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Local market a super way to shop

RACKING up food miles has snuck on to the ever-expanding list of activities constituting environmental vandalism – right up there with throwing eight plastic bags' worth of groceries in the back of the 4WD after driving three blocks to the multi-national supermarket.

The Capital Region Farmers Market cuts a fair whack off the distance food needs to travel from grower to table, reducing transport costs and carbon footprints along the way. Held at Exhibition Park each Saturday morning, this week saw the introduction of a new policy designed to provide customers with even more information on where their food actually comes from.

The market stallholders were

split into two groups – one shed for producers selling their own products and the other for those selling on behalf of approved producers.

If you are purchasing in the producers' shed, you can rest assured that the person behind the display has harvested the fruit, raised the livestock, baked the bread, gathered the honey and caught the fish themselves. They can tell you where it came from and how it grew – not to mention the best ways to consume it.

The sellers' shed also has a store of local knowledge from people in the industry who have diversified a little and may sell on behalf of boutique suppliers or neighbours.

Apart from providing Canber-

rans with a hugely entertaining venue for stocking up the cupboards and crisper each week (you can't compare the buzz of shopping in a giant, noisy, colourful and aroma-filled shed with your local supermarket, really you can't) the market is making a significant impact on reducing local food miles, not to mention supporting local farmers and agribusiness. Managed by the Rotary Club of Hall, all funds generated from the market are fed back into Rotary projects.

And even if you couldn't give a succulent, organic, blush-coloured fig about the environment, how about trying it because the food tastes better?



The Capital Region Farmers Market is held at Exhibition Park each Saturday morning.

Photo: STEFAN POSTILES