Shopping for Local Foods in the U.S.

Description:

Locally grown and produced foods are all the rage in the food industry – many say they're the “next organic.”

But Packaged Facts estimates local foods to have generated $11.7 billion in sales in 2014 – a tidy sum no doubt, but a drop in the bucket of the overall food/beverage market in the United States (less than 2%). That's far less than sales of organic products, which enjoy greater consumer acceptance and are grown on a much higher share of farm acreage. And one can't overlook the limitations local foods face by short growing seasons, depending on where you are in the country.

So, despite the buzz, is locally grown really a sustainable trend? In our new report, Shopping for Local Foods in the U.S., Packaged Facts believes that the local foods market has legs in as much as it is a marketing construct, code for high quality, fresher, more authentic, trustworthy, environmentally friendly, and supportive of the local community - key factors for attracting shoppers into the store and encouraging repeat business.

Scope and Methodology

Shopping for Local Foods in the U.S. thoroughly examines trends and opportunities in the local foods market, covering all types of retail outlets, farmers’ markets, foodservice providers, marketers all types of business models, the role of food hubs, reasons to buy local foods, and government support for local foods programs. Using extensive data from a proprietary Packaged Facts National Consumer Survey conducted in November 2014, as well as other published surveys, the report delves deeply into consumer purchasing, examining what motivates consumers to buy local foods, where they're buying them, and what they're buying and growing themselves.

The report profiles over 20 participants active in the local foods market, including marketers such as Gotham Greens’ rooftop greenhouse operations; bricks-and-mortar retailers ranging from Bi-Lo supermarkets, Fairway Market, and The Kroger Co. to Meijer, Walmart, and Whole Foods Market; online grocery services like FreshDirect and Good Eggs; farmers’ markets and CSAs; and foodservice providers like Bon Appetit Management Co. and Chipotle Mexican Grill.

In addition to the Packaged Facts consumer survey, primary research includes on-site examinations of retail and foodservice channels. Secondary research involved evaluating and comparing data from more than 200 articles and reports found in industry publications; scrutinizing the websites of individual participants in the local foods market; reports by industry associations such as the National Restaurant Association; government data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; annual reports, 10Ks, transcripts of earnings calls, and other financial releases from public companies; and other Packaged Facts reports.

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