



Early Bird Guarantee

There is no increase in the share price for 2011. Guarantee your share of our tenth CSA season by signing up by March 1st.

Usually, returning members who sign up by March 1st pay the previous year's share price. This year, the good news is that there is no increase in the cost of the share, so everyone will pay the same \$560 whenever they join. Still, you will want to sign up before March 1st in order to guarantee your share of our tenth harvest season!

Our CSA has been full at 125 shares for the past five years. This is the greatest number of members our small farm can feed, so we do not have the luxury of simply selling more shares. It is very important to us that all returning members have a spot, so we will hold your share until March 1st. After that date, membership is open to new and returning members on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please send in your check(s) and reserve your spot as soon as you can! We would be thrilled to see you all again for our tenth season.

CSA Share Rebates

Physicians Plus, Group Health, Dean, and Unity all offer rebates worth \$50 to \$300 on the cost of your CSA share. Find out more at www.macsac.org/rebates.html

Claire's Comments

Winter's End So Soon

Though the temperatures are still freezing and there is still snow on the ground, early January is when I begin to feel that winter is over. It's not that I feel warm or that I'm itching to go play outside. It's that I don't even need all my fingers to count the weeks left before the first greenhouse planting of the year. And there is still so much to do before I'm ready for planting!

Seed orders are top on the list. The first step in that process is to figure out how much of each crop to grow. This year I have a little advice from those of you who completed the end-of-year survey. Some of you suggested getting rid of the sweet corn. It takes up so much space on our small farm and still we never get enough of it, so I am taking that advice and dropping sweet corn. Others of you asked for melons. Though we have not had success with melons in the last few years, we did have a couple of seasons with beautiful, plentiful, and delicious melons. My plan is to use the time and energy we save on corn to invest in more melons. I will also be making some other changes including decreasing peas a bit, increasing onions, trying out a new trellising system on tomatoes, and fiddling with the potato planting dates to make sure we get a potato crop this year. All I have to do is feed all this information into my spreadsheets, do some magic calculations, and soon enough a completed seed order will come out the other side.

The next thing that needs to happen before planting is finishing our greenhouse. The most important factor there is designing and building a germination chamber. Since our new greenhouse is passive solar (meaning it is only heated with the sun), it can get quite cool in there at night. In order for seeds to germinate well, they must be held at a fairly constant 70 to 80 degrees. The germination chamber will be a protected place that will keep the seeds warm and moist and happily sprouting. After germinating, plants can be moved into the less stable conditions of the greenhouse and actually benefit from those cool nights. Once the germ chamber is done, all the greenhouse needs for a successful planting season is a soil mixing station, growing benches, and a hardening off area.

There are plenty of other things on my to do list this winter, but probably the most important one is hiring a new farm employee. When I started the farm in 2001, I worked only 20 hours per week and served just 14 CSA members. Now Jake and I both work full time and the CSA membership (including both types of shares) is 160. Plus we have thriving sprout and herb businesses, a new business designing and installing vegetable gardens (which Megan manages), and a growing farm internship program. Not only are we ready for a new staff

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Market Share Option Returns for 2011

Last year we opened up a new type of CSA share called the "market share." It is a smaller CSA option designed for folks who are often away in the summer or who have their own summer gardens. We had some success with this new share type, so we are offering it again in 2011.

Just like with the regular share, members pay up-front for the season and are eligible for the HMO rebates. Then instead of getting a weekly box, members come to the farm stand to shop using the up-front credit. Members may come to any or all pick-ups and select as much or as little as they need. They can also use their credit for bulk tomatoes, broccoli, beans, or other items available for pre-order when the farm is booming. Market share members also have access to the CSA garden, farm events, and the weekly CSA newsletter.

The cost of the market share for 2011 is \$280. There are some restrictions on how the \$280 credit can be used (related to using it up throughout the season); when we are tight on some crops the main CSA will have priority and those crops may not be available at the farm stand; and members who choose the market option may miss some of the excitement of trying out new vegetables each week, but we feel this new share is just the thing for some folks.

If you are interested in all the details, please contact Claire at the e-mail address below and she will send you the brochure. Or visit the CSA membership page of our website to compare the two membership options and view both brochures: <http://www.troygardens.org/what-we-do/troy-community-farm/csa/membership>. We are accepting only 30 members into the market share CSA, so please contact us early!



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member, we really need one! The job is posted and I am hoping to have a new farmer on board by early March. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please let me know and I will send the posting along directly!

Though January is the first harbinger of the end of winter, the organic farming conference in LaCrosse actually closes the season. I will attend that conference (the largest farming conference in the country) at the end of February anxious to improve my farming skills and ready to come back and start planting. In the short bit of winter we have left, I hope to hear from all of you as you renew your CSA memberships we start looking forward to the first salads of spring together!

Upcoming Events

Guaranteed Share Sign-Up Deadline

Tuesday, 1 March 2011

Returning members, send in your sign up form and check(s) by March 1st and guarantee your spot in the CSA for our tenth season! After March 1st membership is open to both new and returning members on a first-come, first-serve basis.

First CSA Pick-Up

Thursday, 2 June 2011

at Troy Community Farm

Remember to bring a tote bag to the first delivery of the season. We will fill it with lettuce, spinach, radishes, sprouts, green garlic, and more.

Farm Volunteer Days

Fridays, 7:00 to 11:00 am

May through October

at Troy Community Farm

The farm has open volunteer hours on Friday mornings. We transplant, mulch, weed, harvest, and have interesting conversation while working hard. Everyone is welcome. You will leave with some dirt under your fingernails, a stretch in your hamstrings, and as many flowers and herbs as you can carry.

10-Year Anniversary Events

Dates, Times, and Locations,

To be announced

2011 marks the 10th anniversary of Community GroundWorks. Our non-profit was organized and Troy Community Farm began to grow food at Troy Gardens ten years ago in 2001. We will be celebrating this milestone throughout the year with various events. All our CSA members will be invited! The weekly CSA newsletter will keep you up to date as plans unfold.

Troy Community Farm

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