

This article, written by our very own Executive Director, Rachel Sagan, recently appeared as a guest essay in The Beacon and other regional newspapers:

Locavore Philanthropy – A Full Serving for our Community

By *Rachel Sagan*, Executive Director, Acton-Boxborough United Way
April 2013



Why give locally? In recent years the local food movement has gained momentum – people are focused on where their food comes from and there is a conscious effort to consume local foods as much as possible. "Locavore" became the 2007 word of the year in the Oxford American Dictionary. [Oxford University Press](#)

Do the principles driving the local food movement apply to our giving and illustrate the power of giving local? What would “locavore philanthropy” look like? It might include supporting the issues that are close to your heart and home.

The reasons for local food are many and include sustainability, support of local economies, reduction in waste and energy involved in transporting food. Some advocate that local food even tastes better. See boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2007/07/22the_locavores_dilemma/By Drake Bennett July 22, 2007.

Local dollars are arguably “fresher.” There is less distance between the community group, the people in need and the donor who makes the gift. Rich relationships can grow and develop between those who give and those who work (or volunteer) at local agencies many of whom live or work in the community served. Just as we meet the farmer at a Farmer’s Market, community based non-profits offer donors many opportunities to meet both staff and volunteer leadership - at Town Meeting, the baseball field, or a local business. These connections help us better understand the benefits these local agencies provide and the real need in the community facing our children, families, and the elderly.

A locavore model of giving might sustain the smaller non-profits that have their ears to the ground and deep connections to the communities they serve. There is a power in giving locally with sustainable results that support all living in a community.