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# CSA Handbook

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**living  
hope  
farm**

growing food, faith and community



## Share Sizes and Costs – 2012

Living Hope Farm offers full and split shares for members. We also accept monetary tax-deductible donations toward our 'First Fruits' program.

**Full Share:** \$750 (end of May through October)

A full share is estimated to be ample enough for a family of four cooking 4-5 times a week.

**Split Share:** \$400 (end of May through October)

This is the same size as a full share but the share is divided between two households each week. Another option is to arrange to pick up your full share every other week. If you decide to split a share you can find your own 'other half' or we can pair you with another member. If you choose to divide your share each week, rather than pick up every other week, we request that one person pick up the produce and split it off the premises. Our parking and distribution areas could easily become congested.

In addition to your regular fresh produce, members will also have the opportunity to cut a complimentary bouquet of

### Our Vision:

Living Hope Farm desires to deepen the understanding of the connection between the health of people and a sustainable system of agriculture while holding fast to the idea that there are many underserved communities in our Philadelphia region.

The Living Hope farm will operate as a non-profit CSA. A CSA is a method of farming that emphasizes safe, nutritious, locally grown food that supports a local economy and allows persons to reconnect to each other and the land.

Living Hope Farm will be growing produce using only organic methods as it begins the three-year transition into a certified organic market farm.

LHF desires to give members opportunities to receive more than just fresh produce. By being a member of the CSA you make an investment in building community and building soils for future generations. As land is increasingly developed in our surrounding area, LHF believes that we should be stewards of the land.

flowers each week from the cutting garden. During the late summer members will also receive a portion of our honey harvest and will have the opportunity to purchase additional honey quantities as well.

Members may pay the full amount when becoming a member or may divide the payment over a three month period. All memberships should be paid in full by May 30.

Our First Fruits program is our intentional desire to give 10% of what we grow to persons who do not have the financial means or access to fresh, local, organically grown food. First Fruits, a common term within the Mennonite Church community, simply means that we choose to give the first and best of what we have to offer. Often that is our tithe. But on Living Hope Farm that means choosing to donate a given number of shares each year and not waiting until a crop is nearly finished producing before determining what is left to give away. Each week, just like a members share, a number of shares will be harvested for our First Fruits program. Any contribution amount above your share price is considered a tax deductible donation.

## **Work Shift Requirements**

Work shifts are your opportunities to participate in gaining a deeper understanding of what is involved in growing the produce you take home each week. Each share is requested to five 4 hours of work over the course of the season (even split shares). The work requirement is a wonderful chance to meet other members, share time with your family outdoors, and increase your appreciation for the process of “seed to field to table.”

Our on-line calendar allows you to view and register for work opportunities each week. Work requirements will vary over the course of the season; some activities more physical, other more dirty or repetitive. Work activities may include but are not limited to: weeding, thinning, mulching, planting and harvesting. When you arrive you will be asked to sign in and will be given some instruction for your work assignment. If you finish a task and still have time to donate please check with the farmer for further instruction.

For parents or those bringing children, it is suggested that you consider the weather and your child’s age. We encourage you to bring them to the farm. We want children to gain a greater understanding of how produce is grown AND hopefully develop an interest in gardening as well. For children that are very young, parents will discover very quickly that children can easily become bored, hot, or thirsty. You are encouraged to bring snacks, sunscreen, water, and a sun hat. Parents may choose to coordinate with another family so that while one family is working another watches the children and then switch your duties. The pick-your-own crops are a great way to introduce the children to farm work in shorter snippets of time, rather than through a work day. Plants can easily be trampled or fatally damaged with happy feet. Children also may choose to linger in the kinder-garden where they will be able to search for casts of a grasshopper, ant, and ladybug or hide below the tent of pole beans, or just sit and enjoy the sounds of the garden. You are always welcome to come and weed, harvest, or relax in the kinder-garden with your children at any time!

Most importantly, adults bringing children should monitor them in the field at all times and discourage them from climbing on any equipment.

 **Where do I park when I come to the farm?**

You may follow the driveway to the left at the Y and park near the long white building at the top of the farm. You will see a ramp where the distribution doors are located. Inside you will find a white board that will describe your pick-up share or if it is a work day you will find a list of work needs.

Please be extremely careful when entering or exiting the parking lot and be aware that smaller children may be crossing the parking lot that you are not able to see below the level of your vehicle.

 **Pick-Up Protocol**

When you arrive for pick-up enter the distribution area through the doors located on the cement ramp. Inside the door you will find a table with a binder. Always go to the binder first, locate your name, and please check it off in the appropriate column. This lets us know you picked up your share.

If you ever have someone else pick up your share for you - please be sure they know the pick-up protocol so that no one else is short changed. If your name is not on that list - please do not take a share...because we did not pick one for you. Instead call the farmer so that we work out whatever it is that created an error.

Inside on the wall you will see a large white board with detailed information about what is included in your share each week. Some items are easy to measure...for example you may just take your number of onions or beets from the display area. Other items need to be measured or counted. You will find scales available for weighing your greens or produce before placing them in your bag to take home. Please make sure you bring a bags, boxes or whatever you would like to place your produce in to take home.

Newsletters should be mailed early in the week and if you read them you will be aware of your upcoming produce.

 **Trade Table**

You will find a Trading Table available inside the distribution area for an item that you are sure you won't use and that will just end up in the compost. Please leave it on the trade table for another customer. Please feel free to take an item that is left on that table that you may want instead if it looks good to you.

Please respect the distribution area leaving the area as neat as possible. Try to maintain clean counters and floors (like you would like to find them in YOUR kitchen) for others who may pick up their share after you leave.

 **U-Pick Crops**

Over the course of the season a variety of 'pick your own' (PYO) crops will be available. These are time intensive crops to pick for the farmer and are not cost-effective to harvest for all CSA members. PYO crops are great opportunities to enjoy quiet time in the field alone or as a family. Tasting a fresh green bean or popping a strawberry in your mouth right off the vine is a treat!

On your pick-up day, in the distribution area, you will find instructions and locations for crops that are available for PYO. For various items quart or pint containers will be provided for your convenience; but we request that you leave them after picking your share. It is suggested that you bring additional containers with you to transport your delicate produce home after harvesting your measured share. Please resist the temptation to increase your PYO share. This allows for others to receive their share who may have yet to pick. Please ask another CSA member, intern, or the farmer if you are unsure of how to harvest a crop.

A limited number of clippers are available to use for harvesting. They can be found near the inside entrance to the distribution area – out of the reach of small children. Please return them for others to use when you are finished.

Sometimes you may find yourself coming from work and not dressed to harvest. Please feel free to use the restroom located in the distribution building for changing into more casual clothes.

 **Flowers? That's Awesome!...**

During the months of July and August you will see the flower cutting garden begin to bloom in full color. These flowers are for everyone to enjoy. In the distribution area you will find a diagram showing you the best way to cut your flowers in the field. The proper cutting technique allows most of the flowers to continue growing and bloom again and again. Here are a few tips for the care of your flowers and methods to extend the life of your bouquet:

1. Bring a vessel (plastic is preferred to eliminate glass in the field) to fill with water at the farm. Take it into the flower cutting garden area for placing freshly cut flowers directly into. A half gallon milk jug with the lid cut off but the handle left in place is a great way to carry your bouquet as you cut.
2. To extend the life of your fresh cut flowers, take them out of their vase and trim their stems every couple of days. Then, replace the vase water with fresh cold water.
3. When trimming the stems, cut them under water
4. Remove flowers that begin to fade or wilt and do not leave leaves under the water level in your vase – remove the leaves from the stems
5. Add a few tablespoons of 7-UP or Sprite to the water. These beverages contain citric acid which is one of the ingredients contained in a package of flower food

6. Lastly, do not place your flowers in direct sunlight or in a warm draft. Bouquets will last longer at room temperature or below.

## **What if I forget to pick up my share?**

We will not be sending out reminder calls, but you will get an email early in the week letting you know what types of produce may be available. If you are unable to pick up your share, please send someone else or give us a call so that we may make other arrangements. If you forget, your food will be donated to a local food pantry.

## **What if I go on vacation?**

You can decide what to do with your share when you are on vacation. Many may decide to have a friend pick it up, or ask us to donate it that week. Please let us know how you plan to handle your share so we can be prepared.

## **Farm Buildings and Facilities**

The farm has a variety of buildings, not all of which are related to the CSA. As you drive in the lane, the driveway makes a Y. To the right the drive leads to the farmer's home; privacy is appreciated. To the left of the barn is a ranch house which serves as a residential facility for the Indian Creek Foundation. The distribution building also contains the farmer's office, intern housing, a kitchen, and a public restroom. The bathroom for public use is labeled accordingly. You are welcome to use the kitchen table or picnic table near the tree for eating lunch. You are also welcome to visit the farmer's black Dexter cattle, peacocks, or swine during the summer, but be aware that the fences are electrified and pigs can bite. Caution should be used when petting.

## **Farm/Community Events**

At various times during the summer the farm will host events that enable CSA members to gather and enjoy a taste of what's been grown. Member potlucks (being a dish to share, your own drink, and tableware) are an excellent opportunity to share a recipe of some of those 'new to you' items in your share and a chance for you to meet others. Additional events may include cooking classes, musicians sharing their talents, activities only for children, walk & talk visits on specific topics such as herb uses. Near the end of the season a harvest festival will be planned to either coincide with the local Apple Butter Frolic, which is held on site, or will be held separately.

If you have a specific talent or interest that you would like to share with the members of the farm, please contact the farmer directly. Living Hope Farm encourages all members to share your interests, talents, and energy in helping plan those activities on the farm that assist in building our community.



## **Newsletter**

A newsletter will be posted bi-weekly on the website and recipes will be included for your convenience. These newsletters will remain archived for you re-reading pleasure.



## **Contact Us**

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**It is true, many hands make light work!**