



Common Ground

*By Marcia Rae
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It seems to me that what is needed now more than ever is a way for people to talk to each other when in the beginning it seems that they just cannot agree on anything. Maybe that is why I focus on food. We all eat – that is common ground and a place to begin.

What if what unites us is more than we realize; and what divides us is less than we fear?

Could food be a way for us, in this community, to begin discussing what we have in common rather than what we don't? If that were possible here, could that not be possible across this country, at a time when we seem to be so polarized?

So here are some things I think we can all agree on about our food and food system. There are probably MANY more.

Food is good. We want food, and for many reasons including for fun.

We need the nutrients that food provides to live. The nutrients in food help to keep our bodies healthy.

Food with lots of nutrients is better than food that is lacking. Lack of food, or food lacking in nutrients contributes to poor health.

Fresh food is better than stale. It tastes better and has more nutrients.

Food that tastes good is good.

Food that is produced in a way that is good for the land is good. Food that is produced in a way that hurts the land and environment is bad.

Protecting good farm land is good. Making good farm land better is even better.

Access to fresh, clean water is important to food production. If we use more water than is being replenished into the aquifer, we will run out of water.

We eat lots of food, grown on vast tracks of land. It takes big machines to farm enough land to produce the quantities of food we eat.

Most of our current farming methods are dependent on oil and natural gas. We will run out of oil and natural gas.

Farmers are important to us all because they grow food that we eat. They are also stewards of most of our land.

It is important to value our food by paying for it in a way that farmers will keep growing it and have a good living doing so.

People need affordable food. People need access to food, i.e. stores or markets.

Keeping money in the local economy is good and helps keep our community healthy and vibrant.

Wow, this is a long list. While these points might seem obvious and simplistic, behind them each is a whole big discussion.

What if we did this with everything? What if we looked for common ground?

Munch on This – Just for today, where can you find common ground?

PS – See you at the Farmers Market this Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon, for real local food. Music by Bob Eskew and friends.

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