

Farm2Firm: Strengthening the Farm to Workplace Connection

To develop a new direct marketing channel for farmers by creating a community supported agriculture (CSA) program for workplace employees in western Massachusetts, while simultaneously providing training and hands-on agricultural production and marketing experiences for new immigrant farmers and other small-scale agriculture producers.

[Final Report](#)
[Workplace CSA Manual](#)

Farm2Firm: **Strengthening the Farm to Workplace Connection**

AMS Farmers Market Promotion Program

Final Report

September 2008



Narrative Report

The primary issue being addressed by CISA's Farm2Firm project was the need of farmers in western Massachusetts to access new, reliable direct markets. This initiative was designed to build and strengthen direct marketing opportunities for farmers through the creation of off-farm CSA distributions at urban workplaces.

Goal and Objectives of the Project

The ultimate goal of the project was to improve farm viability in western Massachusetts (and beyond) by developing a new direct marketing channel for farmers.

Objectives for the project were:

- Workplaces in western Massachusetts will seek to develop Farm2Firm "community supported agriculture" (CSA) programs, in which employees sign up to receive a weekly "share" of a farm's harvest, delivered to their workplace;
- Farmers will develop skills to market, recruit and retain customers at area workplaces;
- Beginning Latino farmers will build marketing skills through technical assistance and inclusion of an "add-on" share option supplying specialty vegetables and herbs;
- Urban youth will learn marketing and customer service skills through staffing CSA distributions;
- The Farm2Firm model will be described in a "how-to" manual in such a way that other organizations around the country can replicate the concept.

Project Description

The primary effort of this project involved linking urban workplaces and rural farms through weekly deliveries of fresh, local produce to the workplaces. In 2007, seven local farms, all located in the more rural Franklin and Hampshire Counties, were able to generate over \$100,000 in income through the markets that this program opened up to them. A total of 181 employees at six Hampden County workplaces, including colleges, a hospital, and a large investment firm, participated in the CSA distributions and two workplaces piloted workplace farmstands. In 2008, there were eight farm/workplace partnerships, with a total of 131 CSA participants, 4 workplace farmstands and over \$75,000 in income generated. In addition to the income that this program generates, we also offer participating farmers one-on-one marketing and communications support and guidance in successfully running an off-farm CSA distribution or farmstand. For participating workplaces, the program is offered as an employee benefit and is an excellent way to support employee health initiatives and involvement in the larger community.

We also built partnerships with local organizations, including a youth gardening program located in Springfield, MA, and an urban farming organization located in Holyoke, MA. Through these partnerships, we were able to leverage volunteer resources for the program and also offer some training and expertise to their participants.

As a result of extensive program evaluation, we wrote a manual on the Workplace CSA model and presented our experiences at several national and regional conferences. The manual and other resources we have developed will continue to be available on our website, enabling our

work to be a resource for anyone interested in the development of similar programs outside of our regional scope.

Partnerships

Throughout the course of this project, we partnered with seventeen farms and fourteen urban workplaces. Our workplace partners were responsible for helping CISA and the farm navigate internal policies, securing a location and any necessary equipment for the distribution, using internal tools to promote the program, handling enrollments and payment, and helping to maintain open communication between the farmer and shareholder throughout the season. Farm partners were responsible for developing marketing materials with input from CISA and their workplace partner, helping with recruitment within their own network, transporting shares to the site, coordinating distribution management, and communicating with shareholders throughout the season. We also asked our workplace and farm partners to participate in a full evaluation of the program at the end of each season.

Nuestras Raíces, the organization we had hoped to partner with for an “add-on” shares pilot, had a change in program direction and was unable to participate at the level we had originally anticipated. We have maintained a conversation about the potential for future partnerships throughout the course of this project. The youth agriculture program we partnered with, Gardening the Community, provided youth volunteers for one CSA distribution, developed a flower share pilot program, and sold their own product at a workplace farmstand.

Beneficiaries

The primary goal of the program is to create a financially viable, stable market for local farmers, so partnerships are always entered into with the financial well-being of the farm as a guiding concern. Over the last two years, local farmers have earned over \$175,000 as a result of this program, and it has helped many CSA farmers gain solid ground for their businesses. By promoting the purchase of local food in urban areas, this program has helped expand awareness about the importance and benefits of buying local food and supporting local farmers. In that way, the positive benefits of the program extend beyond the direct financial benefits to our partner farms to create a healthy environment for all local agriculture.

The employees at our partner workplaces benefit from the increased availability of fresh, local produce. Many of them live in urban areas, so the weekly deliveries of produce make it possible and convenient, and often cost-effective, to eat more healthily and to support nearby farms. In the 2007 end-of-season evaluation, one shareholder wrote, “It was great, great, great! I shared with a coworker and we both were so excited each Tuesday to get our box! So many varied things and so delicious!” Our workplace partners benefit because this program is an excellent fit for the roster of employee benefits they offer. One workplace partner said, “the program increases employee satisfaction and reduces employee absenteeism. It’s a unique partnership between a business leader and local agriculture.”

Results and Lessons Learned

The Farm2Firm project has taken positive steps towards creating ongoing, secure off-farm markets for farmers in western Massachusetts. We have been successful in building strong

partnerships between farms and workplaces and in providing farmers with the training they need to successfully market and manage off-farm CSAs and farmstands. Shareholder evaluations at the close of the 2007 season revealed a 94% satisfaction rate with the program, and feedback has been positive from farm and workplace partners alike.

We have learned that off-farm CSAs are an excellent market opportunity for farmers, but that many of the CSA farmers have a thriving on-farm business as their ultimate goal. That is ideal for the ultimate sustainability of those particular farms, but if we are to maintain the ongoing relevance of this program we must keep opening opportunities to new farms and keep developing new relationships between farms and workplaces. It was more challenging than we had anticipated to step away once a partnership was forged. As we have built relationships with the less established CSA farms in the region, we have found that the need for technical assistance and support throughout the season has grown. Where the sites have been most successful, the site managers have quickly integrated the program into their daily work, which was one of the original goals of the project. However, that makes it more difficult for us to access shareholders or partners for evaluative purposes.

We have also learned that, because the shareholders are not making weekly trips to the farm and are not necessarily “early adopters” of the CSA model, a lot more education and ongoing communication between the farmers and shareholders is necessary to keep those relationships positive. All the farms send out a weekly newsletter with crop updates and recipes, which is a wonderful way to help shareholders feel connected to the farm, and some farms have coordinated farm visits as well.

Originally we advocated hard for workplaces to adopt the workplace CSA model over alternative distributions such as Farmer’s Markets or farmstands, because we were concerned that farmers would not see sufficient return from their investment in a workplace without the guaranteed sale of shares. However, we learned that workplace CSA models are not a good fit with all workplaces and that many farmers are open to the farmstand model. Moreover, our pilot farmstands in the summer of 2007 demonstrated that farmers could earn steady and reliable income through a farmstand model. The keys to successful workplace farmstands are aggressive workplace promotion of the market and open markets that can both serve workplace staff and community members.

Our particular geography both aids and inhibits the success of this type of program. Because there are urban areas relatively close by, it’s less of a challenge for farmers to make the weekly delivery trips. On the other hand, the population density of even the more rural areas is high enough that it is possible for farmers to meet their market needs on-farm, which decreases their interest in traveling. Also, while the cities are accessible, they are not large or dense enough that the opportunities there are endless. An area with a starker urban/rural divide would be ideal for a program like this one.

The final major conclusion we have drawn as a result of this project is that gaining buy-in from our workplace partners has been vital to the success at individual sites. The sites where our contact has a personal interest in the program and the support of their administration have been

the most successful in terms of share numbers, shareholder and consumer satisfaction, and farmer satisfaction.

Conclusion

Workplace CSAs and farmstands can be successful direct marketing outlets for farmers looking for new markets. However, like all new markets, workplace CSAs and farmstands take a lot of work and require specific attention and they are not static: workplace direct market outlets must be evaluated on a yearly basis to ensure that the needs and strengths of the individual farms and workplaces are still a good match. Having a third party organization, such as CISA, available to help in the development and evaluation of workplace direct markets can be beneficial, but is not always necessary. Our role was most important in training and educating partners about successful strategies for workplace markets, creating a space for farms and workplaces to get to know each other, evaluating markets, and in lending credibility to new these new markets.

Resources

Project Contact: Claire Morenon, (413) 665-7100, claire@buylocalfood.com

Attached documentation:

- Workplan and actions
- Workplace CSA manual: “Community Supported Agriculture in the Workplace: A Guide to Developing Workplace Community Supported Agriculture Distributions.”
- 2007 Evaluation data
- Press Article

Workplan Progress Report

Scope of Work: A Fifteen month project

Objective 1: Workplaces in western Massachusetts will seek to develop Farm2Firm “community supported agriculture” (CSA) programs, in which employees sign up to receive a weekly “share” of a farm’s harvest, delivered to their workplace;

Stages/ Time	Sub-Element Activities	Activities performed and milestones achieved	Notes and future activities outside the scope of this grant
Stage 1 Late fall 06-Early Winter 2007	Develop printed materials and other visuals for Farm2Firm; schedule meetings with workplace sites to sell the program. Evaluate 2006 program if workplace CSA is already established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrap up, evaluation meetings with all 2006 sites held. • Updated outreach material and outreach templates. 	
Stage 2 Winter 07	Recruitment and marketing in workplaces – develop materials and “the pitch”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory folders developed for potential 2007 workplace partners, sent to 22 workplaces. • Meetings and phone calls with 11 interested 2007 sites. • Maintained contact with potential workplace sites for 2008. 	
	Match interested workplaces with interested farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All seven 2006 workplace sites were interested in participating in 2007. At one site, the farm decided to stop doing off-farm deliveries, so we found another farm to take over that distribution. Two new workplace sites were linked with two new participating farmers. 	A challenge in launching the 2007 season was finding farmers interested in participating in an off-farm CSA. As the CSA model has grown in popularity, the established CSA farmers have found it easier to sell their on-farm shares, so seeking out customers off-farm becomes less of a worthwhile market for them. This model has proven to be a successful, reliable source of income and could continue to be an excellent opportunity for new or transitioning farmers. To continue this work outside the scope of this grant, we will need to actively build relationships with farmers that are in need of new markets. Because we have worked with most of the established CSA farmers in the region, we will need to build relationships with farmers that are not as experienced in the CSA model or in off-farm arrangements. As we expand the pool of farmers, the need for extensive training and support increases.
Stage 2 Winter 07 (cont)	Meetings with farmers and workplaces who sign on. Work with them to send out recruitment materials, troubleshoot, determine communication channels, confirm distribution locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We developed and sent out farm and Workplace CSA material for each site. In some instances this involved working with farmers to redesign their brochure or registration sheet. • As noted above, we met with each farm and workplace partner to develop marketing and outreach strategies. • We evaluated the effectiveness of different outreach strategies and developed a section on workplace outreach strategies for our manual. 	Outreach and marketing strategies differ from site to site and include, in-person tabling, bulletin announcements, intra-net announcements, email announcements, printed letters with paychecks, etc.

<p>Stage 3 Spring Summer 07</p>	<p>Launch workplace sites – troubleshoot recruitment, provide pass through for checks if necessary, determine equipment needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We provided assistance in outreach and marketing throughout the recruitment start up phase. • We set up the systems necessary to act as a pass through agency for recruitment dollars for one workplace partner. • At two sites that had participated in 2006, sign-up numbers fell below the minimums required by the partner farms, so those sites were discontinued for the 2007 season. • Distributions at two newly participating workplaces were launched, which also brought two new farms into the program. • Conversations with two workplaces led to the creation of two off-farm farmstands. These were sites that were interested in partnering with farmers but not comfortable with the CSA model. After discussions with our staff and potential farmers, these sites agreed to pursue a regular farmstand model. 	<p>Being faced with two sites that were unable to meet minimum shareholder requirements, despite having participated in the program the previous year, illuminated the need for both CISA and the workplaces to continue aggressive marketing within the workplace. Also, as our farm partners have established their on-farm businesses, their minimum off-farm share numbers have become less flexible. This reflects the need to continually re-evaluate the relationships we've built and make sure that the scale of the farm and the share capacity of the workplace remain a good fit.</p>
	<p>Troubleshoot workplace sites and collect data and visuals for manual.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CISA staff visited most sites and were able to speak to the farmer and shareholders about how the season was going. • We checked in with each site manager and each farmer throughout the season and were able to troubleshoot when necessary. 	<p>Distributions went smoothly at most sites as most of the farm-workplace relationships entered their second year. As distributions become institutionalized at workplaces, the need for site visits has diminished, although it is valuable to see how each farm manages their distribution and to hear directly from shareholders.</p>
	<p>Outreach to media.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Farm2Firm program generated 3 newspaper stories in 2007. 	
<p>Stage 4 Fall 07</p>	<p>Evaluation with farmers and workplace coordinators in one meeting each to determine success of the program and areas for improvement. Collect and analyze data for manual. Include in report to AMS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performed evaluations with each workplace and farm partner. • Collected and analyzed data for sharing with workplaces and for the manual. 	
<p>Stage 5 Late Fall- Winter 07, expanded into Spring 08</p>	<p>Launch Farm2Firm for 2008!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit new farmers and workplace sites. • Confirm existing workplace distributions for 2008. • Begin shareholder recruitment. 	<p>From previous years' experience with this program, we knew that our farm and workplace partners would benefit from our support throughout the marketing and enrollment period. Therefore, we requested a no-cost extension through June 2008 and expanded the timeframe of the project.</p>

	<p>Launch workplace sites – troubleshoot recruitment, provide pass through for checks if necessary, determine equipment needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We provided assistance in outreach and marketing throughout the recruitment start up phase. • We set up the systems necessary to act as a pass through agency for recruitment dollars for one workplace partner. • Three of the farms that had participated in the program in 2007 decided that they were no longer interested in participating in the program. Two of those farms had expanded their on-farm sales enough that offering off-farm shares was no longer necessary, and the third had been using alternative funding to pilot their involvement in the program, and when their funding source ended they could no longer participate. • Two sites fell below the minimum number of shares needed by the farm to participate, and we were able to find a replacement farm for one of them. • A new farm stepped in to deliver produce to a site that had last participated in 2006. • The two off-farm farmstands that launched in 2007 continued, although one site had a different farm vending there this year. Two additional workplaces piloted the farmstand model with new farms. 	<p>The partnerships between farms and workplaces were initially conceived of as long-term arrangements, which would require a lot of up-front work from the workplace partner, the farmer, and from CISA, but which would eventually become institutionalized so that fewer resources would be needed to keep it going. During the third season of the program, it became clear that, for many CSA farms, off-farm distributions can be an excellent way for them to bolster their numbers while working to expand their on-farm shares, but that it is not an ideal long-term arrangement for them. Shifting the focus of the program so it is more of an incubation program for new or transitioning farms will help keep it vital and focused on the initial goals of the project, but also will continue to require significant input from CISA and from the workplaces. Another challenge is that, because of their size and entrenched systems, the workplaces are often less flexible and open to change.</p>
	<p>Troubleshoot workplace sites and collect data and visuals for manual.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CISA staff visited new sites and were able to speak to the farmer and shareholders about how the season was going. • We checked in with each site manager and each farmer throughout the season and were able to troubleshoot when necessary. 	<p>Distributions went smoothly at most sites, although there have been ongoing challenges with the site that shifted to a new farm this year. The difficulties have shown the need to manage expectations when the participating farm changes, and also to develop tools to ensure that all participating farms have the training and expertise to manage an off-farm CSA distribution.</p>

Objective 2: Farmers will develop skills to market, recruit and retain customers at area workplaces;

Stages/ Time	Sub-Element Activities	Activities performed and milestones achieved	Notes on progress and future activities outside the scope of this grant
<i>Stage 1</i> Late fall 06-Early Winter 2007	Develop schedule and content for trainings with farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured training venues at three MA winter farmers' conferences. • Developed training material, workshop content. • Prepare training material for manual and make it available to other organizations. 	
<i>Stage 2</i> Winter 07	Launch trainings for farmers who want to participate in Farm2Firm. Hold 3 sessions: Nuts and Bolts of CSA shareholder programs; Computer communications skills (very important for CSA workplace programs); Overview of workplace needs. Evaluate success of trainings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 60 farmers attended three nuts and bolts trainings held in conjunction with winter farmer conferences in MA. • Additional one-on-one technical assistance provided to three new farmers. • One-on-one assistance provided to four farmers who participated in program in 2006. • Invited farmers to attend e-business trainings. • Evaluated quality of one-on-one trainings. • Collect evaluations on group nuts & bolts trainings. • Prepare evaluation and summaries for manual. 	Because all our participating farms already operate CSAs, we did not have to provide training on how CSAs operate. We did provide training on how workplace CSAs differ from on-farm CSAs and how best to communicate with off-farm shareholders via email and websites and how to work best with workplace partners. One farmer from out of state who attended a workshop we led in the winter of 2007 followed up to say that she had used our "best practices" and launched a CSA distribution at a hospital near her farm.
	One-on-one sessions with participating farmers to help them move through the process, introducing them to workplace coordinators and informing them about the "rules" since each workplace are different.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have held one to two meetings with each 2007 workplace site and partner farm to introduce farmers and workplace coordinators, to lay out coordination of program, and to develop the marketing plan. • As noted above, we held one-on-one sessions with farms to help them develop marketing material and workplace communication. • Continue to provide shareholder communication tips, best practices, and models. • Prepare "lessons learned" for manual. 	We have worked with each workplace-farm match to develop outreach material for shareholder recruitment. We have continued to do outreach with farms once the distributions began to help them understand and manage regular shareholder communication needs.
<i>Stage 3</i> Spring Sum. 07	See objective 1.		
<i>Stage 4</i> Fall 07	See objective 1.		
<i>Stage 5</i> Late Fall- Winter 07, expanded into Spring/ Summer 08	Begin outreach and recruitment of farmers for 2008 season.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked with farmers that were new to the program to develop marketing materials and develop means for communicating with shareholders throughout the season. 	If we continue to involve new farmers in this program, as outlined in objective 1, the need for effective training will increase dramatically.

Objective 3: Beginning Latino farmers will build marketing skills through technical assistance and inclusion of an “add-on” share option supplying specialty vegetables and herbs;

Stages/ Time	Sub-Element Activities	Activities performed and milestones achieved	Notes on progress
Stage 1 Late fall 06-Early Winter 2007	Develop printed materials and other visuals about Farm2Firm specialty “add-on” shares.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held discussions with “add-on” partner, Nuestras Raices. Due to program changes, Nuestras Raices was no longer able to offer “latino add-on” shares as we had hopes. Instead, we evaluated interest in add-on shares at the existing sites and have incorporated that information into program planning for subsequent years. • Planned and implemented three pilot CSA models. 	In addition to our conversations with Nuestras Raices, we developed three new share models. Through one of these new models, youths from Gardening the Community marketed and managed flower shares at one of our regular distribution sites. Another farm implemented a fruit add-on share. The third model was a pilot fall CSA distribution at an urban public school.
Stage 2 Winter 07			
Stage 3 Spring Summer 07	Hold trainings for Latino farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2007, we held trainings focused on methods for expanding sales at farmers markets, and in 2008 we held workshops on wholesale market readiness. Both workshop series were designed to help farmers increase their markets opportunities. 	
Stage 4 Fall 07	See objective 5.		
Late Fall- Winter 07, expanded into spring/ summer 08	See objective 5.		

Objective 4: Urban youth will learn marketing and customer service skills through staffing CSA distributions;

Stages/ Time	Sub-Element Activities	Activities performed and milestones achieved	Notes on progress and future activities outside the scope of this grant.
<i>Stage 1</i> Late fall 06-Early Winter 2007			
<i>Stage 2</i> Winter 07	Identify workplace sites which will be staffed by youth; train youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One CSA site was managed by youth through our partnership with Gardening the Community. The group also managed and provided produce for an off-farm farmstand at a local hospital. • We conducted evaluations of our partnerships with youth groups and wrote up case summaries for the manual. 	Partnering with youth groups has relieved farmers of some of the burden of managing and staffing an off-farm CSA site, given us strong connections to the urban communities this program serves, and provided the youth with valuable skills and experiences.
<i>Stage 3</i> Spring Summer 07	See objective 1.		
<i>Stage 4</i> Fall 07	See objective 5.		
<i>Stage 5</i> Late Fall- Winter 07, expanded into spring/ summer 08	See objective 5.		

Objective 5: The Farm2Firm model will be described in a “how-to” manual in such a way that other organizations around the country can replicate the concept.

Stages/ Time	Sub-Element Activities	Activities performed and milestones achieved	Notes on progress
Stage 1 Late fall 06-Early Winter 2007	Convene Advisory Team to outline goals and objectives, timeline, and oversight function. Evaluators signed on and included in this planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held in-depth meetings with all farm and workplace partners. Partners who have been involved in this program are critical, so in addition to having formal advisors, we asked all partners of feedback and suggestions for the program. • Research possible evaluators. 	
Stage 2 Winter 07	Develop Manual index and outline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafted manual outline and evaluation needs. • Implemented evaluation plan. 	
Stage 3 Spring Sum. 07	6 month report to AMS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. 	
Stage 4 Fall 07	Work with evaluators to survey shareholders to determine success of program, including evaluation of specialty “add-on” share. Collect and analyze data and report to farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have already contacted evaluator and finalize evaluator contracts. • Perform evaluations. • Collect and analyze data for sharing with workplace partners and for manual. 	
Stage 5 Late Fall- Winter 07	Write and print manual for distribution. Print 165 copies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manual is written, designed, and printing is in progress, We opted to print fewer hardcopy manuals to focus on publicizing an on-line PDF version. 	
	Develop distribution of manual through CISA website & conferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We presented this program at a USDA Risk Management conference and at the Northeast Organic Farming Association conference in August 2007. • The manual is available online. 	
	Final evaluation with evaluator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final evaluation has been conducted. 	
	Final report to AMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. 	



Holyoke Community College/Riverland Farm 2007 Workplace CSA Survey Responses

- We received responses from 78% of the Holyoke Community College CSA members. Of the 10 members who replied, every single one of them reported that they were satisfied with the program. 70% of respondents said that they were “Very satisfied.”
- The majority of the respondents said that the quality, variety, and quantity of produce exceeded their expectations. All respondents said that they were pleased with the “customer service” at the distribution.
- As might be expected, most of the participant’s comments reveal how pleased they were with their purchase of fresh, delicious vegetables.
 - “It was great, great, great! I shared with a coworker and we both were so excited each Tuesday to get our box! So many varied things, and so delicious!”
 - “I found the quantity, quality and variety of the food to be excellent.”
 - “I had never had several of the vegetables. I am now not afraid to get them.”
- Seven out of ten of the respondents visited the farm during the season. Some of their comments about the visit included:
 - “We enjoyed going to the farm—people were helpful and kind.”
 - “I loved the people, the produce, the U-pick, and the friendly goats at the farm.”
 - “I loved the pumpkin carving party!”
- All of the responding participants said that the enrollment process, pick-up, and distribution system were convenient. Seventy percent of the respondents said that they would like to see more locally-grown food served on the HCC campus.
- All but one respondent said that they plan to participate in the program in 2008.



Mount Holyoke College/Simple Gifts Farm 2007 Workplace CSA Survey Responses

- We received responses from 32% of the Mount Holyoke College CSA members. Of the 7 members who replied, 85% reported that they were satisfied with the program.
- Several respondents indicated that they would have appreciated more variety, but the majority of respondents said that the quality and quantity of produce met or exceeded their expectations. All respondents said that they were pleased with the “customer service” at the distribution.
- All of those surveyed said that the enrollment process, pick-up, and distribution system were convenient.
- All of the respondents said that they read the Simple Gifts newsletter. Only one of the respondents visited the farm during the season. The member noted:
 - “Picking strawberries with my son was a great experience and a warm memory.”
- Over half of those surveyed said that participation in the Workplace CSA program influenced their cooking and eating habits and raised their awareness of the importance of supporting local farmers. All of the respondents said that they would like to see more locally-grown food served on the MHC campus.
 - “We were already aware of the importance of supporting community agriculture, and we love what your farm does. We did try some new things and found a few we particularly like (garlic scapes and delicata squash come to mind).”

Growing Crops and Community Ties: Both Help Bind a Business

By Renuka Rayasam

Posted 6/17/07

Last autumn, when Liz Adler was eight months pregnant, she was still picking squash at the Easthampton, Mass., farm she runs with her husband. Adler, a former social worker, never thought about being a farmer until she met her future husband, Ben Perrault. He was a farmer, and as Adler got to know his work firsthand, she grew to like it. "It's scary and risky, but I feel really lucky," Adler says now of her new career. "I'm excited to raise our baby on a farm."



Ben Perrault, Liz Adler, and daughter Olivia at their Mountain View Farm in western Massachusetts
JEFFREY MACMILLAN FOR *USN&WR*

For decades, the idyllic family farm has been threatened by rising property prices and government subsidies to large-scale agribusiness. Now, though, thanks to a new business model called community-supported agriculture, more people like Adler and Perrault are selling crops for profit.

Small farms are harnessing the rising interest in locally grown food and using savvy marketing and management to stay afloat. Food-safety scares temporarily spur shoppers to explore supermarket alternatives, and they discover that buying produce from a nearby farmer feeds the soul as well as the belly, says Mark Lattanzi of Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, a nonprofit in South Deerfield, Mass. CISA has helped small farms with a "buy local" branding campaign, which alerts consumers to who sells local produce.

Perrault, 28, who worked at organic farms after high school, and Adler, 29, acquired a farm business two years ago after deciding that consumer interest in buying locally could help them succeed. The couple renamed it Mountain View Farm, because they believed the previous name, Ol' Turtle Farm, "didn't suit us as young, up-and-coming farmers," Adler says.

Community-supported agriculture cuts out the middleman, with shareholders paying in advance to receive produce directly from the farm as it becomes available over the course of a growing season. Born in Europe in the 1920s, community-supported agriculture took root in America in the 1980s in areas where farmland

borders urban communities. In 2004, there were 1,700 community-supported farms, up from 60 in 1990. Small farms in western Massachusetts, like Mountain View, now bring in crops worth more than \$100 million a year, according to CISA.

Basil and bugs. Mountain View's 430 members pay between \$435 and \$535 a season on a sliding income scale. Shareholders pay the full amount in the spring, so farmers don't have to take out loans upfront to invest in equipment and seeds. It's a win-win relationship: Customers pay less for fresh food, and farmers get some financial security. "Last year, our basil got eaten by bugs," Perrault says. "But customers got a lot of other herbs instead." Mountain View grows over 200 varieties of crops on 25 rented acres.

Members stop by the farm to fill up a shopping bag with freshly picked vegetables from June through October. They can picnic at the farm, explore nearby trails, and pick flowers and herbs. "We are selling something very intangible: a direct relationship to the farmer," Adler says.

Adler issues a weekly newsletter with recipes and information about the harvest. Members may "expect tomatoes to be perfectly round," Perrault says, "and we have to teach them about heirloom tomatoes, which are big and funny looking." Every September, members throw a potluck harvest festival to benefit Mountain View.

Perrault and Adler started selling shares to employees at a hospital in Springfield, Mass., last year. The farm delivers weekly food baskets to the shareholders at work. "There are a lot of families," Adler says, "who want their children to know that broccoli doesn't grow on a supermarket shelf."

This story appears in the June 25, 2007 print edition of U.S. News & World Report.



FARM TO FIRM - 2008

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE FOR THE WORKPLACE

**A Guide for Developing
Workplace Community Supported Agriculture Distributions**

by

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Special thanks to the farmers and workplace partners CISA has worked with over the last 5 years. Thanks also to CISA staff and Rachel Chandler-Worth, Ann Gibson, and Therese Fitzsimmons for assisting with the program. Our gratitude to Just Food for their inspiration through their “CSA in NYC toolkit.”

This manual was developed with the support of the USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service Farmer’s Market Promotion Program grant funding.

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INTRODUCTION

WHY WRITE THIS MANUAL?

Workplace CSAs are a relatively new and exciting innovation for Community Supported Agriculture farms. They have the potential to increase CSA share numbers without requiring additional on-farm distribution space. But, like all emerging markets, Workplace CSAs can be difficult to launch and sustain. To date CISA has worked with nine local farms to set up off-farm CSAs at seven workplaces since launching the project in 2005.

During this time we experienced many ups and downs and learned some key lessons. We are writing this manual so that other organizations that are interested in starting a similar project might learn from our experiences developing workplace CSAs in western Massachusetts. The idea is simple, but coordinating such a program takes organization and education.

ABOUT CISA

CISA links farmers and communities to strengthen agriculture and enhance the economy, rural character, environmental quality, and social well-being of western Massachusetts and partners with other organizations in its region and around the country to sustain agriculture.

CISA's *Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown*® program is the longest running and most comprehensive 'buy local' program for farm products in the country. It promotes local farms through advertising, special events, and newspaper and radio stories about local farms. CISA

helps consumers find locally-grown farm products through a searchable online database of local farms and their products, an annual printed guide to local farms and other sources of local food, and through timely features in a monthly email newsletter. CISA also offers trainings to Local Hero members, which include farmers, farmers' markets, restaurants, grocery stores, landscapers and garden centers, forest landowners, fiber and specialty foods producers, and institutions. By helping consumers find and purchase locally grown products, the *Be Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown*® campaign has increased the income and visibility of local farms. This campaign is regarded as a successful model for other communities seeking to sustain agriculture

CISA's other programs include a Senior FarmShare program, which provides low-incomes seniors with a free share of the harvest from local farms, the Pioneer Valley Women in Agriculture Network, a Farm to School program, and ongoing work to address infrastructure gaps related to dairy processing, slaughter issues, and food safety requirements.

Workplace CSAs are a relatively new and exciting innovation for Community Supported Agriculture farms. But, like all emerging markets, Workplace CSAs can be difficult to launch and sustain.

Why Workplace CSAs?

Our goal was to build and strengthen direct marketing opportunities for farmers in the three counties we serve in western Massachusetts—Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden. The Connecticut River Valley of Massachusetts is home to 820,500 people, the largest concentration of people in the state outside of Boston. Despite the relatively high population, much of the region still feels quite rural. We hoped to develop a new marketing channel for area farmers and address the marketing and financial risks associated with a new off-farm CSA site. We also aimed to improve consumer access to locally grown food, particularly in urban areas.



A MassMutual/Red Fire Farm Shareholder

WORKPLACE CSAS

THE BASICS

A workplace CSA is simply a type of off-farm CSA distribution. With off-farm CSAs, the farmer goes to the customers where they work, live, or gather in the community. Developing an off-farm CSA distribution site can be a great and creative way to grow a farm business and reach new customers.

Workplace CSAs represent a partnership between a workplace, a farmer, and often a facilitating organization. Employees at a partnering workplace are invited to purchase a CSA share from a local farm, which in turn commits to making weekly deliveries of the shares to a central location at the workplace. Hospitals and colleges have great potential as host sites because they typically employ large numbers of people and have strong internal systems that can support the program.

Large workplaces provide a core group of shareholders in one location, which makes it economical for the farmer to make the delivery trip. In the Pioneer Valley region of western Massachusetts, dense population centers are surrounded by farmland, so many farmers only have to make a short trip to access those consumers.

ASSESSING NEED

Before launching any market-building project, it's important to understand your target communities' need for your products or services. With a Workplace CSA program you should identify both the farmer's need for new shareholders, the

Workplace's interest in offering CSA shares at their facility, and, ideally, workers' interest in becoming CSA members. (See Appendix 1.)

Because of our existing relationships with farmers and as a result of our yearly membership-based Local Hero campaign surveys, CISA staff knew that many Pioneer Valley farmers were looking for ways to increase their direct sales. They saw the potential in dense urban areas, and some of the CSA farmers had even tried to approach workplaces in the past with little success. Surveying farmers is a good first step in assessing farmer's interest in this program, but you should also interview farmers to ensure that they understand the income potential and the workload involved in off-farm CSAs before you proceed too far. (See Table 1.)

When we launched the Workplace CSA program, CISA had few established relationships with large companies in western Massachusetts. Instead of doing a wide-scale survey to ascertain interest, we utilized personal connections and targeted specific workplaces, using lists of "major employers," based on employee size and location for cold-calling.

Establishing consumer demand, especially in the more urban Hampden County, was also a challenge for us. The thrust of our Local Hero campaign had been in northern Franklin and Hampshire Counties, which is also where our market research focused. However, we had anecdotal evidence of increased interest in local food in Hampden County, while the opportunities to buy from farmers remained limited.

Table 1. Pros and Cons of a Workplace CSA distribution for farmers

Pros	Cons
<p>With a workplace CSA, farmers go to the customers where they work, enabling them to reach new customers. Unlike like a farmers market setup, the CSA model guarantees a set income for the season.</p>	<p>Off-farm participants may join because it is convenient and they like the idea, without really understanding what they are getting into. Off-farm members often need more education about eating seasonally, farming generally, and the particular farm they are joining. Also, the CSA model reduces the number of employees you can reach, since they must commit to the program and pay in advance.</p>
<p>The CSA model can help farmers access workplaces with non-solicitation policies, because the shares are paid for in advance and no money needs to change hands at the distributions.</p>	<p>The CSA model can be a deterrent to some workplaces, since it requires employees to commit to the program and often to pay up front, which is not likely to be financially feasible for all employees. Workplaces that allow on-site sales will often push for a farmers market arrangement which would be accessible to all employees but is a bigger financial risk for the farmer.</p>
<p>With an off-farm distribution site, the farm doesn't need to have an on-farm distribution shed, parking, bathrooms, and facilities to accommodate shareholders on the farm.</p>	<p>The farmer will need to account for the transportation costs of delivering food and of managing an off-farm distribution site. Host workplaces may have protocols that can be complicated to navigate, such as security or solicitation policies that complicate distribution logistics and shareholder sign-up and payment.</p>
<p>The workplace host may be willing to help manage the distribution and market the shares. Off-farm partners can often provide tables for setting up distributions, volunteers for managing share distributions, on-site space for storage of boxes, etc. Partnerships with workplaces can also build community and can be a good source of publicity for the farm business.</p>	<p>When partnering with others, you may lose some control over the timing of outreach, the exact location of distribution, or the person with whom most shareholders will interact.</p>

IDENTIFYING PARTNERS

In order to successfully launch a workplace CSA program, you must assess the capacity of your organization and your potential partners. When CISA began working on this project in 2005, we had just received a grant through the USDA's Community Food Project grant program, and we had a record of securing funding for our projects. We were widely recognized as the organization working to establish innovative ways to connect farms and communities in our region and we had working relationships with 140 farms in the Pioneer Valley. We also had internal expertise on communicating with both farmers and people within large corporations.

We contacted CSA farms that were members of our Local Hero campaign to assess their interest in and capacity for an off-farm distribution. Originally, we also identified experienced growers who were not operating as CSAs but had expressed interest in expanding into new markets. Ultimately, we decided to focus on farms that were already experienced in CSA distribution models for this project, since it reduced the learning curve for the farms as they entered the program.

Potential Workplace CSA farmers must also be experienced in growing a diversity of vegetables and have excellent customer service and communication skills. Good candidates for this type of program are often relatively new farmers who are eager to grow their business and will work hard to win folks over to eating locally grown foods as a way of life. The farm must be available for meetings with the other

partners, accessible by phone or email, and open to site visits on the farm. While looking for farm participants, CISA conducted a survey that asked farmers to indicate how far they were willing to travel to deliver shares and how many shares they would want to have secured to make a new distribution worth their while. This was important to us because Springfield, the largest city and home to most of the larger employers, sits at the southern end of the valley, making it too far a delivery trip for some of the farms in the northern counties.

We identified the largest employers in our region, making the assumption that the largest concentrations of employees would yield the best workplace CSA sites. CISA has successfully worked with companies that have between 500 – 4000 employees. Although smaller workplaces can successfully host Workplace CSAs, often these distributions are very small, between 5-20 shares, and may need to be open to workers from neighboring workplaces, which takes additional coordination and outreach. Companies that are large enough to offer a big pool of potential shareholders are also like to have well-supported Human Resource or employee benefits offices that could support a Workplace CSA program. Larger employers also may be able to offer payroll deduction or other internal incentives for employees. Workplaces in the health care field are especially promising because they often have employee benefits offices with a strong focus on healthy living initiatives.

Ideal characteristics of the site coordinator include: someone who is positioned in the

human resources or employee benefits department, familiar with CSA farming and supportive of local agriculture and eating locally, and has the time, interest, administrative support, and power within the company to carry the program out. In actuality, the coordinator often lacks some of those characteristics, and the result is a protracted education process and negotiation of relationships and responsibilities.

It's important that both the higher-ups within the company and the site coordinator are on board with the program. If it's a personal passion of the coordinator's but they have no administrative support, navigating the internal system becomes all the more difficult. If the coordinator is mandated to take on the responsibility but has no commitment to the program, they are likely to be less accessible and to keep the program low on their list of priorities.

PARTNER PROFILES:

Baystate Medical Center and Mountain View Farm

In 1996, Baystate Health Director of WorkLife Strategies, Anne-Marie Szymt, contacted CISA about the workplace CSA program after hearing about the MassMutual Workplace CSA Program. As the largest private employer in western Massachusetts, employing nearly 9,000 people, Baystate, located in Springfield, Massachusetts, had the potential to develop into a large workplace CSA.

CISA staff wanted to be sure that the farm they paired with Baystate could handle the demand for shares, so they matched Baystate Health with Mountain View Farm in Easthampton, Massachusetts.

Mountain View Farm, owned by Ben Perault and Liz Adler, was looking for new markets to sell CSA shares. Ben and Liz had just purchased the 10 year-old CSA farm from the original owner in 2005 and were in a growth stage for their farm business.

“Springfield was an area that we wanted to expand into,” explains Ben. “But we didn’t want to be in direct competition with what other farms were already doing. We were looking for a newer market.” As a

(continued on page 11)

PARTNER PROFILE

(continued from page 10)

leader in the health care industry and a leading employer, Baystate offered the workplace CSA program to employees as an employee benefit—one of several that focus on employee health and wellness. So, the workplace CSA program simply made healthy eating more convenient for the participating Baystate Health employees.

The enrollment goal for the first year at Baystate was 50-65 shareholders. “Don’t aim too high for enrollment,” cautions Anne-Marie. “You want to be able to achieve your goal. The first year will be a learning year. Don’t make the program unmanageable.” The first year of the program, Baystate Health offered canvas tote bags as an incentive to the first 50 employees to enroll in the program. “We wanted to recognize and thank the employees that took the risk and stepped out in front on this program,” said Anne-Marie.

Mountain View Farm had a minimum shareholder requirement of 50 shareholders. “Otherwise, it’s just not worth the extra labor and travel costs to drive down, set-up, and staff the distribution for several hours,” says Ben Perrault. “We set a minimum of 50

shareholders, but we were also expecting growth in the number of shareholders as the program developed.” The program served 85 shareholders in its first year.

Leadership and Organizing Support from the Workplace

Anne-Marie Szynt and her assistant, Linda Breault, provided the leadership behind the program at Baystate. After initiating the contact with CISA, Anne-Marie was able to offer resources from her office to work out the program logistics and publicize the program, as well as enroll shareholders. Using marketing materials developed by Liz and Ben, Anne-Marie used Baystate’s email system to get the word out about the program.

One of the key features of the Baystate Health Workplace CSA program is the payroll deduction option for share payment. Employees may opt to enroll in the year-long payment plan, deducting \$24 out of each bi-weekly paycheck. “I think we’d have about four employees enrolled in the program if it wasn’t for payroll deduction,” says Anne-Marie. “It makes the workplace CSA program more affordable.”

PARTNER PROFILES

Meeting the Farmers

The real selling of the program to employees happened face to face. Liz and Ben set up a table in the lunchroom of each of the Baystate campuses. They brought pictures of the farm and displays of the vegetables and fruit they would provide during the season. Liz also took advantage of the “Lunch ’n’ Learn” program at Baystate to share in more detail some information about the farm and what shareholders could expect as a CSA member. “I talk about the farm, the U-pick program, what fruits and vegetables we would provide, and how to store the vegetables.”

Customer Service and Education

One of the strengths of the Mountain View CSA program is a focus on customer satisfaction. Ben and Liz have a good understanding of the quality and quantity of produce that shareholders expect. “We focus on the staples—tomatoes, cucumbers, summer squash, etc.,” says Liz, “and then we ask them to try new items, like kohlrabi. Customer satisfaction is so much higher if they can choose what they are getting.”

“Quality control is important to establish,” says Ben. “Also, the

person you select to run your distribution site must be a good people person because shareholders want to be able to talk with you while they shop.”

In addition, Ben educates consumers about eating seasonally, growing heirloom variety crops, and produce storage and usage while they select their weekly share. For example, in order to interest shareholders in heirloom tomatoes, Ben “began to talk to shareholders about why we grow them and why it is important to purchase them. At first, most people would pass them up. But by the third week the heirloom tomatoes were ‘cool’ and shareholders are talking about them in the office. ‘What kind did you get and what did it taste like?’”

A Strong Partnership

“We do the best we can every year,” says Liz. About the connection between Baystate Health and Mountain View Farm, Anne-Marie says, “We understand that community farming is a calling for Ben and Liz and we are invested in their success. There is a connection between our employees and the farm. This program is very important to us.”

GETTING STARTED

Once potential sites and farms have been identified, the first action step is to pitch the program to them. It's important to identify the best contact person, develop the pitch, and have clear next steps in place so you can continue the conversation if they express interest. Be prepared to help them think through the pros and cons of establishing a Workplace CSA distribution.

ASSESSING CAPACITY

The Workplace: Introducing the program to the workplace host is probably the most challenging piece of the project. Because it's a relatively new model, a lot of education is required so that workplaces will be interested and understand what they are committing to. In the early discussions about this program, you must simultaneously pitch the program to the workplace and ascertain whether they will be a good fit. Questions to ask the workplace coordinator include:

- Would this program have the support of your workplace, and would you be supported in devoting your work time and resources to it?
- What department is the most natural host for this program?
- What internal requirements must the farm meet? Does your company require insurance for vendors? Is there a non-solicitation policy that may factor in? Are there security hurdles?
- Do you have internal structures that would aid in the promotion of this

program, such as widely-used venues of communication? Could you help find volunteers to help with the distribution? Could you arrange for payroll deduction? Can you manage sign-ups and answer questions throughout the enrollment process?

- Where would the distribution be held (especially one with shade and access to parking for the farm truck)? What days or times are best for you? Do you have storage capacity for tables or tents? Is there parking nearby? A bathroom?
- How many people work on site on a given day? Are there days in the summer when workers tend to leave early?

In assessing the workplace, you should also do your own homework. You may want to scout potential distribution locations on-site by yourself and with a potential partner and keep an eye out for employee bulletins, posters or other mechanisms a workplace might have to communicate to their workers. You may need to prompt your host to think creatively about these aspects of the program. It is also important to assess the potential coordinators' enthusiasm and their understanding of the internal bureaucracy of their worksite. Finally, discuss ways to test the waters with employees to discern interest levels.

The Farmer: Selling the program to the farmer is relatively straightforward, but you must work together to assess the farmer's capacity to deliver an off-site CSA program to a large, corporate workplace. This is

important because most workplace sites will be considered “high maintenance” in terms of customer satisfaction, delivery and distribution site logistics, and communication with the host company. Questions to ask the farmer to assess their capacity include:

- Do you easily fill your onsite CSA shares? How would an off-site delivery impact your on-farm business?
- Would you be able to transport your produce to an urban distribution site? How many days per week? Which days? At what times? Could you make deliveries to more than one location?
- What are the minimum and maximum numbers of shares you could accommodate? When do you need the deadline to be?
- How would you prepare your shares for transport?
- Are you able to staff an off-farm distribution site? If not, would you be willing to donate a share to a coordinator?
- How long would the season run? How much would it cost?
- Are you able to attend meetings with the coordinators of the program?
- How do you feel about partnering with a corporation in your community? Are you prepared to surrender some control over how the program is run and publicized?
- Are you willing to promote the program to workers on-site through tabling, special sign-up material,

lunch meetings etc.?

MAKING THE MATCH

When the initial round of outreach was completed, CISA staff assessed the needs and capacity of the workplaces and the farmers interested in the project and made tentative matches between farms and workplace hosts. The next step was for the farmer and the workplace host site coordinator to meet and discuss the details of the potential program.

As the organizing body, CISA initiated, facilitated, and attended start-up meetings. We consulted with the farm and the workplace host on all aspects of start-up and implementation of the program. As the coordinator, you will have to understand the needs of both the farmer and the workplace and work to make sure that the program works for all parties involved. If it does not, don't force it!

CISA staff developed educational and marketing material about the program that we provide to the workplace host and to the farmer prior to the meeting. We also share educational materials about CISA when first introducing ourselves to the project partners.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It's vital to establish the responsibilities of each partner at the outset. This ensures clear communication and that each planning step is assigned appropriately. Below is the distribution of responsibilities that CISA has developed with workplace and farm partners, although the capacity and internal structures of each partner has led to variations from site to site. For most sites, the workplace coordinator manages enrollment and record-keeping, but CISA carries that responsibility for one of the sites. As the relationship between the farmer and the workplace develops and becomes more institutionalized, the coordinating third-party can take on fewer responsibilities.

Coordinating Organization Responsibilities:

(also see Appendix 2)

- Helps to identify sites and site coordinators for first year
- Facilitates and attends start-up organizing meetings with farmer and workplace partner, consults on logistics of enrollment process, distribution logistics
- Helps farmer define scope, cost, crops etc. if needed
- Develops generic brochure and general program outreach material
- Consults with farmer to gear farm brochure and enrollment materials to program
- Works with workplace partner to develop shareholder investment in program

- Helps build strong relationship between city partner and farmer
- Coordinates outreach and enrollment in first year
- Creates responsibility contracts for all parties
- Coordinates press outreach with city partner and farmer

Farmer Responsibilities:

(also see Appendix 3)

- Develops farm brochure, registration and marketing material specific to Farm2City (with consultation from coordinating organization)
- Helps with recruitment within the farm's own network, mailing list, website, etc.
- Transports shares to site
- Communicates regularly with workplace site coordinator and coordinating organization

Negotiates with workplace coordinator re:

- Distribution style
- Distribution site management—farmer staffs or helps solicit volunteers to staff site (farmer may provide one free share to site coordinator or come up with other management arrangement)
- Weekly email reminder and newsletter to shareholders
- Enrollment strategy and timeline

- Shareholder registration, payment collection, and tracking (Even if the workplace or coordinating organization tracks this information, it is best if the farm also maintains basic info for bookkeeping and distribution purposes.)
- Surplus redistribution (in consultation with coordinating organization)

Workplace Responsibilities:

(also see Appendix 4)

- Assigns a liaison within the business to communicate with farmer and coordinating organization
- Helps enroll shareholders by working with coordinating organization and farmer to market the program within the organization
- Identifies location for weekly share distributions, gets approval of other departments as necessary such as security, grounds and maintenance, etc.
- Identifies company policies that are relevant to the program, such as non-solicitation policies, security concerns, insurance requirements, etc, and works with farmer and coordinating organization to meet requirements
- Negotiates with farmer regarding distribution style, site management, shareholder communications, enrollment strategy, and surplus redistribution.

FINDERS FEE

An important goal of this project is to

make the partnerships and the program itself self-sustaining. No market-building project is successful if it continues to depend entirely on outside funding in order to run, so the goal is for the coordinating organization to eventually be able to step away from the partnerships. While the coordinating organization is involved, however, the hope is that the partnerships are financially viable enough that the businesses involved can contribute financially to keeping the program running. To that end, we instituted a payment structure through which we asked each participating farmer to contribute a small per-share finder’s fee to CISA. The finder’s fee is on a decreasing annual scale, which is designed to reflect CISA’s decreasing role in managing the partnerships. Each specific farm/workplace partnership is assessed the fee independently, so if an already participating farm partners with a new workplace, they would pay 6% on each of those new shares. For the site that requires CISA to manage the enrollment and record-keeping, we charge the 6% rate every year.

Year	CISA offering (general terms)	Finder’s Fee
1st	Site Cultivation/ Introduction, Site Relationship, Shareholder Recruitment, Media Work, Troubleshooting	6%
2nd	Recruitment, Media Work, Site relationship maintenance, Troubleshooting	3%
3rd	Recruitment, Site relationship maintenance, Troubleshooting	2%
ongoing	Site relationship maintenance, Troubleshooting	0.50%

DISTRIBUTION

The farmer is responsible for overseeing distribution at the site, including set-up and clean-up, either in person or by delegating an employee to the site. In some instances, the farmer can negotiate to have volunteers manage the distribution, but that must be done in conjunction with the host workplace. What follows is a list of the primary decisions that must be made about distribution and the way that CISA and our partners have managed them.

PRODUCE DISTRIBUTION METHOD

There are several distribution methods that are widely used by CSA farmers. It's likely that if your farm partner already runs an on-farm CSA, they will opt to use the same distribution method they use on-farm. The different methods all have positive and negative aspects for the farmer and the shareholders.

A *mix-and-match share* requires the farmer to set up tables, display produce, and staff the distribution, similar to a farmers market set-up. Shareholders are given a certain amount of control over which vegetables to choose. The benefits of this distribution style include the opportunity it provides for the shareholders and farmer to build relationships, appealing aesthetics for the shareholders and the host site, and increased choice, which is attractive to shareholders. The drawbacks include the time commitment that the farmer must make and the increased planning and management that has to go into the distribution and the fact that to keep the

displays looking good they may have to bring more produce than they would otherwise distribute.

A *pre-boxed share* allows the farmer to choose exactly what produce, and in what amounts, will be distributed to each shareholder. The shares are boxed and then left for shareholders at a central location at the workplace. This method requires far less time and management on the farmer's end, and usually requires that the site coordinator take responsibility for any unclaimed shares and for storing boxes between distributions. It also reduces the contact between shareholders and the farmer, and gives the shareholders less control over what they receive.

Customer satisfaction tends to be higher at mix and match distribution sites, since shareholders accustomed to grocery stores appreciate the choice. A farmers' market type display in which shareholders have no choice tends to be the least attractive to shareholders, who have complained of feeling "rationed." If a mix and match distribution is not a good choice for the farmer-host you are working with, a boxed distribution is a good second option. We have also found that focusing more on vegetables that your members are likely to be familiar with is a good way to increase shareholder satisfaction. Many consumers choose the workplace delivery options because they appreciate the convenience, not necessarily because they are daring eaters.

CHOOSING A SITE

The workplace site manager is responsible for identifying potential distribution locations and gaining internal clearance to use it. Some characteristics of an ideal distribution location include:

- A good sized room or shady outdoor space that is accessible to a truck, the size of which will depend on the number of shares being delivered to the site.
- Access to water and bathrooms for the farm staff.
- Parking for shareholders and visibility within the organization's facility.
- Compatibility with other uses of the space.
- Sometimes the tables, tents, scales, signs, and other materials from the farm can be stored at the workplace. This can be especially helpful during peak growing season weeks when all available space in the truck should be devoted to produce.

DAY AND TIME

The length of the distribution will vary based on the number of shares, but it is typically 2-3 hours at CISA-organized sites.

Distribution days vary and are usually based on the farm's delivery routes and other markets. Several of our sites hold their distributions on Fridays, which can be challenging because employees tend to take more long weekends during the summer.

It's best if the pick-up time encompasses employees' ending time, unless employees

are allowed to pick up their shares during work hours. Consider the schedules of all employees, including those who work outside of regular working hours.

STAFFING THE DISTRIBUTION

Under some circumstances, the workplace can recruit volunteers or shareholders to help manage the site. Alternatively, community volunteers can sometimes be recruited to help at the distribution site.

It is advisable that the same farm staff member manage the distribution all season since gaining access to the site often involves undergoing a security clearance. Also, the continuity of seeing the same person from the farm each week helps build relationships with customers and with workplace staff who help facilitate the distribution or manage the facility where the distribution occurs.

Often, the point person at the workplace or their designee will visit the distribution site, particularly during the first few weeks when logistics and communications are being worked out. Regular visits by the point person to the distribution are one of the keys to a successful workplace CSA program. It's important for the workplace point person to interact with workplace CSA shareholders as a way to assess the success of the program.

DISTRIBUTION OF LEFT-OVER PRODUCE

Just like any other CSA distribution, sometimes a customer or two will not make it to the distribution due to vacations, other commitments, or just plain forgetfulness. In addition, if the

PARTNER PROFILE:

Gardening the Community

Gardening the Community (GtC) is a youth-centered community-based urban agriculture project in Springfield, MA. GtC employs 15 teenagers each year during the growing season to grow organic fruits and vegetables on city land. The vegetables are sold via a local farmers market, a market stand, a local restaurant and store, and donated to a senior center. In 2007 and 2008, GtC (in cooperation with CISA) operated a farmstand at Shriners' Hospital in Springfield, serving the visitors and employees of the hospital. GtC also supplied a flower share option to shareholders at the MassMutual CSA and helped manage the distribution with the farmer.

GtC was started in 2002 on a ¼ acre vacant lot in Springfield, ma, and it expanded in 2004 when the neighborhood council offered use of ½ acre of garden space within an established community garden. In 2005, the garden land was put up for sale but GtC rallied the community and convinced the City to support the community garden. Since then, GtC continues to work with the City to expand the garden.

All of the produce is transported by use of bicycles and trailers. In addition to growing and selling organic produce, the youth employed by GtC learn about running a small business, social change, sustainable living, and low-input farming.

For more information, visit www.nofamass.org/programs/justice/index.php

farmer is running a mix and match style distribution, there may be some leftover produce remaining at the end of the distribution. It is important to know where this extra produce will go each week and who is responsible for this distribution. Typically, a local community organization such as a food pantry, soup kitchen, or senior center is identified as the recipient of surplus produce. If the produce is not going to be taken by workplace employees or distribution site volunteers, a volunteer from the workplace or the recipient organization transports the produce so it can be used.

Liability Concerns: Insurance, Security, and Non-Solicitation Policies

LIABILITY INSURANCE

When working with larger workplaces, the issues of insurance and liability were raised by corporate legal staff. The primary liability concerns that were raised centered around the potential for injury to either farm employees or workplace employees during a distribution, participant satisfaction with the program, and food safety issues. Both parties should be certain that the other has appropriate insurance should any of those problems arise. What follows is some general information about insurance and liability, but the only way to ensure that your farm and business are adequately protected from liability and risk is to talk to a lawyer and/or an insurance agent before entering into a CSA partnership with a workplace or farm.

In addition to reducing liability risks, the farmer must also have adequate insurance coverage, the need for which varies by activity. Assume that any new venture is not covered by a farm's existing insurance policy and arrange a meeting with a lawyer and/or insurance agent to figure out which type of policy best protects the farm for Workplace CSA distributions. The best rates for liability coverage for farms are often available through agriculture organizations or associations because they take advantage of lower group rates.

How a farm business is incorporated may provide additional protection from personal liability. Limited liability corporations or companies (LLC), partnerships (LLP),

cooperatives, or corporations transfer personal liability to the corporation, thus limiting the liability of the owner of the assets. Sole proprietorship offers no protection from liability beyond what is covered in your insurance plan.

WORKPLACE SECURITY

The larger employers have their own workplace security policies, not only because of the large numbers of employees and visitors in the workplace each day, but also because of confidentiality of the information they may be working with (financial and health care data). It's important to talk with the security department and the facilities maintenance department in the early planning stages.

Primary security concerns include:

- Gaining access to the grounds. At our MassMutual site, CISA sends a list of everyone who may staff a distribution to our primary contact person. Giving the security department a complete list of names early on makes things simpler throughout the season.
- Traffic flow. While the primary focus for the coordinating organization and the site coordinator may be maximum accessibility and visibility for the site, the security department will be concerned about keeping traffic moving freely and safely around the grounds. Be sure to consult with them before establishing a distribution location.
- Facilities maintenance issues. Early on, facilities maintenance staff were

concerned that people might forget and leave their produce in their office over the weekend, creating pest problems. In the end, it was decided that MassMutual Workplace CSA members could not bring their shares back into the facility after picking them up each week. Members take their shares directly to their cars.

NON-SOLICITATION POLICIES

Many businesses have a non-solicitation policy to protect their employees and the employer. A non-solicitation policy keeps individuals, organizations and other businesses from soliciting the workforce. Both large employers we worked with—Baystate Health and MassMutual—had non-solicitation policies in place and concerns about preventing union organizing in the workplace.

If MassMutual determines that an offering will benefit their employees, MassMutual will designate the business or organization a “Strategic Business Partner.” For example, the United Way is a Strategic Business Partner. So is CISA. CISA is a not-for-profit organization offering a service that benefits the regional economy, helps support a major employee wellness initiative at MassMutual, and offers an economic benefit to employees (the produce is offered at a lower cost than retail) and the farmer. By designating CISA as the partner in this program rather than Red Fire Farm, we have been able to proceed without violating MassMutual’s policy. CISA has had to manage the payments and shareholder communications every year at MassMutual in order to maintain this arrangement, however, which has meant a steady commitment of CISA staff time.

PARTNER PROFILES::

MassMutual Financial Group and Red Fire Farm

Ryan Voiland, owner of Red Fire Farm in Granby, Massachusetts had tried to approach MassMutual Financial Group about a workplace CSA before. “But I could never make it past the front desk,” recalls Ryan. “I didn’t have the connections to get to the right person inside the organization to discuss the idea.” Fortunately, CISA had an inside connection at MassMutual—a CISA employee’s husband worked at MassMutual and helped make the pitch to the Community Relations department.

Matching Red Fire Farm and MassMutual was a win-win partnership for both businesses. Ryan had been looking to develop new markets for several years. Red Fire Farm, in its ninth year, was still growing and developing markets for CSA shares. The 20-acre farm sells over 800 CSA shares in western Massachusetts—where it’s located—and in the Boston area. “If I have a choice, I would rather sell the shares in western Massachusetts,” says Ryan. “So, I was very interested in developing the relationship with MassMutual in Springfield.”

(continued on page 22)

PARTNER PROFILE

(continued from page 21)

MassMutual benefits because “the program increases employee satisfaction and reduces employee absenteeism,” says Ronn Johnson, MassMutual Director of Community Relations. “It is a unique partnership between a business leader and local agriculture.”

Working Out the Kinks

Because MassMutual houses customers’ financial data, security measures are high on the MassMutual campus in Springfield. Due to security concerns, locating the distribution in a central site on the campus was not an option, although everyone agreed that higher visibility and access would likely increase participation.

The site at MassMutual is not particularly visible—it’s located in a back parking lot without a lot of amenities. Securing bathroom access for farm staff and volunteers is challenging each week. Due to security issues, Red Fire Farm brings all of the supplies they need with them each week, such as tables and tents, rather than storing them on site. While this is not ideal, “it simplifies the set-up and tear-down process,” says Ryan. “When we were storing our supplies at MassMutual, my

staff had to track down the security guard each week to access them. In the end, it wasn’t worth it.”

While the MassMutual distribution site lacks some basic amenities, it is what is available at that particular site and farm staff and shareholders have adapted over time. Some employees drive over to pick up their vegetables. The site is in one of the only shady places on the campus. “We’ve just asked folks (farm staff, shareholders) to work with us on this,” says Kelly Coleman, CISA Project Director.

Youth Volunteers

Gardening the Community (GtC), a youth gardening project of the Massachusetts Chapter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association has been providing teen volunteers at the distribution site since the inception of the program. Through this innovative partnership, “The youth get to know about farming, build relationships, and learn business and marketing skills,” says Kristin Brennan, GtC Project Coordinator. They help with tasks such as setting up the distribution site, greeting shareholders when they arrive and checking off shareholder names. One youth leader, Jalilah Amatul-Wadud, has worked at the

PARTNER PROFILE

MassMutual Workplace CSA site since the beginning. “Jalilah knows everyone,” says Kristin. “The farm staff at the site have been new each year, but Jalilah’s not transitional. She creates a personal connection for shareholders to the program and she’s become very invested in the program. She’s there every Friday from June through October.”

Innovative Share Add-ons

Red Fire Farm offers add-on bread, fruit, and flower shares as a way to round out what shareholders can pick up at the MassMutual Workplace CSA distribution site, without having to produce everything on one farm. Add-on shares are optional and shareholders sign up and pre-pay for the shares when they enroll. Ryan contracts with a local bakery and orchard to supply the products at wholesale prices.

In 2007, the Gardening the Community youth offered an add-on flower share to shareholders. Twelve shareholders participated in the program. The youth “loved it,” says Kristin. “I really think it’s important to create that level of meaningful connection between the shareholders and the youth. Not only are the GtC members at the site to support Red Fire Farm

and the workplace CSA project, but they are there as farmers in their own right, selling their product.”

Be Patient

All partners agree that the MassMutual Workplace CSA program took a few years to run smoothly but the program was a “flawless initiative” in 2007 according to Ronn. He says, “We need to transform the corporation’s thinking about the MassMutual Workplace CSA Program from ‘it’s an initiative’ to ‘it’s a part of what we do.’ We need to get the program to a place where it will be cared for.”

“Be patient,” Ryan offers as advice to other farmers considering starting a workplace CSA program. “You will need to compromise and/or figure out how to run the program within the constraints of what you are offered.”

“As farmers, we need to find unique, innovative ways to connect directly with food consumers, and CISA’s Workplace CSA program helps us do that, and so much more. The arrangement greatly improves our ability to implement unique and innovative organic farming practices that improve the health of our land and the environment surrounding our farm.”

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Successful marketing of a workplace CSA is aided by the narrowness of your target audience (employees at a particular workplace) and the existence of internal communication channels by which to reach them. On the other hand, since one of the goals of a workplace CSA program is to bring local produce to people who may not otherwise seek it out, potential shareholders are likely to have had less exposure to concepts like supporting local agriculture and seasonal eating. Therefore, selling workplace CSA shares and retaining satisfied customers is a large educational and marketing task.

CISA has developed a simple marketing plan to promote workplace CSAs:

- The coordinating non-profit develops templates that can be made specific for each site, such as emails, posters, flyers, and table tents. (See Appendices 5, 6 and 7.)
- The farmer develops a CSA brochure and/or a registration form specific to the workplace site, with coordinating organization's assistance if needed. If the farm had a website, we recommend that the marketing and registration materials go up on the website. (See Appendices 8 and 9.)
- The farmer also meets with employees face-to-face by staffing an information table in or near the cafeteria during lunch hours, or by offering slightly more formal "lunch 'n' learn" presentations in a conference room during the lunch break. The workplace point person

is responsible for setting these visits up and helping to promote them.

- The workplace point person uses internal electronic communications avenues to reach all employees with information about the program, opportunities to meet the farmers, and registration deadlines. The point person is also responsible for putting up posters, setting out table tents, and otherwise distributing hard copies of materials.

If you don't meet the minimum...

It's very important to establish a minimum number of shares that the farmer can deliver in order to maintain the financial viability of the partnership, and a date by which the minimum must be met. If, despite the best efforts of your workplace partner, the minimum number of shares is not met, it's time to regroup and identify next steps. If you had settled upon doing a "mix and match" style distribution, suggest a boxed share instead, since that distribution method requires less of a time commitment from the farmer. Find out if the workplace is on another farmer or partner's distribution route, and ask if they could haul boxes of veggies for you. One year, a local bakery that sells to several local CSA farms made weekly deliveries to a distribution site for one farmer. If it's just impossible to continue the program that year, try to provide a list of nearby local-food resources to people who had signed up. (See appendix 10.) Talk with your partners about plans for increasing sign-ups the following year.

ONGOING COMMUNICATIONS

The most successful workplace CSA sites are those where the employees and program point people have embraced the farmer, farm family, and farm as one of their own. Creating opportunities for shareholders to build a direct relationship with the farmer is a key element to a successful workplace CSA project.

- Orientation- Holding a “meet and greet” before the season starts is a good way to introduce the farmer, the farm, and the CSA model to shareholders. It gives shareholders an opportunity to ask questions and learn what to expect, and it gives the farmer an opportunity to frame the program for the shareholders.
- Newsletters- Many of the farmers we work with already produce a newsletter with news from the farm, updates on upcoming crops, recipes, and tidbits of information about everything from the bee population to the history of tomatoes. The newsletter is a great way to help the shareholders feel connected to the farm, especially if the farmer doesn’t attend each distribution. It’s also an effective way to help shareholders use all the vegetables, especially unfamiliar crops, that they receive.
- Farm visits- Because most CSA farms have on-farm distributions, all shareholders are invited to visit the farm and often to use the pick-your-own offerings. Scheduling farm tours or farm visit days specifically for workplace CSA shareholders is a good way to reach out to off-farm shareholders. In addition, workplace

CSA shareholders should be invited to any events, pick-your-own, or work days scheduled on the farm.



Shareholders from Baystate Health Systems take a tour of Mountain View Farm’s greenhouses.

WRAPPING UP THE SEASON

The end of the season is your opportunity to capture the information that will enable you to strengthen the program the following year. CISA has developed a generic evaluation form which we tailor to each individual site. (See appendix 11). The forms are distributed to each shareholder either via email or in hard copy at the distribution. It's best to get feedback from your farm and site partners before sending the questionnaires out, since they may have strong feelings about the questions you ask, the wording of the questions, and even the distribution method. The information we ultimately try to gather through the evaluations includes:

- Satisfaction levels generally, and specifically with the quality, quantity, and variety of the produce.
- Convenience of the distribution time, day, location, and method.
- Changes in eating habits and awareness on the part of the shareholders.
- Strength of connection to the farm, including whether they visited, read the newsletter, and were pleased with the customer service at the distribution.
- Level of support for incorporating more local food into their workplace cafeteria.
- Why they joined the CSA.
- If they would like to help promote or expand the program, and resources they have to offer.

Shareholders return their completed evaluations to CISA, where we tally up the responses and share the results with our partners. Because we need to do program-wide evaluation, it's important that the questions shareholders get asked at each site are consistent and that we have access to the raw responses.

It is equally important to conduct evaluations with the farmer and the workplace. We do these face-to-face and generally with both partners at the same time. CISA functions as the facilitator in case there were any issues that cause tension, but since one of the goals of the program is to build sustainable partnerships between workplaces and farmers, it's important that they are able to communicate directly with one another. The wrap-up meeting gives the partners an opportunity to thank each other and revel in the aspects of the program that went especially well, and also to think about aspects that could have been improved. We also begin planning for the next year at these meetings. (See appendix 12).

“It was great, great, great! I shared with a coworker and we both were so excited each Tuesday to get our box! So many varied things, and so delicious!”
-Holyoke Community College/ Riverland Farm Shareholder, on the 2007 year-end evaluation

CONCLUSION

In the same way that the CSA model is not ideal for every consumer, the off-farm CSA is not ideal for every farmer or workplace. We hope that this guide will equip farmers, workplaces, and non-profits to consider the pros and cons of a workplace CSA program and to make an educated decision about whether it is a good fit. We also hope to have provided readers with some easily applicable first steps and relevant lessons gained from four seasons of running the program in western Massachusetts.

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE TESTING THE WATERS LETTER

The sheet on the following page is an example of a letter/email we would send out through our workplace partner to employees to help us ascertain whether the workplace had enough interested employees to host a workplace CSA program and to help us match the workplace with the right farm.

APPENDIX 2: CISA'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The sheet on the following page is a listing of CISA's responsibilities to farmers, workplaces, and shareholders in the Workplace CSA program. It can be adapted to meet the needs of other partnerships.

APPENDIX 3: FARMER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The sheet on the following page is a listing of a farm partner's responsibilities as a participant in the Workplace CSA program.

APPENDIX 4: WORKPLACE RESPONSIBILITIES

The sheet on the following page is a listing of a workplace partner's responsibilities as a participant in the Workplace CSA program.

APPENDIX 5: GENERIC WORKPLACE CSA PROMO FLYER

This flyer on the following page is an example of the promotional material provided to the workplace during the CSA sign up.

APPENDIX 6: SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

This flyer on the following page is an example of the promotional material provided to the workplace during the CSA sign up.

APPENDIX 7: SAMPLE RECRUITMENT EMAIL

The sheet on the following page is an example of a letter/email that talks about "10 reasons" for employees to join a workplace CSA. It was written by an employee and shared for recruitment at all sites.

APPENDIX 8: SAMPLE REGISTRATION FORMS

The sheets on the following pages are sample sign up forms for shareholders.

APPENDIX 9: SAMPLE ADD-ON SHARE

The sheet on the following page is an example of a signup form for an add-on bread share. Some sites have shareholders sign up for all add-ons with their original share; others have different sign up forms. The best option depends on the needs of your site partners.

APPENDIX 11: SAMPLE "DIDN'T MEET SHAREHOLDER MINIMUM" LETTER

The sheet on the following page is a sample of the letter we've sent when shareholder enrollments did not meet the minimum number required to proceed with the program. It also includes a list of alternative local food sources.

APPENDIX 12: SAMPLE SHAREHOLDER EVALUATION

The sheet on the following page is a sample shareholder evaluation. Before administering your evaluations, make sure that the workplace and the farm partner weigh in on your evaluation plans. We provided shareholders with electronic (Survey Monkey) and hard copy evaluation forms.

APPENDIX 13: SAMPLE WRAP UP AND EVALUATION AGENDA

The sheet on the following page is a standard wrap-up meeting agenda for our meetings with shareholders and farmers at the close of the season.

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE TESTING THE WATERS LETTER

The sheet on the following page is an example of a letter/email we would send out through our workplace partner to employees to help us ascertain whether the workplace had enough interested employees to host a workplace CSA program and to help us match the workplace with the right farm.



Can't get to the farm? Have the farm come to you!

Are you interested in . . .

- **Affordable, fresh picked, local produce?**
- **Fresh vegetables delivered to you at work?**
- **Good nutrition and a healthy diet?**
- **Supporting local farmers and the local economy?**
- **Spending \$20-26 a week for fresh vegetables for 2-4 people?**

What is the Workplace Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program?

Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) helps workplaces provide their employees with convenient access to fresh, affordable produce by connecting them with a local farm. Through the Workplace CSA program, as an employee, you can purchase a 'share' of a local farm's harvest. The farmer delivers the shares right to your workplace! 'Shareholders' pick up a weekly distribution of seasonally available local produce from June through October.

What comes in a share and how much does it cost?

Over the course of 20 weeks you will get a wide variety of organic vegetables, always fresh-picked and changing with the season. From crisp salad greens and spinach in the spring to juicy tomatoes, sweet red peppers and watermelon in the summer, to bountiful squash, potatoes, and carrots in the fall, each week you will receive a beautiful array of produce. On average, each week's share consists of enough vegetables for a family of 2-4 people. The exact share price varies with each farm. Share costs usually range from \$400–525. This averages \$20–26 per week. Typically shares are paid for in advance to help the farmer with spring start-up costs, but some farms offer payment plans.

Community supported agriculture at Shriners?

If you would be interested in purchasing a share and picking it up at work each week from June through October, please respond to this email by XX date and let us know. If enough employees are interested in this program, Shriners will partner with CISA and a local farmer to bring YOU fresh local produce at work this season!

"Because of my work hours, I rely on a grocery store for vegetables shipped from California. This program has been wonderful! Every week I enjoy fresh local produce and I am eating healthier. This is a fabulous and economical program that I hope to be part of for years to come."

—Joan Giovannini, 2005 shareholder and HCC employee

APPENDIX 2: CISA'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The sheet on the following page is a listing of CISA's responsibilities to farmers, workplaces, and shareholders in the Workplace CSA program. It can be adapted to meet the needs of other partnerships.



Responsibilities of CISA

CISA's role in the Workplace CSA program

Start up:

- Identify potential sites and farmers and match them according to their needs and limitations.
- To the best of our ability, insure that the workplace, and sponsoring department and point person within that workplace, is capable (barring any unforeseen circumstances that are out of their control) of carrying out the responsibilities listed on the “Responsibilities of Workplace Sponsors” sheet.
- To the best of our ability, insure that the farm is capable (barring any unforeseen circumstances that are out of its control) of carrying out the responsibilities listed on the “Responsibilities of Workplace CSA Farmers” sheet.
- Initiate, facilitate, and attend start-up meetings.
- Consult with farm and workplace on all aspects of start-up.
- Provide general Workplace CSA and CISA educational and marketing material.
- Raise awareness about Workplace CSA, CSA's, and the “Buy Local” campaign.

Implementation:

- Communicate regularly with the farm and the workplace.
- Consult with farm and workplace on all aspects of the implementation of the program.
- Work with farm to define scope, share price and size, distribution logistics, crops, etc., if needed.
- Consult with workplace and farm to pin point distribution location, style, manager, time and day, etc.
- Work with farm to develop brochure specific to Workplace CSA if needed.
- Work with farm and workplace to develop marketing and enrollment materials, strategy, and timeline specific to your site/farm.
- Help with on-site marketing if applicable.
- Help to identify a means for distributing left over produce.
- Be available for trouble-shooting and consultation once distribution has begun.
- Visit the site at least one time during distribution.
- Work to encourage the building of a strong relationship between the farm and the workplace.
- Coordinate press outreach.
- Initiate, facilitate and attend wrap-up meetings.

Long-term support:

- Since Workplace CSA is a CISA initiated program, CISA will remain involved and interested in its development.
- CISA will provide support in transitioning into years 2 and 3 of the program.
- As the farm/workplace relationship develops, CISA will play a less prominent role but will always be available for troubleshooting.

For more information contact CISA at workplacecsa@buylocalfood.com or 413-665-7100.

APPENDIX 3: FARMER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The sheet on the following page is a listing of a farm partner's responsibilities as a participant in the Workplace CSA program.



Responsibilities of Workplace CSA Farmers

What a Farmer Needs to do to Participate in the Workplace CSA program

1. Basic requirements

- Be a member of CISA's Local Hero Campaign (any level).
- Manage a local CSA or diversified vegetable farm and demonstrate the ability to grow a consistently high quality product.
- Be open to on farm site visits and/or informal interviews by CISA.
- Pay CISA a "finder's fee" percentage on enrollees to the Workplace CSA program (See "Finder's Fee" sheet).
- Carry one million dollars in liability insurance.

2. Communication with CISA and Workplace Sponsor

- Be able to communicate regularly with CISA and the workplace via phone and email.
- Be available for meetings with CISA and the workplace.

3. Marketing

- Work with CISA and the workplace to develop a marketing and enrollment strategy and timeline.
- Develop a farm brochure (if you don't already have one), and a registration form and other marketing material specific to the Workplace CSA program (with consultation from CISA and input from the workplace). If your farm has a website, put up these materials.
- Include CISA's "Local Hero" logo on materials developed specifically for this program. For the lifetime of the program, any marketing or media must recognize Workplace CSA as a program of CISA and include CISA's "Be a Local Hero" logo and the logo of the workplace.
- Help with on site marketing i.e. info table or presentation if applicable.
- Be responsible for managing shareholder registration and payment collection (unless otherwise agreed upon with workplace) and communicating the status of registration with CISA.

4. Distribution

- Transport shares to the workplace distribution site.
- Negotiate with CISA and workplace sponsor re: type of distribution i.e. pre-boxed or traditional mix and match "shareroom" style.
- Provide table(s) and/or tent(s) and all other materials necessary to distribution (bags, scales, signs, etc.) unless otherwise negotiated with the workplace.
- Be willing to oversee distribution (including set up and clean up) or work with CISA and the workplace to recruit volunteers or shareholders to manage the site. A free share can be offered in payment to a volunteer site manager.
- Work with CISA and the workplace to develop a means for distributing weekly surplus (usually to a soup kitchen or other emergency food provider).

5. Communication with shareholders:

- It is recommended that you communicate with shareholders via a weekly or bi-weekly newsletter. Providing weekly recipes is also suggested.
- It is recommended that you (or the workplace) send weekly emails to members to remind them to pick up their shares, and, if possible to, give them a preview of what to expect for that week's harvest. In some cases the workplace may be willing to take on this task.

For more information contact CISA at workplacecsa@buylocalfood.com or 413-665-7100.

APPENDIX 4: WORKPLACE RESPONSIBILITIES

The sheet on the following page is a listing of a workplace partner's responsibilities as a participant in the Workplace CSA program.



Responsibilities of Workplace Sponsors

What your Workplace needs in order to offer Workplace CSA to your employees

1. Department Sponsor. Within your workplace, the Workplace CSA program is overseen by one department i.e. Human Relations, Employee Benefits or Work Life Strategies. This department works closely with CISA, the farm, and your workplace to offer Workplace CSA to your employees.

2. Point Person. A central point of contact within this department is important for smooth management of the project. This person must be able to represent both his/her department and workplace, facilitate communication with other departments within the workplace regarding logistics, and attend planning and review meetings. The point person must be available for phone and email communication with both the farm and the Workplace CSA coordinator at CISA throughout the season. For most sites the basic time commitment is minimal and well worth the benefits of participating in the Workplace CSA program.

3. Marketing. Farms need a minimum number of shareholders to make the Workplace CSA program drop-off economically feasible. CISA will match you with a farm whose needs and limitations are compatible with those of your workplace. The *point person* (see above) works with your workplace, CISA, and the farmer to develop and implement a strategy and timeline for marketing the program and enrolling the target number of shareholders. Your workplace (with help from CISA and the farm) will need to promote the program internally to your employees usually through a combination of meetings, posters, web announcements, payroll notices, information tables, etc. CISA and the farm will provide basic information about the program and can work with you to develop material that works best for your workplace. For the lifetime of the program, any marketing or media must recognize Workplace CSA as a program of CISA and include CISA's "Be a Local Hero" logo and the logo of the farm.

4. Enrollment. Although not a requirement, a number of institutions have opted to oversee enrollment and to offer payroll deduction as a method of payment. This convenience is an added benefit to employees and, we believe, encourages higher enrollment.

5. Distribution Site. Once a week the farmer will come to your workplace to deliver produce. A good size room or covered outdoor space that is accessible to a truck and to employees and that can be easily cleaned up is an ideal distribution site. The point person must work within your organization to gain clearance to such a location. The farmer may stay to oversee distribution, a shareholder might manage distribution in exchange for a share, or your workplace may provide a volunteer. The logistics of this can be negotiated between the farm and workplace. The details of distribution differ from site to site, but the site must always be accessible and suitable to store produce for the length of the determined distribution time, usually 2-3 hours.

6. Means for Distributing Weekly Surplus. At the end of each distribution, there will often be leftover vegetables from people who did not pick up all or part of their share. The farm and workplace can negotiate who is responsible for redistributing this surplus but in any case it is recommended that a system be put in place to donate to a soup kitchen or other emergency food provider.

In addition, the workplace sponsor and/or shareholders have the option of working with CISA and/or the farmer to:

- organize community and educational events i.e. nutrition classes, cooking demonstrations, and farm visits.
- develop a newsletter and coordinate recipe sharing.
- make a commitment to making the Workplace CSA program accessible to other community members, regardless of income, by subsidizing full or partial shares, donating shares to a local food pantry, or through fundraising efforts.

For more information contact CISA at workplaceCSA@buylocalfood.com or 413-665-7100.

APPENDIX 5: GENERIC WORKPLACE CSA PROMO FLYER

This flyer on the following page is an example of the promotional material provided to the workplace during workplace recruitment.



CISA

Community Involved In Sustaining Agriculture

Can't get to the farm? Have the farm come to you!

CISA helps workplaces provide their employees with convenient access to fresh, affordable produce throughout the growing season by connecting them directly with local farms.

CISA partners with local workplaces to:

- offer their employees the benefit of purchasing fresh, affordable, nutritious, local produce delivered right to work.
- promote employee wellness and a healthy diet.
- support local agriculture, sustainable farming practices, and the local economy.

Why the Workplace Community Supported Agriculture program?

Western Massachusetts is blessed with an abundance of local agriculture—small family farms produce over \$100 million dollars of food each year. But busy lifestyles and lack of information can make it difficult to find local food. Many residents of the Connecticut River Valley are looking for a change, and many of our farmers are looking for customers who care about their food and where it comes from. CISA's Workplace Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program presents an innovative alternative for both farmers and consumers, using a variation of the traditional CSA model.

What is Community Supported Agriculture?

Community Supported Agriculture is a unique relationship of mutual support and commitment between local farmers and community members. Before each farming season, individuals pay the farmer an annual fee that helps cover the costs of the farm's operation. In exchange, "shareholders" receive a share of fresh produce each week throughout the growing season. CSA shareholders experience the bounty and share the risk of the season's harvest. CSA creates a community that is closely connected to the farm and farm family that grows their food.

"I do not think I could ever go back to eating canned vegetables again! This was my first year participating in the Workplace CSA project. My family received more than enough food in our share and had a great time learning, cooking and tasting new recipes together. The quality of the food was exceptional. I look forward to participating again in the future and recommend the project to everyone that likes to cook!"

—Leida Cartagena, 2005 Workplace CSA shareholder, Intervale Farm, Nuestras Raíces (Holyoke) distribution site

What is the Workplace CSA program?

In the traditional CSA model, shareholders pick up their weekly shares at the farm. Workplace CSA brings shares to people at work, making access to fresh food as easy as possible.



CISA's Workplace CSA program helps employers provide their employees with convenient access to fresh, affordable produce by connecting them with a local farm.

- Employees purchase shares in a farm's harvest.
- The farmer delivers the shares once a week from June through October to a convenient location at or near the workplace.
- Shareholders pick up their shares during distribution hours determined by the workplace and the farmer. Pick-ups last 2–4 hours during and/or immediately after business hours.

What comes in a share?

From June through October shareholders receive a wide variety of locally grown vegetables, always fresh-picked and changing with the season. Typically, each week's share consists of 5–10 types of vegetables. From crisp salad greens and spinach in the spring to juicy tomatoes, sweet red peppers and watermelon in the summer, to bountiful squash, potatoes, and carrots in the fall, shareholders receive a beautiful array of produce grown by a farmer they know and trust.

How much does this cost?

The exact share price varies with each farm. Share costs usually range from \$400–525. A shareholder commits to the entire 18–22 week season. This averages \$18–26 per week. Typically shares are paid for in advance to help the farmer with spring start-up costs, but some farms offer payment plans. Some workplaces have also chosen to offer payroll deductions. *Shareholders and workplaces also have the option of contributing to provide shares for low-income individuals in their community.*

How to join

If you or your workplace would like to be involved with CISA's Workplace CSA program contact CISA at 413-665-7100 or workplacecsa@buylocalfood.com.

Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) is a non-profit community organization that links farmers and community members to strengthen local agriculture and the economy in the greater Connecticut River Valley of Massachusetts.

The Workplace CSA program was launched by CISA in 2005 as part of the larger Farm2City project. Since then, the program has evolved into a successful model that has gained local and national attention. We are grateful to our workplace partners Baystate Medical Center, Franklin Medical Center, Holyoke Community College, MassMutual Financial Group, Nuestras Raíces, and Springfield College, and our local farmers for making this program a success.

Funding for this flyer is provided by CISA's community and farm members with support from USDA's Farmers Market Promotion Program.

The Workplace CSA program is a win-win partnership—consumers receive fresh, nutritious food while helping to sustain the local economy, a healthy environment, and the livelihood of local farmers they know and trust.



Community Involved In Sustaining Agriculture

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CISA is an equal opportunity service provider and employer.

“CISA's Workplace CSA program is a true win-win for both our company and the local farming community. Our employees take a step toward a healthier lifestyle by having access to fresh local organic produce delivered right to the workplace.”

—Richard Goldstein, president of MassMutual Benefits Management, Inc., 2005 host, Red Fire Farm, MassMutual (Springfield) distribution site

APPENDIX 6: SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

The flyers on the following pages are examples of the promotional material provided to the workplace during the CSA sign up.

CAN'T GET TO THE FARM? LET THE FARM COME TO YOU!

For the third season, MassMutual Financial Group has collaborated with Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) and Red Fire Farm to bring you fresh, local, organic, produce at work this season!

CISA's Workplace Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program helps employers provide their employees with convenient access to fresh, affordable, organic produce by connecting them with a local farm.

- **Employees purchase shares in the farm's harvest.**
- **The farmer delivers the shares once a week from June through October to MassMutual.**
- **Shareholders pick up their share of fresh, local, organic vegetables right at work!**

Shares will be distributed early June to mid-Oct. (exact dates TBA) at MassMutual.

- **Springfield on Fridays 3:00- 5:00 PM**
- **Enfield on Friday afternoons. Exact times TBA.**

The details . . .

What: A wide variety of organic vegetables, always fresh-picked and changing with the season. From crisp salad greens and spinach in the spring to juicy tomatoes, sweet red peppers and corn in the summer, to bountiful squash, potatoes, and carrots in the fall, each week you will receive an abundant array of produce. Typically, each week's share consists of enough vegetables for a family of 2-4 people.

Where: You will sign up to pick up your share at either the Springfield or Enfield Campus.

How much: The price of a share is \$475. (We do offer a sliding scale. See Agreement Form for details). \$475 breaks down to under \$24/week for local, organic, fresh, vegetables delivered to you at work. Can't get much better than that!

In addition: Visit the 50 acre farm in Granby for "pick your own" crops such as strawberries, cherry tomatoes, peas, and beans. And you can purchase an "add-on" fruit share from Red Fire Farm, a bread share from the El Jardin Bakery of Holyoke, or a flower share from Gardening the Community of Springfield for delivery with your share. (See Agreement Form for details).



"I live in the city and don't have access to a farm stand. Because of my work hours, I rely on a grocery store for vegetables shipped from California. Farm2City has been wonderful! Every week I enjoy fresh local produce and I am eating healthier. This is a fabulous and economical program that I hope to be part of for years to come."

—Joan Giovannini, 2005 Intervale Farm shareholder through Farm2City

Space is limited. First come, first serve. Act soon! Tell a friend!

Fill out the Registration Form on the reverse side and return to CISA with your deposit.

Registration deadline April 30. Early enrollment appreciated!

**If you have any questions please contact CISA at
workplaceCSA@buylocalfood.com, or 413-665-7100.**





*Deposits will only be cashed when minimum share numbers have been reached.

To fill out an application and find out more details see MassInfo and click on the *Workplace Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)* banner. Space in this program is limited and on a first come, first served basis so act soon! Sign up now by filling out the Shareholder Agreement Form and returning it to CISA with your deposit.* Send forms and any questions to Kelly Coleman at CISA at workplacecsa@buyllocalfood.com, (p) 413-665-7100, or 1 Sugarloaf Street, South Deerfield, MA 01373, or send farm questions to Red Fire Farm at 413-467-SOIL or redfirrefarm@gmail.com.

The details...

WORKPLACE CSA AT MASSMUTUAL
Shares will be distributed from early June through mid-October at:
MassMutual Springfield on Fridays 3:00–5:00PM
MassMutual
Enfield on Friday afternoons.
Exact times TBA.



Can't get to the farm? Let the farm come to you!

Sign up now to get this summer's harvest delivered to you at work.

Interested in...

- Affordable, freshly picked, local, organic produce?
- Fresh vegetables delivered to work?
- Good nutrition and a healthy diet?
- Supporting local farmers and the local economy?
- Spending \$21–26/week for fresh vegetables for 2–4 people?

“Every week I enjoy fresh local produce and I am eating healthier.”

—Joan Giovannini
2005 shareholder



APPENDIX 7: SAMPLE RECRUITMENT EMAIL

The sheet on the following page is an example of a letter/email that talks about “10 reasons” for employees to join a workplace CSA. It was written by an employee and shared for recruitment at all sites.

If you've never seen or experienced a workplace CSA here are
10 Reasons to Join CISA's Workplace Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program

- 1) The amount of vegetables you receive in a CSA share would replace most or all of your need to buy vegetables throughout the season. Imagine that!
- 2) Splitting a share with a co-worker is a great opportunity to get some delicious local produce at a great price.
- 3) With a CSA share you actually pay less for local, great quality, fresh veggies you love and get introduced to some new ones all for less than what you would pay at the grocery store.
- 4) By purchasing a CSA share you are playing a part in helping to stop global warming since your food does not have to travel thousands of miles to get to your plate. By joining a CSA you will know where your food is coming from, how it is grown and who is growing it. And you can visit the farm!
- 5) Joining a CSA is a great way to invest in your local agricultural community and landscape.
- 6) With the abundance of fresh vegetables, you and your family will be eating healthier.
- 7) With simple food preservation tips such as freezing or canning, you could have delicious local produce all year-round. (Imagine that, tasty tomatoes to add to your pasta sauce in November)
- 8) Save time at the grocery store. Your produce comes right to you.
- 9) Learn great new recipes for cooking fresh produce. Share your new skills with friends and family
- 10) It just feels good!!

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a unique relationship of mutual support and commitment between local farmers and community members. Before each season begins individuals pay the farmer an annual fee that will help cover the costs of the farm's operation. In exchange, "shareholders" receive a share of fresh produce each week throughout the growing season. CSA creates a community that is closely connected to the farm and family that grows their food. CSA shareholders experience the bounty of the seasons harvest and share in the inherent risks of farming (poor weather, drought, early frost, crop failure, etc). The exact vegetables in your share will depend in part on the weather and the vagaries of the particular season.

APPENDIX 8: SAMPLE REGISTRATION FORMS

The sheets on the following pages are sample sign up forms for shareholders.

Intervale Farm

27 Cemetery Rd
Westhampton, MA 01027
413-527-5440

Shareholder Agreement Form

NAME _____ CITY SPONSOR: Nuestras Raices

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (day) _____ (eve) _____ EMAIL _____

Shareholder Commitment

I commit to:

- Membership at Intervale Farm for the entire 20-week harvest season—June 4 to October 15, 2007.
- Supporting the farm with timely payments, per Intervale Farm installment plan (below),
- Picking up my weekly delivery at Nuestras Raices, 329 Main St. Holyoke, Mondays 4 – 6 PM.

I understand that:

- I will receive a weekly share of fresh, local produce that will vary in size depending on the time of the season. There is no guarantee on the exact amount or type of produce I will receive.
- I and other members are supporting our farmer by sharing in the inherent risks of agriculture (poor weather, drought, disease, early frost, crop failure, and so on).
- If I (or someone designated by me) do not pick up my share on any given week during regular distribution hours, it will be donated to a low-income family or an emergency food shelter.
- Although half-shares are not available, I am welcome to split my share with a friend and can make arrangements on my own to do that. Please list contact info for both if splitting.

Contact for split: Name _____ Address _____
Phone _____ email _____

PLEASE RESERVE FOR MY HOUSEHOLD:

- One 20-week share with Intervale Farm for Nuestras Raices pick-up. **PRICE: \$420.**
 - Full Payment Plan: \$420 attached. **Due by April 30. Please make check payable to Intervale Farm and send with a copy of this form to Intervale Farm, 27 Cemetery Rd, Westhampton, MA 01027.**
 - Installment Plan: \$105 non-refundable deposit attached. **Deposit is due by April 30.** I agree to make three equal payments of \$105 each for the balance due on **May 1, June 1, and July 1.** Intervale Farm does not send out reminders.
- I am including in my payment a donation of \$_____ for the FARM2CITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND. I understand that this money will be used to help subsidize the cost of a share for a low-income family or community based organization.

Please make a copy of this form for your records.

SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____



Sign up for Springfield and Enfield MassMutual Workplace CSA distribution locations with this form.

Name 1 _____ Name 2* _____

Address _____ / _____

Phone _____ / _____ Email _____ / _____

*You are welcome to split a share with a friend but must make your own arrangements to do so. If splitting a share please fill in contact info for both parties above.

	Number of Shares	Total per Share	TOTAL COST
VEGETABLE SHARES: Sliding Scale \$425-\$525 per share. Please pay at least \$475 unless you are low income. Payments over \$475 will be used to subsidize shares for low income members. If you choose a payment plan, we require a \$100 deposit which will be put towards your total.* YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING ADD-ON SHARES ONLY IF YOU ORDER A VEGETABLE SHARE!		<input type="checkbox"/> \$425 <input type="checkbox"/> \$450 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$475 <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 <input type="checkbox"/> \$525	
FRUIT SHARES (Only available if you have a regular vegetable share.) You will get one pint or peck of fruit (strawberries, apples etc.) or pick-your-own vegetables (peas, beans etc.) each week. Your \$90 deposit will be put towards your total.		\$180	
FLOWER SHARES (Only available if you have a regular vegetable share.) Shares consist of one flower bouquet a week for 10 weeks starting in July. Shares grown by Gardening the Community youth. Flower shares are due in full.		\$60	
BREAD SHARES (Only available if you have a regular vegetable share.) El Jardin Bakery Bread shares consist of one loaf of organic sourdough bread per week (either French, 8 grain, Country or Rosemary) all baked in a brick fired oven in Holyoke. Bread shares are due in full.		\$100	
TOTAL COST			

PICK UP OPTIONS:

- _____ Springfield MassMutual location – Fridays 3:00 - 5:00 PM.
- _____ Enfield MassMutual location –Friday Afternoons, times TBA

I understand that I am committing to the 2007 growing season and shall share the risks and rewards of the CSA. I understand that it is my responsibility to pick up my share each week at the distribution location or my share will be donated to Open Pantry, a food relief agency.

Signature _____

PAYMENT OPTIONS: *We will not cash payments until each site has individually met minimum share numbers.

- 1) ___ I will pay in full.
 - ___ My check for the total cost is enclosed.
 - ___ Bill my credit card the total cost.
- 2) ___ Sign me up for the payment plan (available for credit card only) I will pay the deposit now and the remainder will be withdrawn in three equal installments on 6/1, 7/1, and 8/1.

Billing and Credit Card Info: VISA MASTERCARD

Name _____

Address _____

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Security code (three digits) _____

Signature _____

Deposit calculation

Share Type	Number of shares	Deposit per share	TOTAL DEPOSIT
VEGETABLE		\$100	
FRUIT		\$90	
FLOWER		\$60 (full)	
BREAD		\$100 (full)	
TOTAL DEPOSIT			

Make Checks out to: CISA. Send to: CISA 1 Sugarloaf St. South Deerfield, MA 01373. Billing questions? Call 413-665-7100.

To learn more about other Red Fire Farm Distributions at the farm in Granby, in Springfield, or in the Boston area call Ryan at 413-467-SOIL or email redfirefarm@gmail.com. Information is also posted on the Red Fire Farm website at www.redfirefarm.com. (*Please note: the share price at this distribution location is slightly higher than Red Fire Farm's other locations due to the instrumental involvement of the CISA sponsored Farm to City program which helps make this unique workplace distribution possible.)

Share the Harvest!

Fresh Picked, Locally Grown Vegetables
raised using organic practices



Community Supported
Agriculture
2007

Shares Available at
Mount Holyoke College

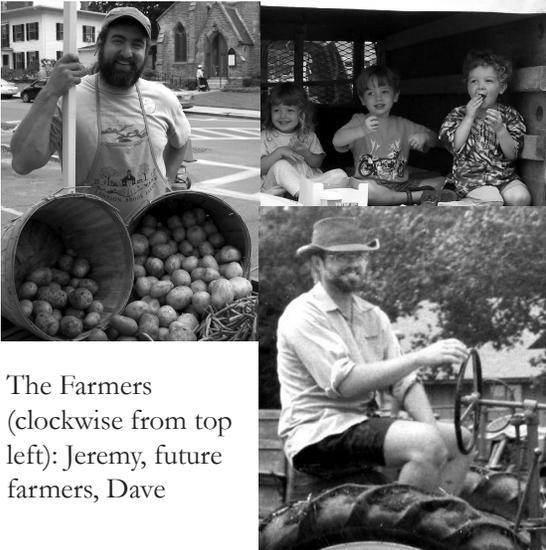


Part of Community Involved
in Sustaining Agriculture's
Workplace CSA program



P.O. Box 9631
North Amherst, MA
01059-9631
413-323-9608
jbp@the-spa.com

Organic Produce



The Farmers
(clockwise from top
left): Jeremy, future
farmers, Dave

Jeremy Barker Plotkin has owned and operated Simple Gifts Farm since 1999. David Tepfer grew up on a 4th generation family farm in Minnesota and has managed grazing systems for many years. We joined forces in 2006 and moved our operation to the North Amherst Community Farm. Our first CSA season was a great success, with about 100 members. We are excited to be part of a community project that is larger than any one of us could create.



The North Amherst Community Farm is permanently protected farmland, thanks to phenomenal community support and support from the State of Massachusetts and Town of Amherst. In the middle of a densely populated neighborhood, it is an ideal site to build connections between people and their food supply. The land is owned by NACE, a non-profit organization. We are pleased to collaborate with this lively and effective group.



In collaboration with Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA), Simple Gifts Farm is offering Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares at Mount Holyoke College.

Community Supported Agriculture is a partnership of mutual commitment between a farm and a community of supporters which provides a direct link between the production and consumption of food. To us, growing and eating food is at the heart of the human experience. Not only do we need to eat to live and grow, but growing, preparing and eating food is a community experience that is a core part of every human culture. A community supported farm encourages more people to engage with their food supply, the land and the farmers who grow that food.

A Simple Gifts Farm CSA Share:

-  Weekly array of fresh, clean, organic vegetables from June through October. A share is typically enough for 2 - 4 adults.
-  Pick up at Mount Holyoke College, day TBA
-  U-Pick crops for shareholders in our new pick-your-own garden at the farm in North Amherst
-  Weekly newsletter with lots of recipes!

-  Spring/Early Summer
-  Height of Summer
-  Autumn

Seasonal availability of produce

-  Arugula
-  Basil
-  Beets
-  Broccoli
-  Cabbage
-  Carrots
-  Cauliflower
-  Cucumbers
-  Eggplant
-  Fennel
-  Flowers
-  Garlic
-  Greens
-  Green beans
-  Leeks
-  Lettuce
-  Melons
-  Onions
-  Peas
-  Peppers, sweet
-  Potatoes, new
-  Potatoes, storage
-  Radishes
-  Salad mix
-  Spinach
-  Strawberries
-  Sweet corn
-  Tomatoes
-  Winter squash
-  Zucchini

For more information about the farm, contact Jeremy or Audrey at 413-323-9608 or visit www.simplegiftsfarmcsa.com. For more information about the Workplace CSA program, contact CISA at 413-665-7100 (<http://www.buylocalfood.com/>)

**Simple Gifts Farm CSA at Mount Holyoke College
2007 Shareholder Commitment**

- Full payment (\$500) enclosed
- \$100 deposit enclosed. \$200 due before first pickup in June; \$200 due by August 1, 2007.

Please make checks to
Simple Gifts Farm
and mail to:
PO Box 9631
North Amherst, MA 01059



You are welcome to split a share with a friend, but must make your own arrangements to do so. You will be responsible for dividing the share yourselves. We recommend that you alternate weeks or come to distribution together.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

APPENDIX 9: SAMPLE ADD-ON SHARE

The sheet on the following page is an example of a signup form for an add-on bread share. Some sites have shareholders sign up for all add-ons with their original share; others have different sign up forms. The best option depends on the needs of your site partners.

APPENDIX 10: SAMPLE “DIDN’T MEET SHAREHOLDER MINIMUM” LETTER

This is an example of the sort of letter we sent to shareholders where the minimum number of shares was not met.

Dear XXXX,

We are writing to let you know that we have unfortunately not been able to meet the minimum number of shares needed to run the Workplace CSA program with X Farm at the WORKPLACE campus this year. We are very sorry that this is the case but the numbers are just too low to make the program feasible.

We have compiled a list of other local farms and farmers markets. You are also welcome to contact us about picking up your share at the Springfield campus. Not quite the convenience of a workplace pick-up but we hope that you will find something here to meet your needs.

We thank you very much for signing up and supporting the program. We will try again next year!

Please feel free to contact CISA if you have any questions at XX or email@email.com.

Thank you,

CISA

Red Fire Farm

Members pick up their shares Friday's 2-7 pm at the farm or members pick up their prepacked shares at the Springfield Farmers Market at the X, Tuesday 12:30-6 pm at the Trinity Church parking lot. Farmstand memberships are also available.

Ryan Voiland
413.467.SOIL
7 Carver Street
Granby, MA 01033
www.redfirefarm.com

Holcomb Farm CSA

Members pick up their shares at the farm once per week either Tuesday 2pm-6pm, Thursday 3pm-7pm, or Saturday 9am-12pm.
Or members can pick up their shares in West Hartford on Tuesday's between 4 and 7 pm.
Pick-your-own crops available any time during the week.

Sam Hammer
860-653-5554
111 Simsbury Rd.
West Granby, CT 06090
www.holcombfarmcsa.org

George Hall Farm

Members pick up their shares Every Tuesday at the farm between 2PM and 6PM.

George L. Hall
(860)658-9297
180 Old Farms Road
Simsbury, CT 06070
www.georgehallfarm.com

Mountain View Farm

Members can pick up their shares on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1PM-630PM or on Fridays from 1PM-5PM

Ben Perrault
413.329.0211
393 East Street
Easthampton, MA 01027
www.mountainviewfarmcsa.com

Urban Oaks Organic Farm

Members pick up their shares every Friday afternoon from 3-6.

Tony Norris
860-223-6200
225 Oak Street
New Britain, CT 06051-1225

Ellington Farmers Market

Arbor Park next to the Fire Station
Ellington, CT 06029
(July-October)
3:00- 5:30, Saturday, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Bloomfield Farmers Market

Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Ave.
Bloomfield, CT 6002
(July-October)
Saturday, 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

Farmers' Market at the X

Tuesdays, 12:30 - 6 p.m. May - October
Trinity Church Parking Lot, 361 Sumner Ave,
Springfield

The following websites may be useful in finding your closest farm, farm stand or farmers' market:

www.buylocalfood.com
www.ctfarmersmarkets.com
www.localharvest.org

APPENDIX 11: SAMPLE SHAREHOLDER EVALUATION

The sheet on the following page is a sample shareholder evaluation. Before administering your evaluations, make sure that the workplace and the farm partner weigh in on your evaluation plans. We provided shareholders with electronic (Survey Monkey) and hard copy evaluation forms.



Farm/ Site 2006 Shareholder Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in CISA's Farm2City program and the XX Farm distribution. We hope to continue this program for many years to come and we'd like to know how you thought this season went. Your answers are important to us, so please take a few minutes to fill this out and return it to the distribution site during one of your pick-ups in October **OR** mail it to CISA, 1 Sugarloaf St, South Deerfield, MA 01373, **OR**, if you have received this electronically, email it back to us at xx@buylocalfood.com. **Please return questionnaires by October 25.** Your comments are especially important. Feel free to write on the back or attach another sheet if you run out of room! Many thanks!

Name (optional): _____

Distribution Site: NAME

Best way to contact (optional):

1. In general, how satisfied are you with the Farm2City/X Farm CSA experience?

Very Satisfied Somewhat satisfied Not at all satisfied

Comments:

2. Were you satisfied with the quality of the produce you received?

Very Satisfied Somewhat satisfied Not at all satisfied

Comments:

3. Were you satisfied with the variety of the produce you received? Please note items that you did not get that you would have liked to receive.

Very Satisfied Somewhat satisfied Not at all satisfied

Comments:

4. Were you happy with the quantity of food?

Too much Just Right Not Enough

Comments:

5. Did you purchase a whole share or split your share with co-workers? If split, among how many people?

Whole Share Split

6. Was the pick-up time and place convenient for you? Suggestions for improvement?

Very convenient Somewhat convenient Not at all convenient

Comments:

<p>7. How satisfied are you with the “customer service”- the farmers staffing the site? Comments:</p>	<p>Very Satisfied</p>	<p>Somewhat satisfied</p>	<p>Not at all satisfied</p>
<p>8. What was your experience with the enrollment process, such as the materials about the program, ease of enrolling or communication with coordinators? Would it be helpful to have materials provided in a language other than English? What language? Comments:</p>	<p>Very Easy</p>	<p>Normal</p>	<p>Confusing / Difficult</p>
<p>9. How did the distribution system work for you? Was the share packaged in a way that was convenient for you? Would you use a “swap table” (to trade items you don’t like for items that you do with the other shareholders) if such a feature were added? Comments:</p>	<p>Very convenient</p>	<p>Somewhat convenient</p>	<p>Not at all convenient</p>
<p>10. Were you able to share food with others? Did you preserve produce for the winter? Comments:</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p>11. Have your cooking and eating habits changed as a result of this program? Did you cook more, try new things, or enjoy better nutrition as a result of this program? Comments:</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p>12. Did you visit the farm? If so, what was your experience? If not, why? Comments:</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p>13. Would you attend on-farm potlucks if they were held? 14. Did you read the X Farm newsletter regularly? Was it helpful? Do you have recommendations for improvement? Comments:</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p>15. Do you plan to participate in the X Farm/ Workplace CSA distribution again in 2007? If not, what would have to change in order for you to participate again? Comments:</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p>16. How would you describe your awareness of the importance of buying local produce and supporting local farmers before you participated in Farm2City and the Mountain View Farm CSA? How would you describe your awareness now?</p>			

17. Why did you choose to join the Farm2City program and Mountain View Farm?

18. What were your expectations? Have they been met?

19. What has it meant to you to have weekly access to fresh, local produce?

20. Would you like to see more locally grown produce, meat or dairy products served in the Baystate cafeteria?

Yes

Don't
Care

Comments:

21. Would you like to see WORKPLACE partner with local farmers for other events or programs to bring locally grown items to you, such as a Harvest Festival or Farmers' Market?

Yes

Don't
Care

Comments:

22. Word of mouth is one of the best ways to get people involved in Farm2City. Can you think of other workplaces or organizations that might be interested in sponsoring a distribution site for its employees/members? Can you think of any people who might be interested in the program?

23. We want this project to serve as a model for other of its kind in the future. Positive testimony from current shareholders will be important in program materials for 2007. Do we have your permission to quote your responses to the above questions in our materials?

Yes

No

24. Can we use your name? If so, please provide your name at the top of this form.

Yes

No

25. Would you be willing to talk further with Farm2City staff about your experience? If yes, please provide contact information at the top of this form.

Yes

No

26. Are you interested in helping to organize or spread the word about the project for 2007 in any way? If yes, please provide contact information at the top of this form.

Yes

No

Thank you for participating in the X Farm CSA at WORKPLACE through the Farm2City program and thank you for filling out this questionnaire!

APPENDIX 12: SAMPLE WRAP UP AND EVALUATION AGENDA

The sheet on the following page is a standard wrap-up meeting agenda for our meetings with shareholders and farmers at the close of the season.

APPENDIX 13: WRAP UP AND EVALUATION AGENDA

This is an example of a season-end wrap up meeting agenda. This meeting would take place with the workplace organizers, the farmers, and CISA staff present.

Workplace CSA Meeting Agenda

I. Introductions

II. Review this year's season

- A) How did it go?
- B) Evaluation plans

III. Review/planning for next year

- A) site location – how was it, change it?
- B) recruitment process – any changes/suggestions?
- C) media coverage/"Buy Local" logo

III. Changes to think about for next year

- A) half-shares
- B) shorter season (starting later in the summer)
- C) add-on products – reselling cheeses, bread, fruit, flowers, ethnic shares etc. at distribution
- D) farmer's market idea (allowing non shareholders to buy product – add-on and veggies?)

IV. Next Steps

- A) Recruitment for current shareholders to sign up for next year
- B) site planning (if needed)
- C) set recruitment deadlines- last year wanted 20 by May 1st, shareholder number goals/deadlines