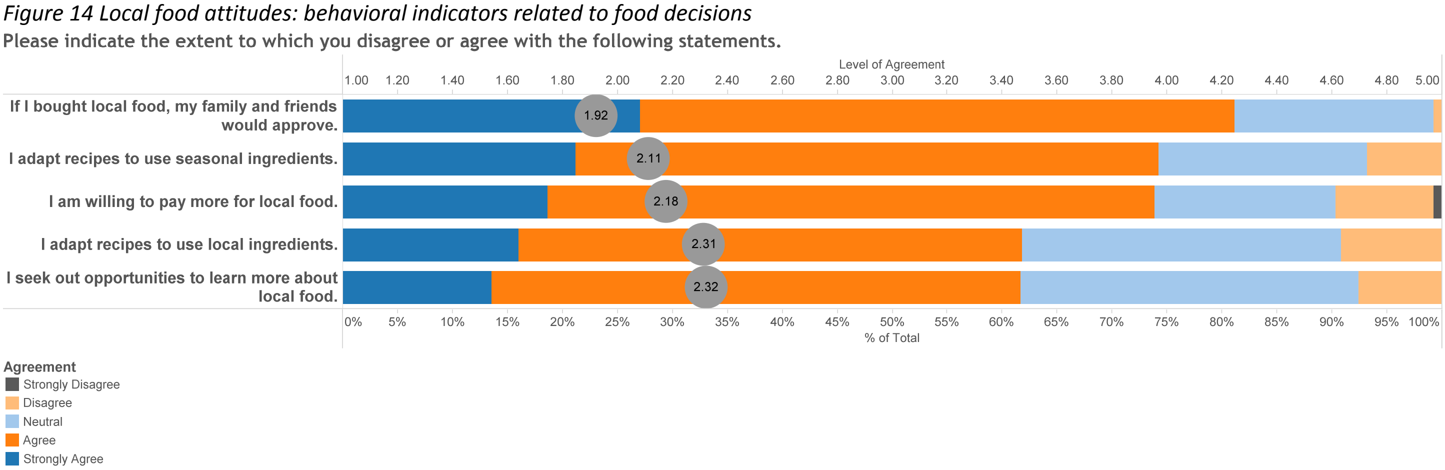
Figure 13 provides insight into awareness, knowledge and perceptions of local food. For example, between 63.9 and 79.9 percent of respondents report that they agree or strongly agree with the following statements: "I am aware of different places or ways to purchase local food," "I seek out opportunities to learn more about local foods," "I am knowledgeable about local food," and "At the store, I can tell which food products are local and which ones are not." Similarly, when asked in the negative – "I am not sure which foods are local" – respondents are consistent in that they tend to disagree with the statement. Despite feeling knowledgeable about local foods, participants vary in their agreement with the statement, "locally produced food is too difficult to find," with about one third of respondents who are neutral, close to one third who agree with the statement, and one third who disagree. Finally, most respondents believe that food labeled as local is actually local.

Figure 13 Local food attitudes: knowledge of local foods



Figures 14 depicts behavioral indicators related to adaptation to food availability, approval from friends and family, and willingness to pay more for local foods. Most respondents (81.2 percent) report that they agree or strongly agree that their friends and family would approve of them buying local food. Regression analysis shows that there is a positive but moderate relationship between support from friends and family and amount of money spent at the Co-op. Approximately 74 percent of Co-op members are willing to pay more for local food. A majority of respondents (61.8 percent) agree or strongly agree that they adapt recipes to local ingredients, and 74.2 percent agree or strongly agree that they adapt recipes to seasonal ingredients. Finally, a majority of respondents agree that they seek out opportunities to learn more about local foods.

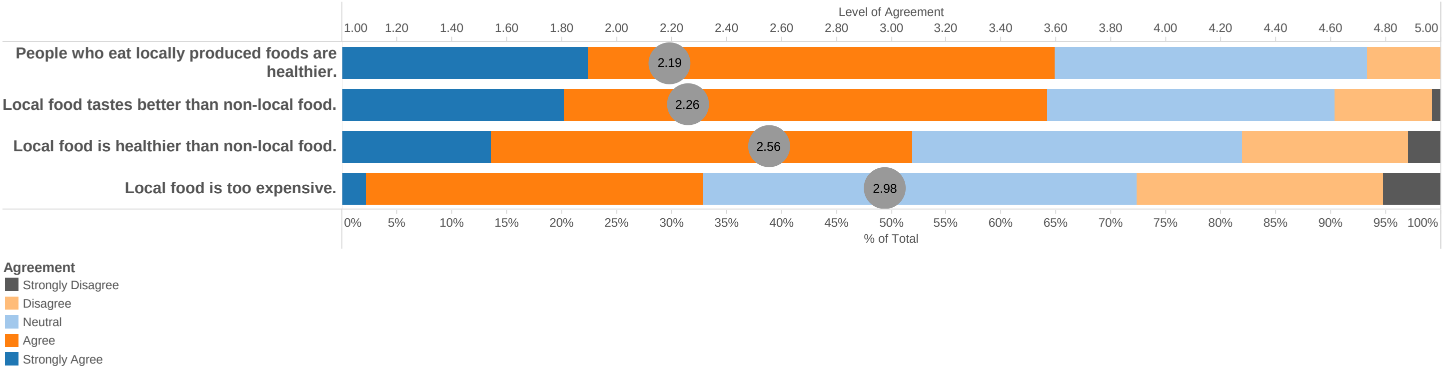
Figure 14 Local food attitudes: behavioral indicators related to food decisions



The results in Figure 15 indicate respondents' level of agreement with regard to the follow statements: "People who eat locally produced foods are healthier," "Local food tastes better than non-local food," "Local food is healthier than non-local food," and "Local food is too expensive." A majority of members agree with statements indicating that local food is healthier and tastes better, however members vary in their level of agreement about local food being too expensive.

Figure 15 Local food attitudes: general attitudes toward local food

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

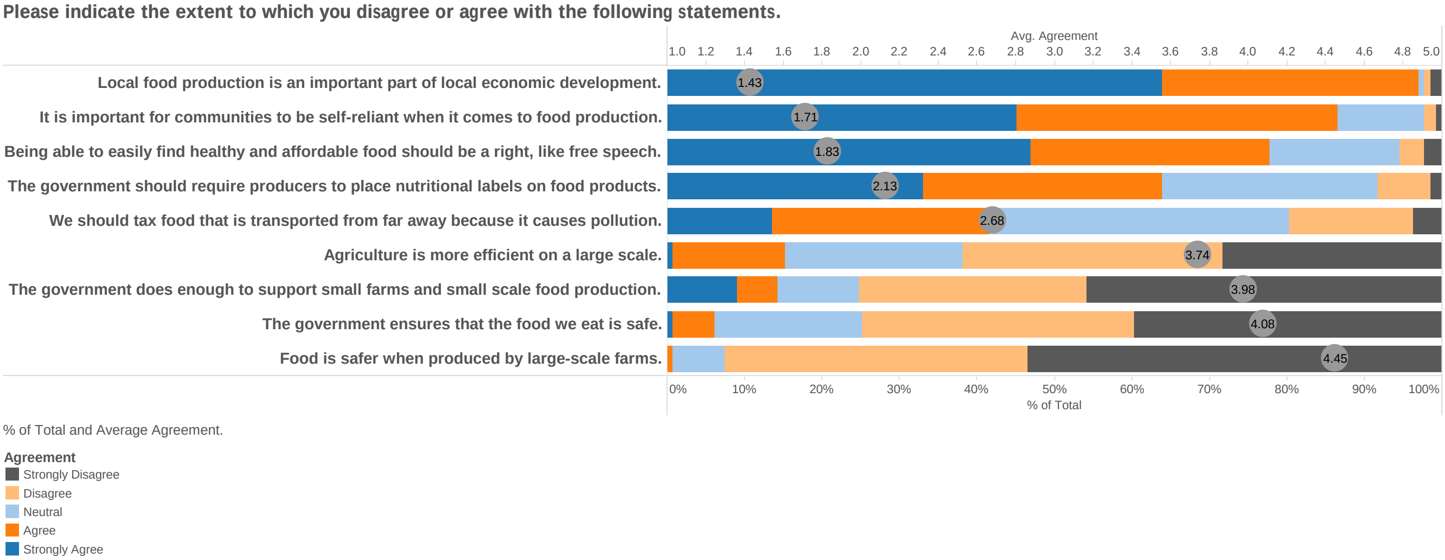


Local Food Values

In the survey, respondents were presented with a number of statements reflecting values related to local food production and asked to indicate the level of agreement with each statement. The chart below ranks statements by the average response, with lower scores indicating greater agreement, and higher scores indicating greater disagreement (Figure 16). Almost all respondents (97 percent) agree that "local food production is an important part of economic development." Almost 87 percent of respondents agree that "it is important for communities to be self-reliant when it comes to food production." Seventy-eight percent agree that "being able to easily find healthy and affordable food should be a right, like free speech." Participants agree that the government should intervene in food systems. Sixty-four percent agree that "the government should require producers to place nutritional labels on food products" and 41.7 percent agree that "we should tax food that is transported from far away because it causes pollution." Furthermore, 75.2 percent disagree that "the government does enough to support small farms and small scale food production," and 74.8 percent disagree that "the government ensures that the food we eat is safe." Only 15.3 percent agree that "agriculture is more efficient on a large scale" and less than 1 percent agree that "food is safer when produced on large scale farms."

Figure 16 Local Food Values

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.



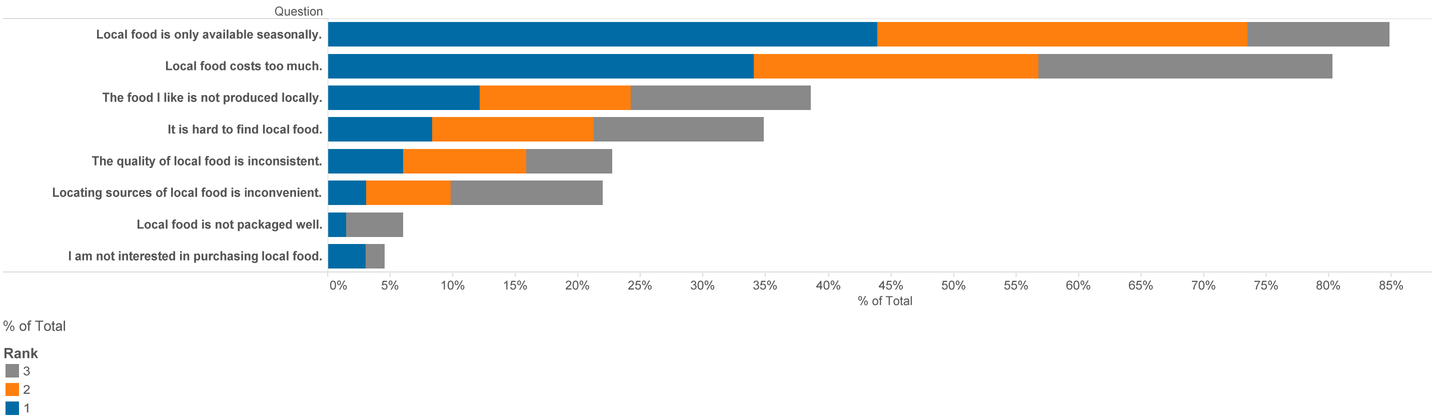
Barriers

Participants were asked to rank the top three barriers to purchasing local food. The two barriers identified most often by respondents are the seasonal availability of local foods (84.8 percent) and the cost of local foods (80.3 percent).

Additional barriers ranked by respondents include the availability of preferred foods (38.6 percent), difficulty finding local food (34.9 percent), inconsistent quality (22.7 percent), and inconvenience of locating local food sources (22 percent). Very few respondents indicate that they are concerned about packaging (6.1 percent). Very few respondents are not interested in purchasing local food (4.6 percent).

Figure 17 Barriers to local food purchasing

In your opinion, what are the barriers to purchasing local food? Please rank the top three barriers by writing “1” on the line next to the greatest barrier, “2” next to the second greatest barrier, and “3” next to the third greatest barrier.



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