

Supermarkets vs farmer's markets: Which is more climate friendly?

Are farmers markets as good for the climate as they undoubtedly are for the community?

1. The pea-patch price. There are many reasons to love your local community garden—a splash of color, pollinators, even health—but its hefty crop of carbon unfortunately may not be one of them, according to researchers from the University of Michigan. They looked at [73 urban agriculture sites in France, Germany, Poland, the UK and the US](#) and found [...] overall urban agriculture generated six times as much carbon as traditional farms.

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other 'disruptive' innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

[SIGN UP](#)

2. Miles and packaging are minor carbon sources. It's counter-intuitive, but buying a plastic bag of salad grown the next state over could be a lower-carbon choice than plucking a few leaves from your own garden. Packaging accounts for around [just 5% of the carbon footprint](#) of most foodstuffs, and distribution perhaps another 10%. Those emissions are dwarfed by the infrastructure needed to set up urban gardens, such as metal raised beds and garden sheds.

...

3. Go GMO for the planet? Big Ag is all about efficiency, which can sometimes (but not always) mean getting more output from less input. Some genetically modified crops enable low- and no-tillage agriculture that [may](#) (or may [not](#)) preserve megatons of carbon in farm soils. On top of that potential benefit, researchers at The Breakthrough Institute estimate that increased yields from GMO crops could [cut European agricultural emissions by around 7.5 percent](#) by avoiding additional CO2 emissions from land-use change.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here](#)