2011 Farm Walk Program

Education for farmers, by farmers
Presented by
Tilth Producers of Washington
& WSU Small Farms Program

Early 2011 Schedule

May 16, 2011
Inaba Produce Farms, Wapato

May 23, 2011
Red Dog Farm, Chimacum

June 6, 2011
Welcome Table Farm, Walla Walla

June 13, 2011
WSU Research & Extension Unit,
Mount Vernon

June 27, 2011
Templeton Farm, Chewelah

July 11, 2011
Cloudview EcoFarms, Royal City

July 18, 2011
Middleton Organic Orchard, Eltopia

Red Dog Farm
May 23, 2011

http://smallfarms.wsu.edu
www.tilthproducers.org
FARMER-TO-FARMER: PASSING ON THE WISDOM
2011 Farm Walk Education Series
Sponsored by the WSU Small Farms Team (smallfarms.wsu.edu) and Tilth Producers of Washington (www.tilthproducers.org)

Red Dog Farm Walk, May 23, 2011
Chimacum, WA

http://reddogfarm.net

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Farm Walk Evaluation form...

Please fill out and leave at the site!

Thank You!
**Pesticide Disclaimer**

Documents included in this packet may contain information regarding pesticides used in states other than Washington. It is the responsibility of the reader to determine whether those active ingredients or pesticide products are registered for use in Washington State.

Readers are reminded that all pesticide products, including products certified for use in organic production systems, must be registered by the Washington State Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Division in order to be legal.

**Exención de Responsabilidad por uso de plaguicidas**

Los documentos incluidos en este paquete pueden contener información relativa a los plaguicidas utilizados en otros estados además de Washington. Es responsabilidad del lector determinar si los ingredientes activos de los plaguicidas o productos estén registrados para su uso en el estado de Washington.

Recordamos a los lectores que todos los plaguicidas, incluyendo los productos certificados para su uso en la producción orgánica, deben ser registrados por la División de Plaguicidas del Departamento de Agricultura del Estado de Washington para ser legales.
Rupert Dandelion, the red border collie, romps with his new canine neighbors while Karyn Williams, the new landholder in the area, runs the tilled soil through her fingers and pictures the crops that will soon turn her farmland green.

Williams has been farming on other people's land for many years, but now, thanks to the support of the Jefferson Land Trust and other members of the Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative, she has her own land to work. With the lively name of Red Dog Farm, the land lies just south of Chimacum in an area with a rich agricultural heritage.

Williams looks out over her 23 acres, ready to plant her first crops in the field she has already tilled, happily anticipating the hard and rewarding work ahead. And she knows well what is involved, having worked for nine years on farms in the Pacific Northwest as well as Europe and Morocco. In fact, it was the two years she spent abroad that made this young woman from the Seattle suburbs know that someday she would have her own farm.

"Farming was definitely not a cool career choice when I was growing up," she laughed. But working on small farms abroad showed her that a family living simply on small acreage could farm successfully. She returned home and enrolled in The Evergreen State College Sustainable Agriculture Program, where she earned her bachelor's degree and managed the college's farm.

Karyn Williams, the new owner of a 23-acre farm in Center Valley, is growing five acres of vegetables for the 2008 season. The project is made possible through the Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative, a network of organizations that work with landowners and potential farmers and foresters to keep rural areas economically viable. - Photo by Selden McKee

Karyn Williams and Red Dog Farm's namesake, Rupert Dandelion. Williams is an experienced farmer who is as comfortable with her hands in the soil as she is at her computer, crunching the numbers to run her business. - Photo by Selden McKee
"At Evergreen I learned crop planning and timing, what to grow and how to sell the produce and manage the accounts. But I especially loved learning by doing - not just the farming itself but the business end of the operation," Williams explained.

The business of farming

The hands-on experience came in Jefferson County, where she and a friend leased Old Tarboo Farms for two years. Williams wrote the business plan and obtained financing. She learned about local growing conditions as they grew vegetables, berries, flowers and hay. And she learned about local markets as they sold their produce at the Port Townsend Farmers Market, to The Food Co-op and local restaurants, and through a community supported agriculture (CSA) program.

Williams is a businessperson as well as a farmer. She loves spreadsheets and the detailed work of analyzing which crops are best for the conditions and which give the best return for the time and money. "I like to spend time in the office, not just in the field," she said.

Innovative financing

Williams is on her new farm due to the diligence and work of members of the Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative, a network of organizations that work with landowners and potential farmers and foresters to keep rural areas economically viable.

Williams wanted to buy a 23-acre parcel that was the Brown Dairy Farm, part of the historic Chimacum Dairy, bordered by Chimacum Creek to the west and Center Road to the east. It is across the road from Glendale Farm, an organic beef operation that LandWorks is in the process of preserving as a working farm. This area at the confluence of Center and Beaver valleys has the most productive agricultural soils in the county, and LandWorks sees preservation of the farms there as vital to the agricultural future of the area.

Knowing she would need financing to buy her own farm, Williams contacted Mark Bowman of ShoreBank Enterprise Cascadia, a unique financial institution that provides financial and business support to small farmers and foresters. Another member of LandWorks, ShoreBank had partnered with the Jefferson Land Trust to put other small farmers on their own farms. Bowman referred Williams to Sarah Spaeth, Jefferson Land Trust (JLT) conservation director.

"Sarah and others at JLT took the time to hash through all the details," said Williams. Spaeth describes the arrangement between JLT and Red Dog Farms as a "nationally innovative way of making farmland accessible for small farmers eager to get their own land to work. And the community benefits from the increased supply of locally grown food."

Under the arrangement, Williams leases the land from the Land Trust and in five years will purchase the land for a price tied to the original purchase price. The Land Trust used money from the Kilham Revolving Fund to make the down payment; the money will be paid back with interest. ShoreBank made the loan to JLT for the balance of the purchase amount.

Because it is a land lease, the farmer will own all the improvements she makes on the land. JLT will put in utilities and, when grant money is obtained, will place an easement to protect the riparian habitat along Chimacum Creek and to preserve the land as farmland in perpetuity.

"It's a very new tool for land trusts, and we hope this will be a model lease arrangement for other projects that the Land Trust and the LandWorks Collaborative undertake," said Spaeth.

Favorable factors

Mark Bowman of ShoreBank says there were several reasons the financing came together so well. First, there is the mutual trust and synergy of the partners of LandWorks. "We have a common goal and can work together on a project," he said. "Together we can walk the fields with the farmer, provide information, contacts and support, and then combine our efforts to get the deal done quickly."

Williams' reputation was another important factor. She has been farming and marketing her products successfully for several years, so she had proven herself.

The strength of the Land Trust was a major factor. "They have a great reputation, strong community support and a good record, so we could accept the financial risk knowing the Land Trust was so well
supported," Bowman explained. He added that the more financial support the community gives the Land Trust, the more able it is to partner with ShoreBank and other LandWorks partners to protect lands before they are developed.

Support from many

Williams' energy and expertise has attracted another new type of financial support: an equipment loan from a local couple who recognized the opportunity to support a young farmer while earning a return on their money. "We aren't wealthy people," said the woman. "This loan is significant for us, but we have utmost confidence in Karyn and her goal."

The lenders will receive produce as part of the interest payment, but primarily they are involved because "it feels entirely right. Small farmers work very hard, don't make much money, and live on the edge of survival. We can help to feed the community while supporting a woman who has farming in her blood."

Williams has found support from many others in the area. The Food Co-op, another LandWorks partner, is a great supporter of small farmers. General Manager Briar Kolp said, "This is what we're all about: encouraging local food production, getting more farms and farmers going, and providing the markets for their produce."

The Co-op helps farmers with marketing not only at the store but also through farmers' markets and CSAs. "What works for the farmers is what is important," said Kolp. She appreciates that small farmers are experimenting with crop variety to provide a year-round mix of produce. And she knows farming is a huge responsibility and that the whole community benefits when someone such as Williams takes on that responsibility.

Al Latham, district manager of the Jefferson County Conservation District, another LandWorks member, provided Williams information on various properties, wetlands and land conditions. Kate Dean, outreach coordinator of the LandWorks Collaborative, knows the farms and farmers and has provided many important contacts.

Katherine Baril, director of Washington State University Jefferson County Extension, has provided marketing advice and expertise. WSU is also a member of LandWorks, and Baril is enthusiastic about the future of the small farm, saying, "We are growing a whole new crop of young farmers."

And Williams herself will nurture this "new crop." She will have five interns, people who want to learn how to make their living as farmers. She wants to teach others who will someday have their own small farms, joining the community of farmers who supply this area with healthy fresh food.

"We share information and help each other out. Each person has a specialty and each farm is different, but we share the goal of providing good food to the community and keeping small farms viable."

The work ahead

At Red Dog Farm, Williams is fixing up a small trailer that will be her home once the utilities are installed. As soon as possible, she plans to put up a house, a barn and a greenhouse. A well with potable water is on the property, but she will also get PUD water. The farm should have its organic certification by April.

This first year, Williams will plant 5 acres with mixed vegetables, salad greens, strawberries and flowers. She'll grow a cover crop on another 4 acres and hay on another 10. She knows this will be a learning process, especially since her land has five different soil types and since moisture content varies from the low wet area along Chimacum Creek to the drier higher sections.

Because she is so detail-oriented, Williams plans a year in advance and keeps records that let her track what works and what doesn't. She knows there must be a good business reason to raise a certain crop or animal.

Practical and realistic about her farming business, Williams also knows there is a limit to what she can do, that she can't work at the summer pace - that is, day and night - every month of the year. "I'm working to balance the financial viability of the farm with my ecological responsibility to the land and community, while at the same time taking care of myself," she said.

CSA and markets
Williams will market her produce at the Co-op and farmers markets, will sell to restaurants, and will offer a CSA. With a CSA, or community supported agriculture, a person pays for farm produce up front and receives a regular basket of food from that farm. It is a way for the public buying the food to become more involved with the farmer providing the food. Many farms in the area offer CSAs.

A Red Dog Farm brochure will be available at the Co-op and from Williams, who can be contacted at karynlw@hotmail.com and 774-6249.

The Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative is a nationally innovative model of land conservation and rural economic development comprising nine local groups working together toward a common goal: to make working lands in our rural county productive and profitable, thus ensuring their long-term viability. Landowners interested in the services of Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative can contact Kate Dean at 301-1750 or info@jeffersonlandworks.org.

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Reader Comments

Posted: Tuesday, February 05, 2008

Article comment by: Simeon Baldwin

Great article featuring a great model of land conservation and a great entrepreneur in Karyn Williams.

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Article Comment Submission Form

We welcome your comment to this story, to be posted after a website editor's review.

Please stay on topic, provide credible information or insight that moves the discussion forward, be convincing and try to be brief. Your comment won’t be edited, so all of it is posted or none of it is posted.

Own your words and post your full name, although single name or alias comments will be considered. An authentic email address and phone number are for our use only. NOTE: site software requires that all fields be filled out.

Submit an Article Comment

First Name: 
Last Name: 
Telephone: 
Email: 
Comment: 
Passcode: 

Click here to see a new mix of characters.

This is an anti-SPAM device. It is not case sensitive.

Submit  Reset
Welcome to Red Dog Farm!

From http://reddogfarm.net

Located in the fertile Center Valley of Chimacum, Washington, Red Dog Farm boasts gorgeous views, prime agricultural soils and frontage along salmon-bearing Chimacum Creek. Red Dog Farm produces 23 acres of organic mixed vegetables, berries, cut flowers, plant starts and hay. Our organic farm's CSA program offers pickups in Port Townsend and on the farm in Chimacum.

About Your Farmer:
Karyn Williams is the owner and operator of Red Dog Farm. Karyn has been farming since 1998 and first started running her own farm in 2005. Red Dog Farm was established in 2008. Karyn is aided by a crew of awesome workers and her faithful red border collie, the farm’s namesake, Rupert Dandelion.

We're Certified Organic!
Red Dog Farm is certified organic by Washington State Department of Agriculture. At Red Dog Farm we strive to work in cooperation with nature by planting diverse crops, maintaining buffers from the creek and wetlands and encouraging diversity of wild flora and fauna.

We're Now Salmon Safe Certified!
Farming in cooperation with the natural world has always been part of the mission at Red Dog Farm and we are very pleased to have qualified under the Salmon Safe program. To be a certified farm, a third party auditor conducted a study of the farm to determine the positive and negative impacts the farm operations has on salmon and salmon habitat. They looked at factors such as excessive nutrient run-off, conservation irrigation practices, and habitat enhancement along the creek. Red Dog Farm passed with flying colors. We're honored to be farming alongside Chimacum Creek and the coho and chum salmon who swim and spawn there.

Purchasing Organic Produce from our Farm:
Organic produce from Red Dog Farm is sold at the Port Townsend Farmers Market, Chimacum Farmers Market, through our Port Townsend CSA, our Chimacum CSA, and at various local restaurants and stores. Or, you can purchase all your favorite vegetables, berries, and flowers at our self-serve farm stand. Farmstand is open year-round 8am- 8pm seven days a week.
Seasonal Produce Guide

**Arugula** (June-Oct)

**Beets** - Red, Golden (June-Feb)

**Broccoli** (June-Nov)

**Brussels Sprouts** (Oct-Feb)

**Cabbage** - Savoy, Green, Red (July-Feb)

**Carrots** - Orange, Purple (June-Feb)

**Cauliflower** (July-Nov)

**Celeriac** (Oct-Feb)

**Celery** (Sep-Dec)

**Collard Greens** (June-Feb)

**Cucumber** - Slicing, Lemon (Aug-Oct)

**Fava Beans** (June-July)

**Fennel Bulb** (July-Dec)

**Flowers** - Seasonal varieties (April-Oct)

**Garlic** - (June-Sep)

**Green Beans** - also Wax and Purple (July-Sep)

**Herbs** - Basil, Cilantro, Dill (June-Nov)

**Kale** - Italian, Red, Curly (June-Feb)

**Kohlrabi** (June-Dec)

**Leeks** (Oct-Feb)

**Lettuce** - Romaine, Batavain, Butter (June-Oct)

**Onions** - Walla Walla, Red, Yellow (July-Dec)

**Pac Choi** (June-Nov)

**Parsley** - Italian, Curly (July-Dec)

**Parsnips** (Nov-Feb)

**Peas** - Sugar Snap, Snow (June-July)

**Pie Pumpkins** (Oct-Jan)

**Potatoes** - Fingerling, Yellow, Red, Russet (June-Feb)

**Radishes** - French Breakfast, Red (June-Nov)

**Salad Mix** (June-Oct)

**Scallions** - aka Green Onions (June-Sep)

**Shallots** (Oct-Feb)

**Spinach** (June-Dec)

**Stir-fry Mix** (June-Feb)

**Strawberries** (June-Oct)

**Summer Squash** - Zucchini, Costata, Yellow (June-Oct)

**Sweet Corn** (Sep-Oct)

**Sweet Peppers** (Aug-Oct)

**Swiss Chard** (June-Nov)

**Tomatoes** - Beefsteak, Roma (Aug-Oct)

**Turnips** - Hakurei, Purple Top (June-Feb)

**Winter Squash** - Delicata, Acorn, Sweet Dumpling (Oct-Jan)
Community Supported Agriculture

Members pay up-front for weekly shares
Farmer chooses produce each week that reflects seasonal availability
Weekly newsletter with recipes, tips and news from the farm
Up to 20% discount depending on your commitment

Two share sizes are available
Small shares are designed to feed one to two people who cook half their meals at home and are modest vegetable eaters.
Large shares are designed to feed three to four people who cook half their meals at home and are modest vegetable eaters, OR one or two voracious vegetable eaters who love to cook

Discounts are based on your commitment
10% off for signing up for three sessions
15% off for signing up for four sessions
20% off for signing up for all five sessions

2011 CSA Sessions
Session 1: April 6th - May 25th (8 weeks)
Session 2: June 1st - July 27th (9 weeks)
Session 3: August 3rd - Sept 28th (9 weeks)
Session 4: October 5th - Nov 30th (9 weeks)
Session 5: Dec 7 - Feb 1, 2012 (every other week delivery)

Crop Highlights
Session 1: Greens, Radishes, Tulips
Session 2: Greens, Peas, Carrots, Broccoli, Strawberries, Potatoes, Sweet Peas
Session 3: Tomatoes, Beans, Squash, Basil, Cucumber, Lettuces, Sweet Corn, Strawberries, Flowers
Session 4: Greens, Roots, Onions, Leeks, Winter Squash
Session 5: Roots, Winter Squash, Shallots, Leeks, Greens

To reserve your spot, fill out the CSA Membership Form and return along with your check. There is limited space. Shares are sold on a first come first served basis.

CSA Membership Form
Name(s)____________________________________________
Address____________________________________________
Phone #____________________________________________
Email(s)____________________________________________

Pick-up Location:
_____Uptown Port Townsend
________2pm- 8pm Wednesdays
_____Red Dog Farm
________2pm- 8pm Wednesdays & Thursdays

Sessions & Share Size:
Session 1 small share $100
Session 1 large share $150
Session 2 small share $180
Session 2 large share $270
Session 3 small share $230
Session 3 large share $345
Session 4 small share $170
Session 4 large share $250
Session 5 small share $150
Session 5 large share $225

SUBTOTAL________________________________________

Discount:
3 sessions -10%
4 sessions -15%
All 5 sessions -20%
TOTAL PAYMENT___________________________________

Make checks payable to: Red Dog Farm
P.O. Box 402
Chimacum, WA 98325

Staff Only
Date___________ Amt pd__________
cash or chk #__________________ staff initials________
DB given: Y/N __FM/Mail
___XL sheet ___email list ___conf.email

Dog Bones Program
Purchase only what you want and save as you do it
Invest in the farm by paying up front
Up to 15% discount depending on your commitment
Redeemable for any Red Dog Farm produce, flowers, or plant starts at any of our farmers market booths and the Red Dog Farmstand (Note: Does not include cheese, eggs or meat.)
Certificates come in 50 dollar increments so they are easy to divide among family members or give as gifts

To sign up please fill out the following information and send along with a check. Dog Bones will be sent to you in the mail unless you request to pick them up in person.

Name__________________________
Address________________________
Phone #__________________________
Email___________________________

Discounts are based on your Commitment
Full price: $50 to $150
10% off: $200 to $550
12% off: $600 to $750
15% off: $800 and above

Total Amount Dog Bones $________
Discount minus $________
TOTAL PAYMENT $________

Dog Bones can be purchased at anytime.
Dog Bones have no expiration date.
Discounts are not cumulative. They apply for the amount purchased at any one time.

Make checks payable to: Red Dog Farm
P.O. Box 402
Chimacum, WA 98325
Red Dog Farm

Type: LT Ownership
Year Acquired: 2007
Acres: 23.1

As part of the Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative effort to preserve local agricultural lands and production, Jefferson Land Trust purchased this 23.1-acre property in late 2007. This scenic property protects a portion of salmon-bearing Chimacum Creek, and is currently being leased for organic row crop and hay production.
Kawahara 10
Kilham Corner 3
Kurtzo 22
Landkammer 11
Last Camp 9
Lower Chimacum Creek Nature Preserve 18
Marlow 1
Marsh and Meadows 16
Marshall 21
Meacham 5
Middlepoint Farm 46
Middlepoint Land Conservancy 4
Quilcene Heights 8
Quimper Wildlife Corridor 2
Red Dog Farm 37
Salmon Creek Reseck 34
Schmidt 19
Snow and Salmon Creek Estuary 23
Snow Creek Estuary Preserve 23
Snow Creek Houck 35
SpringRain Farm 42
Sunfield Farm 27
Tamanowas Rock Phase I 38
Tamanowas Rock Sanctuary 49
Tarboo Slopes 41
Tarboo Wildlife Preserve 30
TNC-Prince 15
Evaluation of Day-Neutral Strawberries in Organic Systems in Washington

Patrick Moore and Wendy Hoashi-Erhardt, Horticulture
Craig Cogger and Andy Bary, Soil Science
Doug Collins, Small Farms Program
Washington State University, Puyallup Research and Extension, 2606 W Pioneer Ave, Puyallup, WA

Contact: Wendy Hoashi-Erhardt, wkhe@wsu.edu, 253-445-4641.

Project Summary

Day-neutral cultivars allow strawberry production over a 4-5 month period (or potentially longer) in the Pacific Northwest and can be an important crop for organic farmers. However, day-neutral strawberries are primarily developed in other regions for conventional production systems, and their suitability for organic production under Pacific Northwest growing conditions is unknown. Ten day-neutral cultivars were evaluated on research plots over two years, 2009 and 2010 for yield, fruit quality, vigor, durability, and disease resistance. After getting initial data, a subset of five cultivars were evaluated on four regional farms in 2010, to continue in 2011. Final report will be available Summer 2012.

General Management

Prior to planting, soil was amended with compost. Beds were formed on 48-52” centers, raised 10” high, 2” wide on top, covered with black plastic mulch, with a single drip line running down the center. Bare-root plants of 10 cultivars were planted in late April 2009 in replicated plots. Plant spacing was staggered double row, 10” apart, and 12” between plants within the row. Certified organic plants were not available. Cultivars were foliar fertilized with soluble liquid organic fertilizer (Drammatic 4-4-0.5) every other week. Weeds in the row were controlled by hand on three occasions in August and September; alleys were mowed as needed. Runners were removed by hand from plants periodically between May and September. The plot area was surrounded by a row-cover fence, and a field vacuum was used on plots and alleys once a week in August and September to reduce lygus bug populations. The strawberries were harvested once or twice weekly between 3 June and 5 October 2010, depending on rate of ripening. Fruit was classified marketable, or affected by botrytis fruit rot, powdery mildew, anthracnose fruit rot, or other damage.

Replicated plantings of 5 cultivars were established in Spring 2010 on organic farms in Chimacum (2), Tacoma, and Orting, Washington. The five cultivars, Seascape, Albion, Aromas, Monterey, and San Andreas were chosen because they were widely commercially available, and had shown through the first year’s data on our plots, or through other reports, that they had adequate potential for good vigor and productivity in Washington.
Evaluation of day-neutral strawberries in organic systems in Washington

No comparisons with ‘Seascape’, an industry standard, are possible on research plots because the nursery mistakenly supplied a different cultivar instead of ‘Seascape’.

‘Aromas’ had the highest total yield and highest marketable yield of all the cultivars during the second cropping year of 2010 (Fig. 1). The cultivars Monterey, Portola, and San Andreas were planted late in 2009 due to nursery delays, and thus their yields cannot be meaningfully compared with that of the other cultivars planted in April 2009.

Cultivars were evaluated for damage due to botrytis fruit rot and anthracnose (Table 1). Botrytis fruit rot is one of the major challenges for organic strawberry farmers, and can be managed to some degree with clean mulch, removal of old leaves at season’s end, removal of infected fruit during the season, appropriate plant spacing to increase airflow within the canopy, and avoiding very susceptible cultivars.

Fig. 2. Anthracnose damage on ripe strawberries.

Anthracnose describes a disease that can affect strawberries as a crown rot and as round, sunken, firm lesions on fruit. The pathogen resides in the soil and can splash up during rain or overhead irrigation. The disease thrives in warm, humid conditions. Clean nursery stock, crop rotation, good weed management, and soil solarization are some cultural controls for organic production. Anthracnose tends to build up over time, so the 2nd year of production saw more than the first.

Losses to spotted wing drosophila (SWD), a new pest in 2009, ranged from 1-5% in 2010, and little difference among the cultivars was seen (data not shown). Similarly, powdery mildew was not as much of a problem in 2010, affecting less than 1% of fruit (data not shown). Lygus bugs damage fruit by puncturing developing seeds, resulting in malformations at the site of feeding (Fig. 5). In our study, lygus bugs were managed by frequent field vacuuming and the erection of a temporary row cover fence.

Page 2 - Not for further distribution or reprinting without permission from the authors
Evaluation of day-neutral strawberries in organic systems in Washington

(Agribon) around the plot areas, which seemed to decrease the populations of lygus bugs affecting the strawberry evaluation.

![Image of organic day-neutral strawberries]

**Fig. 4.** Lygus bug damage of organic day-neutral strawberries, ranged left to right, undamaged to severely damaged.

Fruit qualities, such as size, firmness, and flavor were evaluated for the cultivars. Berry size affects marketing choices, picking efficiency, and flavor perceptions. Below 15 g, berries become labor-intensive to pick. Berries over 25 g may be difficult to pack into pint containers and may be perceived as having low flavor by some consumers. Results for fruit size are displayed in Fig. 5.

![Images of berry pint containers]

**Fig. 5.** Fruit size of 7 cultivars relative to common berry pint containers.

Berry firmness is a good indicator of suitability for fresh market. Firmer berries tend to stand up better to the picking, packing, and moving necessary to bring fruit to market; especially when the fruit needs continue to look glossy and attractive for a few days. Firmness also has a big effect on mouthfeel and
juiciness. Some people purchasing local berries will have an aversion to “crunchy” berries. Firmness evaluations and flavor ratings are given in the cultivar summaries below.

Based on two years of evaluation at WSU Puyallup on research plots, and one year on regional organic farms, the cultivars can be summarized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultivar</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seascape (released 1991, from CA)</td>
<td>The most well-known day-neutral cultivar in Washington; lower yielding than Aromas and San Andreas. Tended to be rated fairly high for flavor, medium sized, pleasing red color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aromas (1997, CA)</td>
<td>Most productive, vigorous, and durable of the cultivars evaluated. ‘Aromas’ was the least affected by anthracose, powdery mildew, botrytis, and lygus. Consistent yields of attractive, well-sized, moderately firm, medium red berries. Overly vigorous growth must be managed carefully. Rated lowest for flavor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albion (2006, CA)</td>
<td>One of the more highly rated cultivars for flavor. Good marketable yields in both years, consistently acceptable size and firmness. Probably best suited for annual system in organic as durability is not great.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evie 2 (1995, UK)</td>
<td>Good marketable yields over two years, with attractive medium sized berries and acceptably vigorous plant. Potential problems were berry softness, susceptibility to botrytis, non-traditional strawberry flavor, and nursery availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarian (200?, Netherlands)</td>
<td>Unacceptable for organic production because of small size, uneven ripening, inconsistent yields, weak vigor, berry softness, and susceptibility to powdery mildew and lygus bugs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malling Pearl (2005, UK)</td>
<td>Better marketable yields in 2010 than in 2009. Berries were attractive and had acceptable size. Potential problems were berry softness, susceptibility to botrytis, and nursery availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitney (1999, CA)</td>
<td>Unacceptable production and fruit quality because of low vigor, very light internal color, and susceptibility to anthracose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Andreas (2009, CA)</td>
<td>Large, sweet fruit that were rated highly for flavor. Durability appears to be better than Albion. Fruit is quite firm, and color is a light red, which may be problematic for some farmers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monterey (2009, CA)</td>
<td>Medium-large fruit with acceptable but not great flavor. Durability appears to be better than Albion, earlier to bloom than the other day-neutrals in the spring. Fruit is quite firm, which may be a problem for some.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portola (2009, CA)</td>
<td>Good vigor in spring that declined over the summer; overall low vigor and low yields in 2010. Medium-large sized, firm berries with acceptable flavor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Organic Farming Research Foundation for this project.
Overview

CREP is part of the Farm Service Agency’s (FSA’s) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The Washington CREP provides incentives to restore and improve salmon and steelhead habitat on private land. It is a Federal-State partnership between FSA and the Washington State Conservation Commission.

CREP is a voluntary program. The most prominent practice is restoration of a forested riparian buffer. In December 2009, three additional practices were added to target water quality issues: riparian hedgerows, grass filter strips, and wetland enhancement.

Land enrolled in 10-15 year CREP contracts is removed from production and grazing. In return, landowners receive annual rental, incentive, maintenance, and cost share payments for establishing one of the CREP practices. The enrolled land must be removed from production during the contract period.

All CREP practices must be established according to Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications. Technical assistance to design and install the practices is provided by NRCS and local conservation districts.

Program Flexibility

CREP recognizes site variability. Buffer widths vary based on local site conditions. The buffer boundary can be moved towards or away from the stream at different locations to meet landowner needs, as long as the buffer practice standards are met.

Recent Improvements

The CREP enhancements approved in December of 2009 are the addition of: 15’-wide hedgerow buffers along smaller streams; grass filter strips upstream of salmon reaches; and wetland enhancement and buffers for wet areas connected to salmon reaches. In addition, certain types of horticulture lands are now eligible for CREP. These include orchards, berry farms, and vineyards.

Eligible Land

Eligible land must (1) have the required cropping history, (2) be able to support the required vegetation, and (3) be parallel and adjacent to an eligible stream. For the cropping history requirement, the land must meet one of the following:

- Cropland planted to annual crops, perennial grasses or legumes, or used as summer fallow, 4 of the 6 years 1996-2001. Perennial grasses or legumes must have been planted during 1996-2001. Orchards, berry farms and vineyards must have been in production 4 of the 6 years.
- Pasture land. This land may be enrolled in the forested riparian buffer or hedgerow buffer.

There is no minimum or maximum acreage to enroll.
**Eligible Streams**

For the CREP forested riparian buffer, there are 10,000 miles of streams designated as eligible. These are streams where riparian habitat is a significant limiting factor for salmon and steelhead.

Hedgerows are eligible along designated streams and other water courses within 10 stream miles of a designated stream reach. Hedgerows are a dense growth of shrubs and small trees that improve shade, leaf litter, bank stability and some filtering capability. Hedgerows can only be planted on water courses that are less than 15’ wide.

Grass filter strips, are allowed on streams within a watershed basin that contains a designated stream reach. They cannot be enrolled along a designated, salmonid-bearing stream, but only on water courses that drain, directly or indirectly, into a designated stream.

Wetland enhancement reaches must be adjacent and connected to a designated stream reach.

**Eligible Participants**

The operator of record and landowner(s) are eligible to participate in the contract. The land must have been owned or operated for at least 12 months prior to offering it for CREP.

**Forested Riparian Buffers**

Forested buffers must be planted to native trees and shrubs suitable to the site. Grasses will also be included if necessary. Native grasses will be used if available or comparable introduced grasses if natives are not available or successful. The buffer may include a grass strip on the outside edge if needed to address concentrated flows entering the buffer. The minimum buffer width of the forested riparian buffer is 35 feet and the maximum is 180 feet.

**Hedgerow Buffers**

Hedgerows are a 15 foot buffer planted to woody vegetation. The species planted must again be natives, but a greater utilization may be made of shrub-type species. These buffers are limited to salmonid bearing streams 15 feet wide or less when the stream is full to its bank.

**Grass Filter Strips**

Grass filter strip widths can range from 20’ to 120’ depending on the design requirements. Enrollment is limited to non-salmonid bearing water courses within the watershed containing a designated stream, as described above. In high rainfall areas, filter strips may need to be clipped periodically to remove vegetative buildup. Any material removed must be destroyed without economic benefit.

**Wetland Enhancement**

Wetland enhancement practices help restore the functionality of wetland ecosystems. Enrolled wetland must be hydrologically connected to a designated stream. The enrolled area would include the wetland and a surrounding buffer not to exceed three times the wetland acreage. The buffer will be planted to native and/or introduced species suited for the site.

**Fencing and Livestock Water Developments**

Under all CREP practices except wetland enhancements, existing livestock operations can receive the cost share reimbursement discussed below to fence livestock out of the buffer and establish livestock water. These practices must be located at, or near, the outside edge of the buffer and certain reimbursement limits apply.
**Contract Length and Start Date**

The applicant can choose a 10- to 15-year contract. The contract can start upon approval or be delayed up to 6 months after approval, at the participant’s discretion. A number of steps must be completed before a contract can be approved. These include:

- a determination that the stream reach and land are eligible
- a determination that the participants are eligible
- completion and approval of payment eligibility forms for USDA programs
- establishment of the participant’s land and farming operation in USDA records
- development of a conservation plan
- environmental impact and historical preservation review and consultations, if necessary
- determination of the exact acreage enrolled.

Participants must work with both the contracting agency (FSA) and technical agency (NRCS or conservation district) to obtain a contract, implement the practices, certify performance and receive reimbursement.

**Continuous Signup**

CREP signups are accepted year round. Producers can initiate an offer at any time, and once eligibility has been determined, can proceed with contract development.

**Financial Reimbursement**

Program participants are eligible for the following financial reimbursements on enrolled land.

**Annual rental payments.** Annual rental payments are based on “soil rental rates (SRR),” which are in turn based on dryland agricultural rents in the county, adjusted for the enrolled soils’ inherent productivity. CREP rental rate incentives are based on the average SRR for the site times the following incentive rates:

- 200% for forested riparian buffers and wetland enhancements
- 175% for hedgerow buffers
- 150% for grass filter strips.

Average SRRs for enrolled land can vary from $50 to $215, times the percentages above.

Annual rental payments are divided among the participants based on their share of the CRP contract. They are issued in arrears shortly after October 1 each year.

**Signing Incentive Payments (SIP).** SIPs are equal to $100 per enrolled acre and are issued shortly after the contract is approved. SIPs are also divided based on each participant’s share on the contract.

**Cost share reimbursement for establishment.** Cost share is issued in two components. The components are limited to normal, eligible installation costs approved by FSA, and all are issued after installation of the practice. Partial payments can be earned as portions of the practice installation are accomplished. The two components include:

- 50% cost share payments from FSA
- 10% cost share payments from Washington State, through the conservation district

**Practice incentive payment.** A 40% “practice incentive payment (PIP)” is available, but it may not be issued until the entire practice is installed. See Practice Installation Loans below.

**Maintenance Payments.** After the CREP practice is installed, Washington State will pay maintenance payments equal to 100% of the eligible costs of maintaining the cover to specifications for up to 5 years. To request this payment, participants must submit receipts or other cost documents to support
their claim. These payments will be issued by the local conservation district.

**Practice Installation Loans**. Installing certain CREP practices, especially forested buffers, can be expensive. The FSA 50% cost share and 10% State cost share can be issued in increments as installation occurs. However, the 40% PIP cannot be issued until the installation is complete. To limit the financial burden, conservation districts can provide 0% interest loans for the PIP portion of reimbursement. Conservation districts have more information on these loans.

**Payment Limitation**

FSA annual rental payments, including the incentives, SIPs and PIPs, are subject to the $50,000/year payment limitation that applies to all other CRP payments the participants may earn. There is no limitation on cost share payments or the State maintenance payments other than eligible cost caps.

**Binding Contract on Participants and Successors**

CREP contracts are a 10-15 year binding agreement on the participants. Withdrawing from a CREP contract during this period will generally require the refund of all payments received. In addition, if the land is sold or transferred, the successor must agree to assume the contract or all payments must be refunded. Applications should discuss their long term obligations with FSA staff before signing a CREP contract.

**For More Information**

For more information about CREP, contact your local FSA, NRCS or Conservation District. After an application is submitted, a no-obligation eligibility review will be conducted, and you will be provided a final opportunity to decide if you want to enroll the land.

Also visit our website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/wa](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa).

This Fact Sheet is a summary of CREP, and is not intended to cover all situations or program provisions. **Contact your local FSA, NRCS or Conservation District for specific questions about your land.**

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Selling Directly to Consumers

Direct Marketing Strategies

# 2

Jan. 2010

Farmers interested in selling directly to consumers have many strong options in Washington State. Direct marketing strategies require the farmer to think about all aspects of marketing such as displays, signage and informational materials, and how to create eye appeal to attract shoppers. Six of the most viable direct marketing options are summarized in this fact sheet. Benefits and challenges are listed for each of these options.

This fact sheet includes:

- farmers markets;
- farm stands;
- U-Pick;
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA);
- Internet sales and mail order; and
- agri-culinary tourism.

We would like to thank Karen Kinney for reviewing this fact sheet and offering helpful suggestions.

Farmers Markets

Farmers markets may be a fantastic place to start marketing your products. With more than 140 farmers markets in Washington, they are often very accessible. For a small fee, producers buy space to market their goods at a market that is well-advertised to consumers. Most markets are run by a manager and are accountable to a board of directors. Vendors often have an opportunity to be part of the board.

Presentation, booth design, and signage are important in attracting customers. Offering samples to customers at farmers markets can be a key step to selling your delicious products. Sampling regulations fall under local health department guidelines and may require a food handler permit. Many markets offer special events such as chef demos to help promote product sales.

Benefits of Selling at Farmers Markets

- Farmers markets are unbeatable for customer feedback on your products.
- A good place to test new products, get feedback and get new ideas.
- Often well-attended, they can offer very high volume sales.
- You can develop a loyal customer base.
- Opportunity to become known to the public and media and expand your business.

Challenges of Selling at Farmers Markets

- Picking the right market that matches your products, growing season, and volume is critical.
- Takes you away from the farm for hours or days at a time; incurring opportunity costs.
- May have to travel some distance for maximum sales.
- There are no guaranteed sales; bad weather or competing events may keep customers away.
- It may be difficult to access space in well established markets.

To find a directory of farmers markets, contact the Washington State Farmers Market Association at www.wafarmersmarkets.com, email info@wafarmersmarkets.com, or call (206) 706-5198.

WSDA has created the Washington State Farmers Market Manual to help existing markets run better, and new markets begin. It is available online at www.agr.wa.gov/Marketing/SmallFarm/docs/FMM1.pdf.

The Governor proclaims Washington State Farmers Market Week for the first week of August to celebrate Washington farmers and farmers markets. Many markets hold special events for customers during that week.
Farm Stands

Farm stands can be on your farm or by a roadside and can be as basic as the bed of a pick-up truck full of melons or a seasonal shed full of apples. Farm stands can be as elaborate as a year-round, air-conditioned store with refrigerators, freezers and prepared foods. Farm stands can be unstaffed, honor pay systems, or staffed. The system you choose will have a direct connection on the cost of the product you sell. Farmers selling on-farm should factor in the savings from not having to deliver the goods. As staffing costs can hinder a farm stand’s viability, consider being open only when there is regular demand. Advertise well, and follow any local zoning regulations for signage, so that passersby see that you are open and have time to stop safely.

Benefits of Selling at Farm Stands

- Allows for flexibility because you control the market, days and times open; can be very effective as a seasonal outlet.
- Opportunity to sell a single product or a variety of products.
- Good opportunity to sell odd shapes and sizes, and seconds.
- No sizing or grading needed.
- Limited packaging, labeling, and transportation required.

Challenges of Selling at Farm Stands

- May take you away from your farm tasks or be expensive to staff.
- Sales can be unpredictable with traffic flow.
- May have increased insurance liability as people come on to your farm.
- Possible zoning, building permit, or other licensing requirements.
- Adequate storage or refrigeration may be needed to maintain quality product.

U-Pick

In Washington, U-Pick is an option primarily for flower, tree fruit, berry, pumpkin, and Christmas tree growers. U-Pick farms should be aware of the liability risk of having consumers come onto the farm. It is a good idea to research liability insurance and waivers before opening to the public. Be sure to offer a clean site for visitors with parking, restroom facilities, and rules, container options and prices outlined clearly to ensure the best experience. U-Pick farms can be a community meeting place and they are also a great family activity. U-Pick farms have tourism appeal, too. Consider advertising your U-Pick farm with roadside signage, farm map listings, or the Washington State Tourism website found at www.experiencewa.com.

Benefits of Selling U-Pick

- Allows for flexibility because you control the market, days and times open; can be very effective as a seasonal outlet.
- Opportunity to market a single seasonal crop.
- Keeps packaging, labeling, transportation, and harvesting costs to a minimum.
- Potential to develop a loyal customer base that returns year after year.
- Potential to market additional farm products to local and visiting U-Pick customers.

Challenges of Selling U-Pick

- Increases your risk as people come onto your farm and liability insurance may be difficult to find or costly.
- May incur damage or lose some product in fields or farm from customers.
- A location far from a population base or urban area can limit customer access.
- Advertising is crucial; your website and marketing information must be accurate and up to date so that customers get correct information, including the current status of your crop.
- Staffing for managing the operation.
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

A CSA is an agreement between a farmer and a customer. The farmer provides their customers with a share of the harvest for a fixed period of time. Farmers can design their CSA so that customers pay in advance or in installments for a weekly box or bag of farm products. Since members of the CSA pay in advance, it provides working capital directly to the farm. Many summer CSAs offer produce throughout the growing season and cover 18 to 24 weeks. In addition, Washington farmers are also using CSAs to market their grains, cheeses, eggs, meat, fiber and produce year-round, as well as value-added products.

Most CSAs include a weekly newsletter of farm happenings, a list of what’s in the box, and recipes for items in the box. CSAs advertise by word of mouth, brochures, and web sites to solicit customers. CSAs utilize more of a grassroots marketing venue as members often host pick up sites where farmers drop a group of customers’ boxes at one location. Many CSAs offer pick-up at the farm.

In Wenatchee, Farmhouse Table CSA buys products from numerous local farms and puts them together in order to create the variety desired by CSA customers. In Clark County, there are more than twenty CSA farms operating on five acres or less. See www.swwa-csafarms.com.

Benefits of Selling through CSAs

- Pre-sales allow you to plan production and have a secure market for your harvest.
- You set the prices and choose quantities to put in the box.
- An excellent CSA builds a loyal customer base.
- Provides an opportunity to educate CSA members about new varieties and products.
- Does not require individual packaging, grading/sizing, and minimizes transportation.

Challenges of Selling through CSAs

- Requires a complex crop mix and production plan to be able to deliver consistent, quality products every week.
- Farms must dedicate time to responding to individual customers’ needs, complaints, and praises.
- It takes time to manage and write the weekly newsletter and/or recipes, and a willingness to share personal stories.
- A high turnover of CSA customers can increase marketing costs.
- Farms need to arrange and manage pick up locations.

Internet Sales and Mail Order

Internet sales and mail order are a valuable way to reach customers throughout the U.S. with unique, seasonal, and value-added products. Many Internet sales items work well as gifts, treats for self, or hard to find, specialty items. Value-added food products that you ship are required to be processed in a licensed WSDA Food Processing Facility. Accepting online payment is important for this market.

Blue Bird Grain Farm offers Internet sales of their products such as a monthly CSA of grains, and gift baskets. See http://shop.bluebirdgrainfarms.com.

Benefits of Selling through Internet and Mail Order

- Mail order can be cost-effective for smaller deliveries and keeps the farmer on-farm and off delivery routes.
- Reaches a larger customer base, especially if farm is not located close to a large population base.
- Can link and be linked to other websites of like minded groups to access more customers.
Challenges of Selling through Internet and Mail Order

• Need to communicate well with your customers by going the extra mile and including package inserts, email confirmations, or phone follow-ups.
• A reliable, user-friendly website is essential to online sales.
• Getting frequent return sales may be difficult. Think of ways to provide high value and make your product special.
• Can be difficult to establish your web presence without other forms of direct selling to help publicize your name and products.

Agri-Culinary Tourism

Agri-culinary tourism can boost your revenue by offering an on-farm educational, dining, lodging, or cooking experience to consumers. With culinary tourism and interest in local food and farms on the rise, think about what you can offer the eco or agri-tourist who seeks an authentic farm experience. Whether a school field trip, cheese-making, beverage and food pairings and tastings, a cooking class, or guided harvesting, composting and seed-saving classes, and even wool carding, many options exist that appeal to consumers. It helps to advertise well and get non-refundable deposits for classes. Be sure to charge for your planning and class or tour time. Consider working with a local chef for classes on your farm or at their restaurant. Local regulations, permits, land use and building codes can make the start up time and monetary costs very expensive. Make sure to check with your local government permit departments to find out what is required very early in the planning process.

Benefits of Agri-Culinary Tourism

• Can diversify farm revenue and supply income in the slow season.
• You set the prices and choose the number of people to allow in activities.
• Offers an opportunity to sell other products once people are on your farm.
• You can build a loyal customer base that appreciates your uniqueness and grows your business.

Challenges of Agri-Culinary Tourism

• It can be stressful dealing with the public on your farm, especially if there are logistics problems.
• Requires a significant amount of time to create, plan and manage programs.
• May need to incorporate time for educating about the realities of farm.
• Additional insurance and permits may be required.

Recommended Fact Sheets: Food Processing, Insurance, Labor

For further assistance or to make suggestions on how to improve this fact sheet, please email smallfarms@agr.wa.gov or call (360) 902-2057 or (360) 676-2059.
Community Supported Agriculture

The concept of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) was brought to the United States by Jan VanderTuin from Switzerland in 1984. Projects in Europe date to the 1960s, when women's neighborhood groups approached farmers to develop direct, cooperative relationships between producers and consumers. By 1986 two CSA projects in the United States had delivered harvest shares from Robyn Van En’s Indian Line Farm in Massachusetts and the Temple/Wilton Community Farm in New Hampshire.

In an impassioned rationale for CSA, Elizabeth Henderson (www.gvocsa.org/foodandag399.html), who grew up in New York City, offers a personal account of how her CSA work grew out of twin hungers for community and for connection to the land.

Twenty-five years ago, many young professionals left jobs in northeastern cities to revitalize abandoned New England farms. They found a dying local agricultural scene. Production of dairy, fruit, poultry, and vegetables was squeezed out of local markets as the food industry consolidated and shipped products became more common.

Direct farmer-to-consumer arrangements seemed to offer an answer. Young
In basic terms, CSA consists of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation so that the farmland becomes, either legally or spiritually, the community’s farm, with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and benefits of food production. Members or shareholders of the farm or garden pledge in advance to cover the anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer’s salary. In return, they receive shares in the farm’s bounty throughout the growing season, as well as satisfaction gained from reconnecting to the land. Members also share in risks, including poor harvest due to unfavorable weather or pests.

–United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) definition
www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa/csadef.htm

workers desired a less-regimented life. They also sought integration into a rural community while undertaking revitalization of its agricultural base.

New England features a harsh climate that limits production to about four months of the year. Consequently, a comparatively narrow range of foodstuffs could be raised and economies of scale were rarely an advantage. Still, the CSA concept was born and has since become widely publicized.

Over time, two distinct types of community supported agriculture have emerged: the shareholder CSA and the subscription CSA. (www.leopold.iastate.edu/pubs/staff/files/csa_0105.pdf and www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa)

Subscription CSA (farmer-driven). In this approach, the farmer organizes the CSA and makes most of the management decisions. Farm work is not required of subscribers. A permutation is the farmer cooperative, where two or more farmers organize to produce a variety of products for the CSA basket. Subscription CSAs now constitute more than 75 percent of all CSAs.

Shareholder CSA (consumer-driven). This type of CSA typically features an existing “core group” that organizes subscribers and hires the farmer. The core group may be a not-for-profit organization and land may be purchased, leased, or rented. Most key decisions are made by core group personnel.

Long-standing local food security programs may integrate CSAs as part of a comprehensive plan to ensure all segments of the community have access to good food—through food banks, community farms, community gardening, internships, training, farmers’ markets, transportation, and advocacy. The CSA is a means to involve all social strata and to supplement grant income. Some CSAs operated by nonprofits offer a certain number of free or reduced-price shares.

Some CSAs have “add-on” options to the basic basket. Subscribers usually self-harvest intensive-labor crops like snowpeas and berries. In fruit growing regions, subscribers can have tree fruits and berries as part of a “fruit share.” (1)

More information on the history and philosophy of the CSA movement can be found at the Web site of the organization dedicated to the late Robyn Van En (1949-1997), co-founder of the U.S. movement. The Robyn Van En Center (www.csacenter.org) links to many other resources, including a federal database and an excellent bibliography at www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa. This site also links to support groups that provide region-specific information and planning help for traditional CSAs, including books and periodicals and consultants with access to CSA farm budgets, crop tracking sheets, and management software.

The original idea of CSA was to re-establish a sense of connection to the land for urban dwellers and to foster a strong sense of community and cooperation with a decided social justice goal to provide food security for disadvantaged groups. As operated by nonprofits like the Western Massachusetts Food Bank and the Hartford Food Project, the CSA complements related food security programs. It provides work and training for the unemployed, fresh produce for the food bank, and a venue for other local farms to sell products. In addition, the CSA offers a measure of farmland preservation, insurance against sudden disruptions of the food supply line to major urban areas, and offers transportation for disadvantaged inner-city residents to sources of healthful, reasonably priced groceries.
A part of the original CSA aim was to enlist support from urban consumers for local and sustainable agriculture. A key concept of early CSA organizers was to assert local control over a food system that was growing increasingly consolidated and remote. In an era of price supports for commodity crops and chronic agricultural surpluses, organizers saw a food system that overemphasized competitive advantage and externalized many costs while failing to offer the small farmer a fair return.

The 2005 book by Leslie Durham entitled Good Growing—Why Organic Agriculture Works advocates “a new certification label—the Fair Share.” According to this philosophy, the small, organic farmer receives “a fair price (say, 75 percent of the consumer price) for the products sold.” The label further verifies that the products are marketed outside corporate agribusiness channels. (2)

Twenty years after its beginnings, the CSA movement has moved in a number of new directions. Two recent permutations of the CSA concept are profiled below: the cooperative that sells shares in farmers’ market offerings and the workplace CSA. As of publication (2006), these CSA forms remain to be studied, and little research data is available.

About 10 percent of CSAs are operated by non-profit organizations. The Hartford Food Project’s Holcomb Farm CSA and the Food Bank Farm CSA, operated on behalf of the Western Massachusetts Community Food Bank, are profiled below. About three-fourths of all CSAs are now operated by individual produce farmers as one of several direct marketing methods. The remainder are core group subscribers who hire farmers to grow for them and who have considerable decision making authority. Peter C. Reynolds, in a perceptive critique of the development of CSA plans, points to the connection channel as all-important: “The CSA is not a single farm but the place in a web of complementary farms where consumers connect with the land.” (3)

The success of any type of CSA depends heavily on highly developed organizational and communication skills. Organizers must enjoy the complex scheduling and task management that goes with CSAs. Computer literacy is a plus. CSA seasonal labor needs can be met either by relying on shareholder labor, family labor, or interns.

**Trends/Statistics**

USDA maintains a searchable database of CSAs in the United States at [http://usare.usda.edu/pub/index.cfm?sub=csa](http://usare.usda.edu/pub/index.cfm?sub=csa). The initial development of this database was the outcome of a series of USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grants to Northeast U.S. sustainable agriculture organizations—the first in the U.S. to survey CSA farms.

These related projects began with a series of farm surveys in 1996 (for the year 1995), 1997 (for 1996), and 1998 (for 1997), funded by USDA’s SARE program (subsequently continued with other funding). The first comprehensive portrait of the CSA movement in the U.S was a National CSA Farm Survey conducted early in 2000 for the year 1999. Three hundred sixty eight CSA farmers responded (of 1019 names).

A 2000 SARE grant helped collaborators envision building CSA farm networks nationwide while implementing a whole range of services, including a national CSA farm directory. Objectives included linking to efforts outside the Northeast, setting research agendas, and developing public policy reforms. Agenda items included tax incentives to make farmland more affordable and accessible, allowing food stamps to be used at CSA farms (subsequently enacted in 2001 for low-income seniors) (5), and removing policy barriers governing on-farm processing and farm apprentice labor. (6)

In December 2001, one source reported a net total of 761 CSA farms registered with USDA. As of March 2004, a study published by the Leopold Center at Iowa State University found 1,034 CSAs in the national database—an increase of more than 25
Holcomb Farm CSA

The CSA program at Holcomb Farm is one of an array of projects sponsored by the Hartford, Connecticut, Food System (HFS), which began operation in 1983. A nonprofit, non-governmental organization, HFS works on social justice and local food security issues, while influencing food policy. It also operates training programs and works to protect local farmland. According to Organic Food Matters (4), “The Hartford Food System has successfully challenged all the barriers that keep organic produce from the heart of low-income areas.” Programs include the following.

- Food Policy and Advocacy
- GROW Hartford (cultivating youth leadership and civic participation through training hundreds of Hartford young people and families on a half-acre sustainable urban farm)
- Holcomb Farm Community Supported Agriculture
- Farmland Preservation—Working Lands Alliance
- Grocery Delivery
- Research

The Hartford Food Project sponsors a farmers’ market, and local farmers may sell complementary products (such as eggs, meat, honey, and bread) at the weekly CSA pick-ups.

Its special concern is the food needs of the handicapped and elderly, women with small children, the unemployed, and disadvantaged minorities. See also the sample newsletter from the Holcomb Farm CSA, below.

Food Bank Farm CSA

The 600-member Food Bank Farm CSA is operated on 60 acres by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, a nonprofit agency. Six million pounds of food is distributed yearly to 420 programs in four counties—including soup kitchens, food pantries, homeless shelters, childcare centers, and elder programs. About half of the production of the farm goes to provide fresh vegetables, flowers, and small fruits to Food Bank clients. The Food Bank also sponsors Brown Bag (supplementary groceries for the elderly), a school hunger education program, and nutrition education for low-income people.

Food Bank Farm provides shareholders with fresh produce May through October and storage vegetables in November and December, in two sizes of shares—a Farm Share for a family of three to five and a Farm Share Plus for five to seven. Some crops are U-Pick. Additional fresh local products available on pick-up days include brick-oven sourdough bread, local and organic eggs, tofu, goat cheese, tempeh, miso, salad dressings, granola, baked goods, fruit, beef, lamb, chicken, fresh pasta, biodegradable detergents, and soap made locally by bicycle-powered equipment. Internships are offered each season. (See ATTRA’s Internships database at www.attra.ncat.org.)

percent in three years. A count in July 2005 showed 1,144 in the USDA database. The organization Local Harvest (www.localharvest.com) maintains its own national database, with a current total of 1,080 CSAs. See the chart below for numbers by states.

Washington, Iowa, and Minnesota/western Wisconsin publish directories of CSA farms. The Kansas City Food Circle publicizes many local food system elements—small organic vegetable producers, farmers’ markets, restaurants, groceries, value-added small businesses, U-Pick opportunities, and CSAs—through its widely distributed directory. (7) Assuming 50 to 500 subscribers each, CSAs supply more than 270,000 U.S. households during the growing season.

Research

A multi-year project known as the SARE Lass Study, had three objectives:

- Develop a mail survey questionnaire to gather cost and return data from Northeast CSA Farms for 1995, 1996, and 1997, and analyze the data
• Conduct outreach—development of print and electronic publications, including a network directory

• Organize peer-mentoring workshops, telephone consulting, and a conference

Analyses (see Resources below) of the survey data indicate that CSA operators cover direct costs through shares, but operator labor and fixed inputs are not adequately covered. Most CSA farms surveyed were operated by a “core group.” Chief investigator Daniel Lass has reported on further implications of survey findings, including the 2003 booklet *CSA Across the Nation: Findings from the 1999 CSA Survey*. (See Resources, below.)

With funding from USDA, the University of Wisconsin’s Center for Integrated Agriculture Systems and other partners conducted a national survey of 1999 CSA data in early spring of 2000. The study is known as the National CSA Farm Survey and was conducted by Daniel Lass, Steve Stevenson, John Hendrickson, and Kathy Ruhf. For analysis of the findings, see Lass et al., 2003, *CSA Across the Nation*, and Stevenson and Hendrickson, 2004, *Research Brief: Community Supported Agriculture Farms, National survey results*. (5) The latter analysis notes that a significant proportion of CSA farmers did not own land, but made rental or lease agreements. More than 70 percent of responding CSAs were in 12 states in the Northeast, West Coast, or North Central Region.

A subsequent survey was performed for the year 2001 by the same team. (See Resources)

Kathy Ruhf of the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group led a team including Northeast non-profits, universities, Extension services, and farmers and published the Northeast CSA Network Project in 2000. Project objectives included the following:

• Improve and expand regional CSA support services to reach new users

• Put on a regional conference to promote development of new CSA farms

• Sponsor a regional research project on priority CSA topics

• Take final steps toward a self-sustaining organizational capability

(*Initial report, April 2000*)

The third northeast CSA conference in 2001 attracted 350 participants. Pre-conference mini-schools (6) attracted 100 participants, 30 to 40 percent of whom indicated they would make specific changes in their farm operations. Sixteen percent stated they would like to start a CSA.

With a new business plan to become self-sustaining, the Robyn Van En Center...
(Pennsylvania) became the main portal for the national on-line directory of CSA farms, although USDA (through its Sustainable Agriculture Network) still provided technical support. (The directory is now hosted by Western SARE.) A national CSA farm census was conducted in 1999, to build an initial conference mailing list, with 76 CSA operators responding. The project team completed a preliminary survey on research needs. (Final report, 2002)

In 2003 the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University began a study of CSA farms in the Midwest, surveying 55 farm operators “to provide a regional characterization of the movement.” (8) The fact that almost all labor on the surveyed farms was provided by family members implies that only one type of CSA was characteristic of the Upper Midwest—the farmer/landowner operating a CSA as a marketing strategy. Ninety-seven percent of the farmers were “completely satisfied” or “satisfied” with their CSA operations. They believed that 83 percent of their members were “satisfied most of the time” and 17 percent “very satisfied.”

Farmers identified causes of dissatisfaction for their CSA members as “too much produce, too much food preparation time, and lack of product choice.” Surveyed CSA operators were more highly educated and younger than the national average. CSA returns were higher than the average return per acre for commodity crops in the Midwest. (However, it should be noted that, without factoring in price supports, Midwest commodity crops consistently show negative net returns.) (9) A major conclusion of the Leopold Center study was that share prices should be increased to provide a better return to the farmer. The study ignored social justice aims common to other types of CSAs, as well as integration of CSAs into a comprehensive local food-system plan with many types of services, programs, and activities to ensure community food security.

J.M. Kolodinsky and L.L. Pelch studied CSAs from the point of view of consumer acceptance. Their study was supported by grants from USDA and SARE and findings were published in the *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*. Kolodinsky

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**CSA and Beginning Farmers**

Vegetable production (most CSAs focus on vegetables) is a highly complex, financially risky career, demanding great creativity and professionalism. To initiate a farming operation with the CSA structure may not be the wisest choice for the beginner. The operation, from the very start, will face the dual challenges of mastering complex production and post-harvest handling techniques, while simultaneously managing and servicing the needs of an unusually large customer base. Existing vegetable operations that add CSA as market diversification strategy appear to have a high likelihood of success.

Many farmers, especially those with less experience, feel that one of the chief advantages of the CSA structure is a ready supply of up-front cash at the beginning of the season. In a typical arrangement, the CSA might have 100 members each paying $300—half at the beginning of the season and half at mid-season. The operation would, indeed, have $15,000 to work with at the beginning of the season. The attraction of that kind of interest-free operating money leads many inexperienced operators (and not a few experienced ones) to overlook other important considerations. “Interest-free” does not mean “without cost.”

Administering 100 fifteen-dollar accounts every week for something like 20 weeks can be quite time consuming, and therefore expensive. Here’s the hitch. Most of the time, it is possible to borrow $15,000 of operating money at the bank for less than 12 percent per year. The use of $15,000 for six months, therefore, will cost less than $900. Since the second $15,000 comes in at mid-season, it is effectively a payment for the vegetables sold in the first half of the season and thus (unlike the first block of money) represents no particular advantage to the CSA structure compared to any other type of marketing system.

Therefore, in this example, having the use of early-season money is worth $9 per member. Nine dollars per member is the maximum amount that can be spent on administration and other overhead before that part of the CSA arrangement becomes a decided money-loser. At the minimum wage, the CSA operator can afford to spend no more than five minutes per week on each member. Operators who value their time at $9 per hour for cost-accounting purposes need to have a system capable of completely administering each member in less than three minutes per week. (10)
and Pelch (11) found the likelihood of membership in a CSA to be highly correlated with food shoppers who have a high degree of education, who buy organic, and who consider political/economic/social factors in choosing their off-season (winter) produce venue. Likelihood of CSA membership was negatively correlated with the presence of children or teens in a family, having adequate storage space for canned or frozen foods (presumably lessening the need for fresh produce every week), and lower educational attainment.

Hearing about the CSA through word-of-mouth increases membership probability, while posters and flyers have an insignificant impact. (Contemporary methods of seeking shareholders through the Internet, via a “local food” or “slow food” site such as Local Harvest, have developed since the Kolodinsky study was published in 1997.) While income was found not to be correlated with the decision to join a CSA, higher cost of share per person decreases the likelihood of membership.

The Harvest Home Organics project received a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Farmer grant from Northeast SARE in 2000. The project objective was to establish a CSA for marketing organic vegetables, flowers, and herbs. While the produce venture was successful, community-building among shareholders did not meet the expectations of the grant recipient. Shareholders did not find the social and aesthetic meaning in the CSA system that the investigator did, but viewed it primarily as a source of fresh produce.

With a grant from the Organic Farming Research Foundation, Santa Cruz, California, Deborah Kane of the University of Georgia’s Institute of Ecology studied perceptions of new CSA members at the beginning of the 1996 growing season compared to season’s end. Published as Maximizing Shareholder Retention in Southeastern CSAs: A Step Toward Long-Term Stability, in 1997, the Kane Study noted that a majority of respondents (66 percent of the 259 surveys mailed) perceived that the value of their shares had declined. Ten percent perceived an increase in value and 26 percent perceived no change in value. Kane noted that “shareholders were split fairly evenly” in regard to community-building aspects of CSA.

Fifty-two percent of the new shareholders interviewed in the spring indicated that they didn’t have any expectations whatsoever. They didn’t want to go out to visit the farm, they didn’t want to meet new people, and they didn’t have time to volunteer or help out with distribution. Of those that did care about the community aspect, a minority expressed any sense of deep commitment to the concept.

The variety of produce received played a key role in overall satisfaction. Participants’ stated expectations were contradictory. Most of the people who said before the season began that they wanted to get involved in the farm never actually made it out to the farm.

**Production Considerations**

Most CSAs plan to raise 30 or more vegetables per season. Some, like Food Bank Farm, provide “winter shares” of root vegetables for storage in November and December. As already mentioned, many CSA organizers try to augment selection by creating a venue for other locally grown and locally raised products.

Organizers must carefully assess the subscriber threshold for price per share as well as number of shares issued. Make sure all input costs are addressed. Irrigation costs should be included when setting the price of a share. In most regions, irrigation is necessary for at least a portion of the crop year.

In addition to the original 1999 Sharing the Harvest handbook, by Elizabeth Henderson and Robyn Van En, several entities have published CSA handbooks or fact-sheets, including Iowa State University, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of California at Davis. (See Resources)
CSAs and the Internet
Computers greatly enhance the work of a CSA—not only in scheduling crop production and harvest, but keeping track of the makeup of the weekly (or biweekly) basket, whole shares and half shares, workdays, and division of available produce into equitable shares. Members can be kept informed by e-mailing a newsletter, recipes, workday notices, schedule changes, and personal notes. Enhanced communication helps build community and increases the likelihood that the CSA will survive and prosper. The company Fearless Foods (www.fearlessfoods.com) offers CSA software—some free.

Information/Training
Newsletters help farmers (or the core group) communicate with CSA subscribers. Many CSAs add them to the baskets on pick-up days. Interactions may take a different form when the community has hired the farmer and face-to-face decision-making meetings are the norm. Holcomb Farm CSA of the Hartford Food Project publishes a very detailed newsletter, in print and e-mail form, that provides specifics on how its CSA works as part of a local food system. Current and back issues are archived on the Holcomb Farm Web site.

Cookbooks.
CSAs may publish their own cookbooks (see mention in the Holcomb Farm newsletter). While CSA subscribers may find commercially published cookbooks useful, especially those featuring ethnic cuisines that traditionally use only a small amount of meat and large amounts of vegetables, there are disadvantages. These include having to cull the few usable recipes from a collection, individualizing them to foods produced in a particular region, and allowing for the fact that an occasional cookbook author has changed authentic recipes to accommodate contemporary tastes for meat, sugar, and fats. Ideally, a CSA group will develop its own recipes featuring its regional produce, or exchange recipes with CSAs in other parts of the country, as a networking project. Fortunately, the Internet now puts vast numbers of recipes at our fingertips, and an impressive array can be instantaneously found for every conceivable ingredient. A CSA

Two New CSA-Type Plans

Hardin’s River Mercantile Cooperative, Little Rock, Arkansas
Buyers of a share (about $700 in 2005) or a half-share in the cooperative can receive $60 worth of Arkansas products every month at the Hardin’s location at the Little Rock River Market. Four Arkansas meat producers who sell at the market provide antibiotic-free beef, lamb, goat, pork, and chicken for the plan—along with produce vendors and a dairy. Share fees are paid up-front to participating farmers. “If the seeds don’t do well, the crop will still get paid for, and the farmer can produce something else,” according to Hayden Henningsen, the River Market’s produce specialist. (See www.naturallyarkansas.org.) Participants are encouraged to can or freeze part of their bounty. (13)

Corporate-Hosted CSA
According to Denise M. Finney (14), who is studying office-based CSAs, “changes to the original CSA concept are making it more appealing to the general public.” A report on her research in North Carolina appeared online in September 2005. It includes “profiles of the volunteer committee of members, each farm involved in the program, and several shareholders.” A promotional piece describing the concept is designed to be used by growers when they approach a business to initiate a workplace CSA program.
Holcomb Farm CSA, May 2005 Newsletter (excerpted from newsletter archives, www.holcombfarmcsa.org/newsletters/May%202005.pdf)

Where, When, and How Do I pick Up My Share?

On Farm Distribution Times

Tuesday: 2-6 PM
Thursday: 3-7 PM
Saturday: 9 AM-12 PM

You are welcome to arrive early to walk around the farm or harvest the pick-your-own crops, but the share room won’t be ready until the posted start time!

Directions to the Holcomb Farm CSA, West Granby

Once You’re at The Farm…

Enter the barn through the north door near the parking lot. Check off your name on the member board and pick up a paper newsletter if you don’t get an email newsletter. The crops will be displayed in two (“Greens” and “Mix and Match”) categories. Sometimes we add a third “Extras” category. Take a “Greens” bag (one size for full shares, one size for half shares) and fill it up with whatever you like from the “Greens” section. Do the same for the “Mix and Match” section.

Standardized bags will be provided for each section, but we encourage you to bring your own bags to consolidate all of your goodies for easy transport. We will have some grocery bags available and we welcome contributions of paper and plastic grocery bags.

All crops, bags, and categories will be clearly labeled. When pick-your-own-crops are ready, we’ll add those to the share board and we will have signage and picking supplies in the field.

Sound confusing? It makes sense after the first week or two and there will always be a staff member and often a volunteer to help.

Farm Guidelines

- Only really nice, leashed dogs are welcome.
- Park only in the designated parking areas. There is one parking spot right next to the barn reserved for handicap members or members with infants.
- Please do not allow children to trample the pick-your-own crops. Please do allow them (and yourselves) to eat as many ripe pick-your-own crops as they want. Pick only the crops that are labeled for picking. The other ones aren’t ready yet and won’t be good anyway. If you don’t know the proper way to harvest something, ask the staff monitor.
- As tempting as they are, tractors are not for climbing. Also, please keep children from wandering into the farm workshop (opposite end of barn from distribution area) where all sorts of hazards await. You are welcome to walk around and view the equipment and the greenhouses.
- You are welcome to use the picnic tables, visit the chickens, or take a hike around the farm anytime. There are miles of hiking trails in the woods behind the farm.

West Hartford Shares

Tuesdays 4–7 PM

Directions

Park in the driveway or along the road. The share boxes will be stacked in the garage. Check your name off on the member list and take a paper newsletter if you don’t get an email newsletter. There will be a stack of full share boxes and a stack of half share boxes. All boxes will have similar contents. There will be a swap table. If there are items in your box you don’t want, leave it on the table for others to take. You can pick up items that others leave. Please return your empty share boxes every week so we can reuse them.

[The newsletter also listed farm events and volunteering opportunities.]

www.holcombfarmcsa.org/newsletters/May%202005.pdf
Holcomb Farm CSA: Related Food System Services

Baked Good Shares

Diana [Flynn] will deliver her freshly baked breads, cookies, and pies to the farm on pick-up days each week for the twenty week season.

1 Loaf per week: $75
2 Loaves per week: $140
Add ½ dozen cookies: $45
Add one dozen cookies: $80
Add 5 seasonal pies: $55

For more information and to sign up, call Diana at [ph. #].

Products from other Local Farms

We sell on a cash basis at the on-farm distributions a limited range of products from other local farms that we do not produce ourselves. We hope this adds convenience for our members while supporting our neighbor farms.

- Eggs from Sol-E-Terre Farm, Suffield
- Honey from Jeff, who keeps hives at Holcomb Farm
- Sweet Corn from Rosedale Farms, Simsbury
- Apples from Bushy Hill Orchard, Granby
- And maybe, Maple Syrup.

Bring Us Your Compost!

Want to compost your food scraps and yard waste but don’t want to deal with a compost pile? Bring it to the farm! We’ll have a big compost receptacle outside the barn. Just toss your compostables into it and we’ll add it to our big compost piles. We’d also love to have your leaves in the fall. We use them to mulch many of our crops.

www.holcombfarmcasa.org/newsletters/May%202005.pdf

The Holcomb Farm CSA Cookbook

Julie Sochacki has compiled a beautiful book of recipes and food preservation tips from CSA farms and CSA members around the country. It is an indispensable guide to all the familiar and unfamiliar abundance that comes with a CSA share. $16/each. They will be available in June at distribution. You can reserve your copy by sending a check to the CSA. More info at www.farmcookbook.com.

www.holcombfarmcasa.org/newsletters/May%202005.pdf

cookbook for the Midwest was published in 1998 by the publishers of Growing for Market. (15)

Food preservation tips. A vital part of the services that a CSA can offer is reacquainting two generations of Americans with food preservation techniques. In other words, what do you do with a basket of peak quality raw ingredients? How do you change them into a tasty meal—for either now or next winter (when the CSA has gone away till spring)? There is a revival of interest in fermented foods—like pickles, sauerkraut, and kimchi—and condiments of all sorts. With modern home freezers, arduous canning procedures have been superseded by quick freezing tricks. Absolutely ripe tomatoes, raw peppers at all stages, and blanched vegetables such as greens, broccoli, okra, corn, and peas are quickly popped into the freezer. Cabbages and root vegetables will keep for a long time in the vegetable compartment, and garlic and onions at room temperature.
Dill and other delicate herbs that do not dry well can be frozen into individual ice cubes. Berries can quickly become preserves, just by following the directions in every package of pectin. High-priced condiments like jalepeno or red pepper jelly are easily produced, as well. Making a $3.00 jar of salsa is as easy as putting one fully-ripe tomato, one hot pepper, one small onion, and a handful of cilantro in a blender and giving it a few pulses. Season with olive oil and a bit of sweetener, to taste.

Promotional material. Promotion of a CSA should take advantage of free media outlets whenever possible. Promotion through related venues such as health food stores and farmers’ markets is a good idea. (Many CSA farmers also sell at farmers’ markets.) Printed materials such as brochures and flyers are not as effective as word-of-mouth in recruiting subscribers for a CSA. (11) However, a document setting out expectations and procedures is helpful.

End of year evaluations. At least one direct marketing farmer surveys his customers at the end of the year to determine satisfaction and solicit suggestions. A group operating a CSA might also make use of a survey to iron out any problems before the next season.

A Systems Approach to Local Food Security

Concepts like CSA can achieve many different (sometimes contradictory) ends. CSAs have been envisioned as vehicles to build community, preserve local food production systems, protect the environment, and provide for the poor. Perhaps unstated is the implication that farming as a business should support a middle-class lifestyle.

Many people see a loss of control over their own food supply. This public concern is coupled with the evaporation of the industrial base that replaced subsistence agriculture in the United States 150 years ago. Superstore prices have already begun to reflect rapidly rising transportation costs, which leads to questions about the long-term sustainability of a food system based solely on comparative advantage and low-cost energy. Many environmentalists believe that those who choose to practice small-scale agriculture for local markets deserve a social reward for the services they provide. Such rewards are not compensated through today’s market mechanisms.

Meanwhile, as the CSA concept has spread beyond New England, it has changed. In the Midwest, CSA becomes only one among many direct marketing techniques. The Iowa Study focused on potential enhancement of return per acre through a CSA plan—if the land owner could increase the share price sufficiently. The longest enduring CSAs, however, tend to be institutions, not-for-profit organizations, and committed groups of individuals (like the Hartford Food System) that integrate the original CSA goal of local community building with a wide array of enhancements. This approach ensures the widest possible
participation in a locally based food production and distribution system.

When they began in the U.S., CSAs were a major or even sole source of organic produce in their localities. But with the advent of the National Organic Program (NOP), the relationship between local and organic has become more and more tenuous. Large organic operations in a few states now supply much of the available organic food to the rest of the country. Delivery is through the traditional oil-dependent transportation network.

More and more production now occurs on certified acreage outside the U.S. With growing urban populations offering a concentrated market for large-scale production, economies of scale tend to swamp individual local producers, who can at best hope to reach the shrinking 20 percent of Americans who put environmental and social justice concerns ahead of other considerations. However, the outlook for integrated local food systems, including the CSA models, still holds considerable promise to enhance local food security.

References

   Richie's farm is Buffalo Organics, East Aurora, NY.

   Purchase from local bookstores or from the University of Nebraska Press.


   www.sare.org/reporting/
   According to Growing for Market (News briefs. March. p. 3), early in 1998 USDA denied to CSA farms eligibility to accept food stamps, on the grounds that CSAs required prepayment. By 2001, a different program was granting food stamps for CSA participation by the low-income elderly.


   www.ers.usda.gov/data/costsandreturns/


12. Salm, Amunda. 1997. Eight Tips from the Experts...
   www.eap.mcgill.ca/MagRack/COG/COG_E_97_04.htm

Resources

The USDA National Agricultural Library’s Alternative Farming Systems Information Center (AFSIC) offers a comprehensive listing of resources, including a bibliography of major publications on CSA—as well as periodicals, listserves, Internet links, associations, conferences, and CDs. The list is both in print and online. www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa/csafarmer.htm

Internet

CSA-L@prairienet.org
www.prairienet.org/pcsa/CSA-L
Web site has archives.

Handbooks

The basic handbook is still


As of Winter 2004, Northeast SARE had bought up the last copies of this book. To order, call 802-656-0484, or e-mail sanpubs@uvm.edu.

Since then, another handbook has been published by Iowa State University Extension, and a series of research briefs by the University of Wisconsin Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems. The University of California at Davis has published (1995) a handbook for CSA producers.

See also, Trauger Groh and Steven McFadden. 1997. Farms of Tomorrow Revisited: Community Supported Farms—Farm Supported Communities. Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association, Kimberton, PA. 294 p.

Distributed by Chelsea Green Publishing, P.O. Box 428, White River Junction, VT 05001. 800-639-4099.

Consultants

As a result of the 2000 SARE project, Cooperative Extension offers CSA support services in seven states (CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, PA, and VT).

www.csacenter.org/tech/eats/index.htm

Farmers with CSA experience offer consulting services in NY, PA, MA and 27 other states.

www.csacenter.org/tech/farms/index.htm

Software

The CSA Planning Chart, a computerized spreadsheet that allowed growers to calculate how many of each crop to grow for a specified number of users, is no longer available except through private consultants.

See the ATTRA publication Agricultural Business Planning Templates and Resources. ATTRA also offers the CD Agricultural Risk Management.

Collections of CSA profiles

www.sare.org/publications/

ATTRA Internships database
www.attra.ncat.org

Research/Bibliographies

(see also references above)


Online documents at www.cias.wisc.edu/archives/2004/01/01/community_supported_agriculture_farms_management_and_income/index.php


Report on research conducted in Georgia in 1996, funded by Organic Farming Research Foundation.

Order from: www.umass.edu/resec/research/pubs0304.html.