Silverbrook Farm’s Community Sustainable Agriculture Program



by
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I recently visited Silverbrook Farm in Dartmouth (article with pics here) and learned a lot about one of the oldest farms in Massachusetts. As someone that eats a lot of fruits and vegetables, I was happy to learn about Silverbrook Farm’s Community Sustainable Agriculture (CSA) program, which is a program where consumers purchase a “share” of a farm’s future crop and in return receive fresh, locally grown produce each week during the harvest season. Silverbrook Farms in Dartmouth, Masschusetts offers one of the best CSA programs in the area by partnering with other local farmers to offer a great variety of fruits, vegetables, cheeses, honey, jams and mustard not always found in your local grocery stores.

It doesn’t get any fresher than a CSA!



Silverbrook Farm Dartmouth

CSA Pick up Area.

When it comes to consuming fruits and vegetables, one of your primary goals should be freshness. Silverbrook's CSA guarantees that the produce you pick up is harvested that day. It really doesn't get any fresher than that. On average, produce in a large grocery store chain is several days if not weeks old. This is due to the global distribution of our food. Due to the low cost and longer growing seasons, large grocery stores import much of their fruits and vegetables from California, Florida, Mexico and other southern hemisphere countries and states. Once picked, it's not uncommon for produce to take a week to completely harvest, pack, transport and finally become available to consumers in a grocery store. With a local farm, the produce is harvested and offered to the CSA member that day.

The Health Benefits of Fresh Produce

Fruits and vegetables provide the body with fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants – all needed to live a healthy life. As produce ages the health benefits of consuming that produce diminishes. When you purchase your produce in a super market you really don't know how old the produce is. The instant a fruit or vegetable is harvested, the vitamins (and health benefits) begin to deteriorate. Additionally, produce shipped hundreds to thousands of miles can go through vast temperature changes, irradiation (to destroy microorganisms, bacteria, viruses, or insects before shipping across borders) and other harmful processes before reaching your plate further reducing its health benefits. Buying local produce helps ensure you are getting produce that is richer in vitamins and minerals.

Partnership with Other Local Farms



Through partnerships, Silverbrook Farm's CSA offers honey, mustard, cheese and jams!

About 50% of the produce in Silverbrook's CSA share will come from Silverbrook Farm with the rest coming from Mendes Sustainable Eva's Garden (certified organic), Sylvan Nursery (sustainable grown fruits and vegetables), The King Farm (sustainable grown vegetables), Matte's Orchards (conventional fruits and vegetables), and Hillside Farm (conventional corn grower). When you become a shareholder of the CSA, you are supporting a total of six local farms.

Costs and Schedule

Picking up fresh produce on a weekly schedule helps ensure fresh fruits and vegetables to your plate on a regular basis. The cost savings are also significant. Silverbrook Farm's Summer Dartmouth CSA pick-up is every Wednesday from 1-6 p.m. starting June 20th and ending 24 October. That's 19 weeks, or 19 total CSA pick-ups. The CSA is broken into a full/family shares ($611) or half shares ($367), costing the consumer

$32.16 a week for a full/family share, or $19.32 for a half share. How much does $19 get you in the grocery store each week?

What do you get in a CSA?

The CSA evolves through the harvest season, but you will always get a mix of fruits, vegetables and during parts of the year honey, cheese, mustard and jam. Silverbrook Farm also offers a nice recipe section on their website to help CSA members prepare some tasty meals! Here is the 2012 CSA schedule for Silverbrook Farm:



FAMILY SHARE

Early Summer	Late Summer	Fall
Salad Greens, half pound	Salad greens, half pound	Chard, bunch
Peas, 1 pound	Green Beans, half pound	Grapes, 1 pint
Spinach, half pound	Corn on the cob, 6 pcs.	Corn on the cob, 6 pc.
Onions, 4 pcs.	Onions, 4 pcs.	Onions, 4pcs.
Strawberries, quart	Blueberries, pint	Asian Pears, 5 pcs.
Kale, half pound	Peppers, 1 lb	Peppers, 2 lbs
Mustard Greens, bunch	Beets, 4 pcs	Potatoes, 3 lbs
Our own Jam	Heirloom Tomatoes, 2 lbs	Husk Tomatoes
Honey	Red Tomatoes, 1 lb	Apples, 3 lbs
Cheese (Local)	Husk Tomatoes, half pint	Winter Squash 2 pcs.
	Cucumbers, 2 pcs.	Kale, bunch
	Peaches, 1.5 lbs	Garlic, 1 pc.
	Currants, half pint	
	Summer Squash, 2 pcs	

HALF SHARE

Early Summer	Late Summer	Fall
Salad greens, quarter pound	Salad greens, quarter pound	Chard, bunch
Peas, half pound	Green Beans, quarter pound	Kale, bunch
Strawberries, 1 pint	Blueberries, half pint	Grapes, half pint
Kale, quarter pound	Corn on the cob, 3 pcs.	Corn on the cob, 3 pc.
Onions, 2 pcs.	Onions, 2 pcs.	Apples, 2 lbs
Mustard, quarter pound	Heirloom Tomatoes, 1 lb	Asian Pears, 3 pcs.
Our own Jam	Red Tomatoes, 1 lb	Winter Squash, 1 pc.
Honey	Peaches, 1 lb	Chard, bunch
Cheese (Local)	Summer Squash 1 pc.	Potatoes, 1.5 lbs
	Cucumbers, 1 pc.	Garlic, 1 pc.
	Peppers, 1 lb	Peppers, 1 lb.
	Beets, 2 pcs.	

Ordering your CSA

Ready to take the dive into a healthier diet this summer? Want to support local farmers that care about sustainability?

Contact Silverbrook Farm today. They also offer gift certificates so you can give the gift of health to your friends and family.

Telephone: 508-991-5185 / Cell: 508-264-9064
Farm Address: 592 Chase Road, Dartmouth, MA 02747 (please call and make an appointment before stopping by)
Silverbrook Farm Website

Photos of Silverbrook Farm – Dartmouth, MA

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