

Eastern U.P. Farm & Food Economy



Buying Local Food Matters!

The Eastern U.P. has ample resources:

Residents of the Eastern U.P. earn \$1.6 billion of income annually.
Farmers work 129,000 acres of land.

Yet the region faces immense dilemmas:

Over 17,000 residents (34%) earn less than a liveable wage.
The Eastern U.P. pays \$46 million per year to treat medical conditions related to obesity and diabetes.

Farmers do not earn enough money:

- 531 Eastern U.P. farmers sell \$18.3 million of food products per year (1989-2011 average), spending \$17.9 million to raise them, for an annual gain of \$420,000. This is an average net gain of \$800 per farm.
- Eastern U.P. farmers earned \$810,000 less by selling commodities in 2011 than they earned in 1969 (in 2011 dollars).

The Eastern U.P. food economy drains away \$130 million each year:

- Farmers spend at least \$8 million per year buying farm inputs sourced outside of the region.
- Consumers buy more than \$125 million of food each year that is sourced outside of the region.

Farmers and consumers are connecting:

- 69 farms sell \$228,000 of food products directly to consumers. This is a 73% **increase** of number of farms selling direct, and a 135% **increase** in direct sales since 2002.
- If each Eastern U.P. resident purchased \$5 of food each week directly from farmers in the region, this would generate **\$15 million of new farm revenue** for local farms. This would be a 83% increase in farm revenue! **New local food facilities are needed for this to happen!**



Data compiled October, 2013, by Ken Meter, Crossroads Resource Center (Minneapolis)
Sources: USDA, Centers for Disease Control, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Covers Chippewa, Luce, & Mackinac Counties in Michigan
See full summary at www.crcworks.org/crcdocs/miupEASTsum13.pdf