

CISA

Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture

A Commitment to Community and Small Farm Development

LOCAL HERO CAMPAIGN

Since 1999, CISA's 'Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown' campaign continues to convince more consumers to buy local farm products. CISA has penetrated the Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire County markets with the Local Hero message by placing advertisements in newspapers and on radio stations and by helping farmers, grocery stores and restaurants highlight their locally grown food. Consumers are responding to the call to action and are searching for local farm products at farmers' markets, farm stands, grocery stores, in restaurants and at agricultural fairs. As a result, sales of local farm products are increasing and local farmers are seeing increases in their income. CISA's impressive results have been confirmed by four years of annual polling data collected by independent market research companies. Annual internal surveys of Local Hero participants continue to show positive results in the Local Hero campaign.

"Our association with CISA has given us the contacts and publicity our small business needs. We are several years ahead of our marketing plan, in part, due to CISA."

*Dan Conlon
Warm Colors Apiary
South Deerfield*

"I SEE LOCAL HERO EVERYWHERE!"

- Nearly 80% of consumers are aware of the Local Hero campaign and 78% can recall the major theme and slogan without being prompted by pollsters.
- Eighty-six percent of the residents of Western Massachusetts are favorable toward the advertisements and believe they make a convincing case for buying locally-grown food.
- More than 80% of those polled agreed that it is important to continue the message so that residents are kept aware of the benefits of buying locally grown food.
- 65% say they are buying more local food as a result of the Local Hero campaign.

POSITIVE IMPACT FOR LOCAL HERO FARMERS

Over 125 Local Hero members farm over 15,000 acres of land in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties. 50% of Local Hero farms responding to our survey reported product sales increases.

These surveys also indicate that:

- 60% of respondents increased their production
- 55% increased the price of goods they sell
- 42% started or increased farm stand sales
- 41% started or increased sales to restaurants or retailers
- 29% increased their distribution area
- 17% increased their sales to wholesalers

As a loan officer for an agricultural lender I have personally observed the positive impact that CISA's marketing efforts have had on the bottom line of many of my borrowers.

—Greg Melnik, senior loan officer, First Pioneer Farm Credit



“Whenever we use the Local Hero signs on local farm products, our customers buy it.”

Local Hero retailer

LOCAL HERO A RECOGNIZED BRAND

Farmers are using the Local Hero logo to promote their farms and farm products. Belle Rita Novak of the Springfield Farmers’ Market at the X says, “I like that CISA is all over the place. CISA’s print ads are noticed by our customers.”

- 99% were listed in the annual *Farm Products Guide*, distributed to 250,000 Pioneer Valley consumers.
- 87% used Local Hero logos, price cards and Local Hero farm signs.
- 61% used the Local Hero logo on their product label.
- 26% had their farm featured in a radio story.
- 46% participated in “Local Hero” promotional events.

RESTAURANTS AND RETAILERS RECOGNIZE LOCAL HERO

Forty-six retailers and 15 restaurants partner with Local Hero farmers to increase sales of locally grown farm products. Retailers and restaurants help broaden the market for local products and increase the visibility of the Local Hero campaign. Forty percent of these participating restaurants and retailers responded to CISA’s survey. In the last survey:

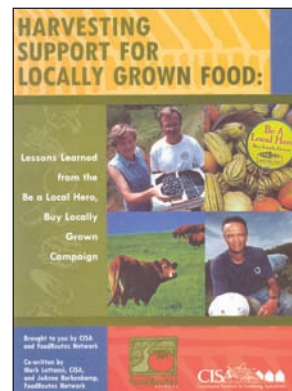
- 68% of responding restaurants and retailers report purchasing more locally grown products.
- Responding restaurants and retailers spent over \$1.7 million on local products. This figure represents sales from independent grocers only. When one considers the purchase of local products by chains, the total amount would exceed \$5 million.

One restaurant owner reported an increase in purchases of local farm products of \$75,000, and a Local Hero retailer reported that over half of his produce sold came from local growers.

LOCAL HERO A NATIONAL MODEL

CISA and FoodRoutes published *Harvesting Support for Locally Grown Food: Lessons Learned from the ‘Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown’ Campaign*, a comprehensive manual to creating and implementing successful public awareness campaigns for locally grown food. Nearly 500 copies of the manual have been distributed across the country, and many communities are learning from CISA’s experiences while starting their own campaigns. CISA is proud of the accomplishments of the Local Hero participants and campaign and is working to assist other communities in this important work.

To order a copy of the manual, call CISA at 413-665-7100 ext. 10. Printed copies are \$50 plus shipping, CD-ROMs are \$45 plus shipping.



One Sugarloaf Street
2nd Floor
South Deerfield, Massachusetts 01373
phone: 413-665-7100
fax: 413-665-7101
www.buylocalfood.com
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