

FARMING TERMS

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FOOD PROCESSING TERMS

BIODYNAMIC: Biodynamic farming is an approach based on the work of Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner. In addition to organic practices such as crop rotation and composting, biodynamic farmers rely on special plant, animal and mineral preparations and the rhythmic influences of the sun, moon, planets and stars.

CERTIFIED CALIFORNIA GROWER: California farmers that sell at Certified Farmers Markets are required to register with their county's agriculture department. These departments certify that the information the farmer registers is true, including crop types, number of acres and location. All farmers are required to post their county certification at the farmers market. These Certified Producer Certificates (CPC's) do not indicate the farmer's growing methods.

CONVENTIONAL: Refers to standard agricultural practices that are widespread in the industry. Can include use of pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, "mono-cropping," antibiotics, hormones and other agribusiness approaches. Conventional farming in the U.S. may also include the use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). The Marin Farmers Market prohibits the sale of any products known to contain GMOs.

DRY-FARMED: Produce grown using a tilling technique that seeks to retain moisture in the soil and to minimize or eliminate the use of irrigation.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOS): GMOs are plants and animals that have had their genetic make-up altered to exhibit traits that are not naturally theirs. In general, genes are taken (copied) from one organism that shows a desired trait and transferred into the genetic code of another organism. Genetic modification is currently allowed in conventional farming.

HEIRLOOM: Heirloom crop varieties, also called farmers' varieties or traditional varieties, have been developed by farmers through years of cultivation, selection, and seed saving, and passed down through generations.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM): A pest management strategy that focuses on methods that are least harmful to the environment. Pesticides are applied in such a way that they pose the least possible hazard, and are used as a 'last resort' when other controls are inadequate.

NATURALLY GROWN/ALL NATURAL: USDA guidelines state that "natural" meat and poultry products can only undergo minimal processing and cannot contain artificial colors, artificial flavors, preservatives, or other artificial ingredients. The claim "natural" is otherwise unregulated.

NO SPRAYING/PESTICIDE-FREE: Some farmers may avoid the use of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides even if they continue to use conventional inputs such as synthetic fertilizer. "No Spraying" or "Pesticide-free" indicates that while the farm may not be organic, there are no toxic sprays applied to the produce.

ORGANICALLY GROWN/CERTIFIED ORGANIC: All products sold as "organic" must be certified. Certification includes annual submission of an organic system plan and inspection of farm fields and processing facilities to verify that organic practices and record keeping are being followed.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE: Agriculture that is socially just, humane, economically viable, and environmentally sound.

TRANSITIONAL: Farmers need to practice organic methods for three years on a given piece of land before the products grown there can be certified organic. "Transitional" means that the farmland is in the midst of that transition period towards organic certification.

VINE-RIPENED/TREE-RIPENED: These terms are applied to fruit that has been allowed to ripen on the vine or tree. Many fruits that are shipped long distances are picked while still unripe and firm, and then sometimes treated with ethylene gas to "ripen" and soften them.

ARTISAN/ARTISANAL: The terms "artisan" and "artisanal" imply that products are made by hand in small batches.

DRY-AGED: Meat that is "dry-aged" is hung in a temperature and humidity controlled room for a period of weeks to develop flavor and tenderness. Under controlled temperatures, the muscle fibers relax, yielding a less resilient piece of meat that is more tender to chew. Most commercially available meat is "wet-aged," meaning it is wrapped in plastic and then refrigerated for a much shorter period of time.

FARMSTEAD CHEESE: Farmstead cheeses are made by the same people who farm the animals that produce the milk. In other words, a cheese that is "from the farm."

NATURALLY-LEAVENED: "Naturally leavened" means that commercial yeast was not used, but instead a sourdough starter made from natural yeasts. The dough goes through a sour fermentation that is a slower, more traditional and less predictable process than commercial yeast leavening. Most breads that are commercially available today use commercial yeast as leavening.

RAW-MILK CHEESE: Cheese and other dairy products made from milk that is not pasteurized say "raw milk" on the label. In the U.S., raw milk cheeses are required to be aged for 60 days as a safety precaution.

SULFURED/NO SULFUR: Many dried fruits are sulfured with sulfur dioxide (SO₂) or meta bisulfate to keep them from oxidizing during and after the drying process. This preserves their original color and acts as a preservative. Unsulfured fruits are often dark brown in color.

VEGAN: Foods with this label contain no animal products of any kind.

WOOD-FIRED OVEN BREAD: Breads baked in an oven made of brick, clay or sod that is heated by burning wood.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY TERMS

FARMERS MARKET TERMS

CLOSED-HERD: This term means that the animals in a herd are all bred from the original herd. No animals are purchased from breeders or other sources and incorporated into the herd.

FREE-RANGE: Free range (or free roaming) implies that a meat or poultry product comes from an animal that was raised out of confinement or was free to roam. Its use on beef is unregulated and there is no standard definition of this term. USDA requires that poultry have access to the outdoors but for an undetermined period each day. "Free range" claims on eggs are not regulated.

GRASS-FED: The diet of grass-fed animals consists of freshly grazed pasture during the growing season and stored grasses (hay or grass silage) during the winter months or drought conditions. Grass feeding is used with cattle, sheep, goats, and bison.

HUMANE: If an animal product is labeled "humane," it implies that the animals were treated with compassion. "Certified Humane" means that the animals were allowed to engage in their natural behaviors; raised with sufficient space, shelter and gentle handling to limit stress; and given ample fresh water and a healthy diet without adding antibiotics or hormones. Not all "Humane" claims are regulated.

NO ANTIBIOTICS: Antibiotics are given to animals such as cows, hogs and chickens to prevent diseases that run rampant in the cramped conditions in which many food animals are kept. When a ranch or product professes "no hormones," this means that they do not engage in these practices.

NO HORMONES: Hormones are commonly used in the commercial farming of animals such as cattle to increase the size of beef cattle or to increase the production of milk in dairy cattle. Some of these hormones are natural, some are synthetic, and some are genetically engineered. If a ranch or product professes "no hormones," this means that they do not engage in these practices.

CALIFORNIA CERTIFIED FARMERS MARKET: A location that has been approved by the county agricultural commissioner for California producers to sell agricultural products directly to consumers.

FARMERS: To be classified as a farmer in a certified farmers market all of the products must be grown, raised, or caught in California and sold directly by the producer or his or her employee or family member. Every farmer in the market is required to post a Certified Producer's Certificate, issued by their county's agricultural commissioner.

VENDORS: Processed and prepared foods made by regional artisan producers are allowed at the market on a limited basis. A small number of commercial sellers are also allowed at the market to add variety and complete the shopping experience.

FAIRFAX (WED. 4-8, MAY-OCTOBER)

FREMONT — IRVINGTON (SUN. 9-1, ALL YEAR)

HAYWARD (SAT. 9-1, ALL YEAR)

MARIN CIVIC CENTER (SUN. & THURS. 8-1, ALL YEAR)

NOVATO (TUES. 4-8, APRIL-OCTOBER)

OAKLAND — GRAND LAKE (SAT. 9-2, ALL YEAR)



PHONE: 415.472.6100
TOLL FREE: 800.897.FARM
WWW.MARINFARMERSMARKET.ORG
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GLOSSARY

A general guide to terms you may see at the farmers market regarding farming practices, food processing and animal husbandry.

Courtesy of the Center for Urban Education About Sustainable Agriculture (CUESA)

SAN RAFAEL NOVATO FAIRFAX OAKLAND HAYWARD FREMONT

