

Bergefurd Farm CSA- FQA's (Frequently Asked CSA Questions)

WHAT IS A CSA? CSA stands for 'Community Supported Agriculture' and is a way for people to directly support local farms. Upfront payment is required well before the growing season begins so a farmer can plan for the amount of seed to order and to help cover some of the crop planting costs.

DO I HAVE TO BUY A SHARE BAG EVERY WEEK? Yes. Farm families depend on consistent weekly income to pay for labor and harvest expenses and your commitment guarantees you'll receive our families fruit, herbs and veggies picked fresh for you and your family all season long.

WHAT'S IN THE SHARE BAG? Each share bag contains between 4 and 10 or more varieties of freshly picked home grown berries, melons, herbs and vegetables. Amounts of each may vary according to season, weather and what is being harvested on the farm that day. Produce will be on a consistent basis for many common items, (i.e. beans, corn, tomato, potatoes) weather dependent, so you will receive most produce items on a weekly basis.

WHY NOT JUST BUY MY PRODUCE AT THE FARMERS MARKET INSTEAD OF JOINING A CSA? We welcome all CSA customers to shop for additional produce at our farm or from other farmers at Farmers Markets. However, by joining our CSA you are 1) guaranteed your season long weekly share of produce (CSA customers will come first when a crop is short); 2) you will not have to wait in line at the Farmers Market; 3) you will not have to worry about not having enough money to buy the produce you want at the market; 4) shopping is quicker at the market, i.e stop in, pick up your share bag and you are outta there!; 5) no more getting up early on Saturday or Sunday mornings to be the first at the market, you will automatically receive the best selection, for your share will be packed as soon as it is harvested from the field; 6) you will know the farmer that is growing your produce and can visit the fields and farm where it is being grown anytime; 7) if you come late to the market your fresh packed produce share will be waiting for you even if we are sold out; 8) our families CSA is fun for it includes our annual farm visit day, farm tour, pick your own pumpkin from the patch, pumpkin putt-putt, barnyard buddies petting area, tractor trikes and hayride.

IS A CSA MEMBERSHIP A BARGAIN? Depending on how much produce your family goes through, the cost of your CSA membership may actually be **CHEAPER** in the long run compared to making a weekly purchase at a Farmers Market. Many of our Farmers Market customers spend \$40 or more each week on produce, our CSA membership is \$15.00 to \$27.50 a week.

WHAT ABOUT QUALITY? We believe the quality of fruit and veggies in our bags is excellent and we are very careful about how the bags are packed to ensure you'll be getting the best possible produce available. We do allow small blemishes to be included in the bag on all varieties because not all fruit and veggies are created perfectly (or equal) and we believe it is wasteful to throw out anything that is still in excellent and edible condition. PLEASE keep in mind that produce which looks imperfect or dirty will usually clean up just fine and definitely taste better than those which are bred only for uniformity, shipping or pest resistance.

WHERE DO I PICK UP MY SHARE BAG? You can choose to pick up your share at the farm or at one of the Farmers Markets we attend in the Columbus and Cincinnati areas. All pickup locations are listed above and on the application form.

WHAT IF I CAN'T PICK UP MY SHARE BAG? If you are unable to pick up your share at the designated time for your pick up site, please try to have someone pick it up for you. Shares that are not picked up by the end time will not be left because of the perishable nature of the contents and the **produce will be delivered to a local food bank.** With 24 hour advanced notice you can pick up at any of our other locations and times. If you plan to be away for a couple of weeks, a good idea is to have a neighbor, friend or relative take over your share pickup for the time you are away.

DO I NEED TO BRING MY SHARE BAG BACK? YES! Make sure to bring back your previous weeks empty share bag when you make your next pickup. At the end of the season you will be charged an additional \$20 for each bag not returned.

WHY DO I GET A WEEKLY CSA FRIENDS NEWSLETTER?

Be sure to read your weekly newsletter! It is the direct communication you have with your farm and is the main way we communicate what is happening on the farm, crop conditions, expected harvests and weather related production issues. Also in the newsletter we provide recipe, cooking and preserving tips. The newsletter is emailed to shareholders on Saturday or Sunday.

WHAT IF I WANT A LARGER SHARE? We suggest you ask for an additional ½ bushel share or else double up on a full share, which would be suitable for a larger family of good eaters.

CAN I GET EXTRA PRODUCE FOR COOKOUTS, PARTIES, CANNING or FREEZING? Yes we offer CSA member canning and freezing specials throughout the season call or watch your newsletter for more details.

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DO YOU OFFER PARTIAL SEASON SHARES? No. The logistics are simply too complicated for us to manage with all of the other in season farm management tasks we have to do. However, we do have many shareholders that will "split" a season share with neighbors or friends.

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFO? Call our Wilmington home for questions not answered here. The telephone number is (937) 383-2133 or call Marcia on her cell phone (937)302-7908. You may also email questions to bergefurdsfarmmarket@yahoo.com.

WHAT DOES THE FARM GROW AND WHAT CAN I EXPECT IN THE SHARE BAG? Our families farm is located just south of Wilmington, Ohio about 1 hour from Cincinnati, Columbus and Dayton. We grow over 100 varieties of just about every vegetable, berry and melon crop. For a more complete list of fruit and veggies and approximate harvest dates see the chart attached.

CAN I CHOOSE WHAT GOES IN MY SHARE BAG? Due to pre bagged shares, all shareholders will receive the same variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs. For example shareholders who dislike beets will receive the same amount of beets as the shareholders who love beets. We suggest you share the items you do not like with your friends, neighbors and family.

HOW MUCH IS IN A FULL BUSHEL SHARE BAG? We do our best to fill your weekly share to the brim. A full share is equivalent to about 1 1/2 regular paper grocery sacks. Shares will be lightest early in the season with greens. Mid-summer to fall the shares will be heaviest and you will probably also carry your melon, watermelon and squash in addition to a full share bag.

WILL I RECEIVE ALL ITEMS THAT YOU HAVE ON YOUR CROP LISTING? Farming and the crops we harvest are **VERY** dependent upon weather and how well Mother Nature treats us. Some weather events (i.e. freeze, flood, droughts, hail, wind, disease, insect) will result in total crop failures. If there are crop failures or skips in harvest your share bag will be filled with crops that were not impacted by the weather event.

HOW LONG WILL CROPS KEEP AFTER HARVEST? Crops vary in how long they will keep, even under ideal growing and storing conditions. There can be a significant difference between the storage life of fresh locally grown produce and that of conventional produce treated after harvest with fungicides, fumigants, waxes and preservatives. Use, prepare or preserve your produce as soon after harvest as possible for best taste and quality.

ARE YOU A FAMILY RUN FARM? The day-to-day farm operations are run by our entire family Brad, Marcia and children Ashley (24), Brandon (15), Bryant (13) , Brady (11) and our grandsons Ethan and Weston. As the busy planting and harvest seasons fall upon us we ask for help from our families, friends, anyone that owes us a favor or anyone who will work for produce!!

WHAT IF MY FAMILY DOES NOT LIKE A PARTICULAR PRODUCE ITEM? If you get tired of a particular item we suggest that you trade or share your wonderful produce with your neighbors and friends just like if it were coming out of your own garden. Giving away garden grown produce to friends and family is a long standing tradition. We also encourage you to preserve produce for use in the winter season by canning, freezing, drying and juicing.

IS THERE A DEADLINE FOR SIGNING UP? There is no deadline for signing up, shares are sold on a first come first served basis and are available until we are sold out, which usually is by March. If we sell out we can add you to the next seasons waiting list.

ARE ALL ITEMS IN OUR BASKET GROWN ON YOUR FARM? Yes, our farm grows more than 100 varieties of small fruit, melons and vegetables, including summer and winter squash, several varieties of tomatoes (including heirloom varieties), cucumbers, pickles, bell peppers, broccoli, cabbage, potatoes, radishes, beans, sweet corn, onions, greens, watermelons and melons to name a few. See the list below of crops grown.