

Connecticut's Community Supported Agriculture

Community Supported Agriculture, commonly known as CSA, is a popular term among food-conscious people.

CSA programs directly link the consumer to the farmer. The middleman is eliminated. The consumer becomes a shareholder or subscriber and commits at the beginning of the growing season to purchase part of the farmer's crops.

Shareholders pay their membership fee up front, which helps cover production costs. The cost and size of the share is pre-determined by the farmer, generally by produce value or weight. Some CSAs offer half shares or working shares.

- **A working share allows the shareholder to work on the farm for a discounted membership fee.**

There are many sensible reasons for joining a CSA. The benefits are not only for consumers and farmers, but are also experienced throughout the local community.

- **Generally, most CSA farmers follow sustainable farming practices, which is better for the environment and economy**
- **Membership in a CSA keeps your food dollars close to home**
- **The farmer has a guaranteed market for produce and receives a fair income**
- **You have access to the freshest, highest quality, usually organic produce for your family**
- **You have greater diversity in your food choices – this means new taste experiences from a large variety of vegetables and herbs**
- **You will get greater nutritional value from food diversity**
- **You can develop a relationship with the farmer – ask questions, and even take a tour of the farm**
- **You can make going to the CSA farm a learning experience for your kids – teaching where and how our food is grown, and who's doing all the work**
- **In addition to vegetables, some CSAs offer herbs, flowers, fruit, dairy products, maple syrup, local honey, eggs, and grass-fed meat**
- **Would you like to be a part of the process? Look for the pick-your-own (PYO) crops option in a CSA.**