



### Going Green

Going green has many meanings when it comes to food. We can eat green literally: greens have great nutritional value! Going green also refers to making conscious choices to conserve energy, support local farmers and support earth friendly practices. You and I really can change the world, or at least agricultural practices, by the choices we make. As others have put it- we can vote with our forks.

I live in an area where we can grow greens all year, and I eat some most days, either cooked or in my salads. With salads I've gravitated towards the heartier greens like spinach, red cabbage, arugula, mustard greens and kale. My favorite is lacinato kale, also called dinosaur kale. Its deep green color is gorgeous slivered against red cabbage.

Buy local and organic when possible. This supports your neighbors, who often practice earth-friendly agriculture. Buying local saves fuel and optimizes nutrition and quality.

The new COOL labeling laws require stores to identify the Country Of Origin (Label), which will help our quest to buy locally. Many of our local stores already support local farmers. Better yet, go to the farmers directly.

Farmers Markets and farm stands are good ways to buy food that is locally grown and sustainably raised, but don't assume – ask questions of the farmers themselves. It feels great to buy food from the people who grew it.

CSA's are Community Supported Agriculture, also called Farm Boxes. Signing up for weekly boxes supports that farm. Like farmers markets, it gives farmers a way to sell their produce directly to the user (you!)



Some boxes are vegetables only, and some add fruits and other foods. Shop around to find a fit that is good for you. You can even join buying groups for sustainably raised meats or fish in some areas.

CSA's are a wonderful way to increase the amount and types of vegetables you eat. My farm box comes with a description of the vegetables it contains, and suggestions for how to cook them. It includes a recipe or two each week. I have expanded my own vegetable experience through that weekly box!

If you want to participate in a CSA/Farm Box – this is the time of year to sign up. Some programs fill up fast. And while some Farmers Markets operate year round, others are seasonal. The market here in Healdsburg opens in May. I can't wait! You can get a listing of Farmers Markets and CSA's near you at [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org).

### Nourishing Breath

There are many ways that we nourish ourselves, and breath is way up there on the list. Breath is so simple and yet so critical. We often don't appreciate it until there is a problem.

Most of us don't breathe very well. I certainly don't. I have a tendency to hold my breath or to take shallow breaths. Then I feel tired – wonder why!

You can literally change how you feel by bringing your awareness to your breath. You can even do this right now as you read these words. Let your belly go soft; this allows the lungs and diaphragm to expand more and increase the volume of air that you inhale.

As your breath slows and deepens, it triggers the parasympathetic nervous system, also known as the "relaxation response". Slow, deep, breath stimulates the vagus nerve which is involved with a number of important organs, lowers blood pressure and heart rate, and improves digestion.

Conscious breathing lowers levels of the stress hormone cortisol, which allows blood sugar levels to drop. Our thoughts, concerns and anxieties become more quiet. We are able to relax, which gives us a new perspective. All this just from bringing our awareness to our breath.

You don't have to forcefully change your breath, just noticing it will help it to slow down and deepen.

A friend of mine is giving weekly breath classes – check them out if you live in the Santa Rosa area. If not, you may want to sign up for her weekly breath tip. It is short, informative, and a good reminder to breathe well.

<http://theflowerbloomsoutofthemud.blogspot.com/>

### Recipe of the Month

**Black Bean Salsa Salad** is a beautiful, colorful and delicious way to enjoy beans. It can be used as a light meal, a side salad, a healthy carbohydrate or an accompaniment for fish. [www.HealthyHabitsCoach.wordpress.com](http://www.HealthyHabitsCoach.wordpress.com).

#### *Greening your diet*

*Do need ideas for making your diet more green and more sustainable? When you create a way of eating that fits you it is so much easier and more enjoyable! Call me to find out more: 707 431-7524.*

#### **Kathy Nichols: Life Coach & Registered Dietitian**

Are you ready to stop dieting and looking for a way of eating that is sustainable, enjoyable and healthy?

*Discover Wellness from the Inside Out!*

