



## Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

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### 2023 Site Host Information Packet



Thank you for your interest in becoming a Site Host Volunteer for the Lancaster Farm Fresh Co-op CSA. The CSA program relies on site hosts to act as ambassadors for the co-op and to provide welcoming pickup sites for other CSA members in your communities. We couldn't operate without our network of dedicated site hosts, so we greatly appreciate your interest in the program!

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## ABOUT LANCASTER FARM FRESH COOPERATIVE

### WHO WE ARE

#### Co-op Farmers –

Lancaster Farm Fresh Co-op is a non-profit organic farmer's cooperative of over 100 small-scale family farms in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. We focus on growing healthy, high-quality foods from highly maintained and enriched soils.

#### Co-op Staff –

Lancaster Farm Fresh Co-op staff tackle the non-farming aspects including marketing, sales, logistics, shipping, and operations. This allows our farmers to focus on what they do best – farming!

### WHAT WE DO

#### Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) -

The Lancaster Farm Fresh Co-op Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program is based on a traditional CSA farm sharing model. CSA members pledge their support to the co-op's farms by purchasing "shares" of the farmers' harvests before the season starts. This investment directly supports the farms by providing the necessary capital for the upcoming harvest including seeds, soil amendments, tools, equipment, energy-related costs, and other operational needs. In return, the farmers commit to growing high-quality organic produce and other goods which are then delivered weekly to residential and corporate sites throughout the mid-Atlantic region.

#### **Wholesale -**

Produce and goods from member farms and partnering vendors are delivered to grocery stores, restaurants, and small businesses throughout the east coast. Wholesale allows the co-op to introduce more people to our farm's fresh, organic produce, thereby expanding our reach.

## **ABOUT OUR FARMERS**

Lancaster Farm Fresh Co-op member farms steward the land to preserve Lancaster County's soil for abundant production of high-quality, healthy produce for future generations. Most of our farms are certified organic with the remaining few operating completely chemical-free and in the process of becoming certified. With a thirst for knowledge, our farmers continuously strive to improve their sustainable farming techniques from one season to the next. From no-till methods to crop rotation to other experimental methods, our farmers work together to succeed in growing the highest-quality produce possible and enriching the health of the communities we serve and the land we live on.

## **ABOUT OUR CSA SHARES**

Lancaster Farm Fresh Co-op offers 3 different CSA seasons throughout the year - summer, fall, and winter. CSA shares include fresh, seasonal, organic produce from our member farms as well as a variety of exceptional products such as flowers, cheese, bread, milk, yogurt, meat, and eggs. Shares are harvested by our farmers, delivered to the co-op's warehouse, packed into boxes, loaded into refrigerated trucks, and delivered to CSA pickup sites across the mid-Atlantic region - all within 24 hours!

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## **SITE HOST INFORMATION**

### **ABOUT SITE HOSTS**

CSA Site Host Volunteers play a vital role in making healthy, organic food available to their communities by generously offering space for weekly pickup locations for CSA members. Pickup sites can be private residences, corporate offices, community centers, and elsewhere. Lancaster Farm Fresh has locations throughout the mid-Atlantic region spanning from rural and suburban communities to the metro areas of Philadelphia, New York, and Washington D.C.

Site hosts have the flexibility to determine the number of members that they can accommodate at their sites as well as the types of shares that they can receive (e.g., coolers or large bins). Hosts also choose the pickup windows that work best for them. Some locations such as corporate offices can restrict their sites to employees only.

We encourage site hosts to engage with their members through Facebook groups, recipe swaps, and even potlucks and community events! CSA site hosting is what you make of it – and if you're looking to create a community centered around good food and healthy eating, hosting is a great place to start.

## SITE HOST GUIDELINES

### Communication –

Communication is the most important responsibility of our site hosts. You have valuable face-to-face time with our members, and they will often contact you first if they have questions or concerns. Please note that you can always direct members to contact us directly as well.



- You do not need to be onsite, but we ask that site hosts be available during their delivery and pickup windows via phone call, text, or email. Members will be provided with your contact information so that they can reach out to you if they have an issue.
- For missed or late deliveries, we ask that site hosts contact CSA Customer Service as soon as possible so that we can reach out to members in a timely manner.
- Site hosts must notify the Site Host Coordinator of any important updates such as contact information, site changes, availability, store or office closures, or other known disruptions that would affect delivery or pickup (eg. parades, construction, etc.).

### Important Contacts –

- o For site-related issues or questions, please contact your Site Host Coordinator, Cara Cochran, at [csa.sitehost@lancasterfarmfresh.com](mailto:csa.sitehost@lancasterfarmfresh.com) or 717.656.3533 x 154.
- o For all other questions, please contact the Customer Service team at [csa@lancasterfarmfresh.com](mailto:csa@lancasterfarmfresh.com) or 717.656.3533 x 2.

### Site Set-Up –

- Site hosts must provide a secure, covered location that can accommodate CSA shares. The number of shares will vary and is based on the number of members at each site. Typically, a CSA delivery includes 1-2 boxes per member, 1-2 boxes for fruit (when in season), 1-2 boxes for items such as bread, flowers, and a swap box, and 1 cooler.
- CSA shares must be protected from the sun, wind, rain, and other elements in all seasons such as a covered porch, awning, tent, garage, etc.
- Site hosts are not required to be onsite to receive CSA deliveries, however, our drivers appreciate any help you are able to offer, and they would love to meet you!
- Please make sure your CSA area is clean and that there is a clear path for the driver to deliver shares.
- If pickup hours after dark, please ensure locations and pathways are well lit.
- Coolers will remain at the site and picked up the following week during the next delivery, so site hosts must make sure they are cleaned out and at the site for the driver.

### Site Clean-Up –

When CSA runs smoothly, there shouldn't be much for you to clean up!

- We ask all CSA members to clean up after themselves including breaking down their own boxes and helping to tidy up their hosts' sites.
- Site hosts should collect any leftover produce. They may choose to donate, keep, or compost. Many of our site hosts partner with food banks or local families in need to make use of any extra produce. A list of regional food banks and organizations will be supplied to the site hosts prior to the start of the season.
- Please make sure to check the cooler and remove any leftover items except for the ice packs. Ice packs will be recycled.

- We ask site hosts to bind the previous week’s boxes together in a pile so that our driver can pick them up and return them to the co-op for reuse! Our drivers will not collect the boxes if they are not tied.

## SITE HOST BENEFITS

### Free CSA Shares –

Lancaster Farm Fresh “pays” our site hosts in produce! As a gesture of our appreciation, site hosts will receive a complimentary medium vegetable share and a fruit share for the Winter Season once the weekly delivery minimum is met. Site hosts can “purchase” complimentary shares through the website with a discount code. Site hosts also receive a 5% discount on any additional CSA shares or specialty store orders placed through the website.

### Invitations to Special Events –

Lancaster Farm Fresh is planning a variety of events and activities such as farm tours, community potlucks, cooking demos, and more, throughout the year – some of which will be reserved for site hosts only! Some of these special events will be hosted at our member farms, and some will come to you! Stay tuned for more information.

## CSA MARKETING & TIPS



We do some broad CSA marketing through social media advertisements and promotional emails. As a site host, you know your community best, so we rely on you to assist with promoting each season’s CSA. The more promotion you do, the more successful your site will be - and the more support goes to our farmers!

Assisting with marketing is easy and helps ensure that your CSA site meets the weekly delivery minimum. Here are some marketing tactics that other sites hosts have had success with:

### Flyers –

Each season, we create a new digital flyer and share it with our site hosts. We are always happy to mail you physical copies– just shoot us an email and let us know how many you would like. Here are some suggestions for places to post the flyer:

- cafes and coffee shops
- gyms and fitness centers
- yoga studios
- wellness centers
- massage therapists
- chiropractors
- religious organizations
- libraries
- local schools
- community bulletin boards
- grocery stores
- senior centers

### Social Media –

Social media is a great way to connect your friends, family, and community members to Lancaster Farm Fresh CSA. You are highly encouraged to share links to our website, post on various outlets including Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, Next Door, WhatsApp, and elsewhere!

We also suggest creating community Facebook groups to further engage your site members. Hosts can post important notifications, recipes, photos, events, and more.

Lancaster Farm Fresh Co-op has the following social media accounts that you can follow and share:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Pinterest](#)

### Events –

Is there a health expo, community day, block meeting, or PTA event happening in your community soon? We welcome you to inform us about any events you think could be beneficial for a CSA team member to attend. We love attending events, handing out free produce, and getting people excited about CSA!

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Q: What does “weekly delivery minimum” mean?

While we wish we could deliver CSA to every neighborhood, we need to set a minimum delivery amount for each location. The minimum amount required for delivery is based on the site’s distance from the co-op. The site’s weekly shipment value is then calculated to determine if the minimum delivery amount is met.

### Q: What happens if my site does not meet its weekly delivery minimum?

We try our best to support sites through our general promotions, but if your site does not meet the minimum required for delivery, we will need to cancel the site for the season. Any members currently signed-up for your site will be transferred to other locations.

If your site is *close* to the minimum at the end of the sign-up period, we may be able to keep your site if you are willing to host **without** a complimentary share. If at any point during the season (members can sign up for prorated shares throughout the season) we will absolutely begin sending you a complimentary share. These situations are handled on a case-by-case basis.

### Q: What are Unite for HER (UFH) shares?

Unite for HER (UFH) is an extraordinary organization that offers wellness services to women battling breast and ovarian cancers. We partner with UFH to offer special produce shares at no cost to their members during shortened, 6-week sessions. UFH members may choose an existing location that is convenient for them. To help distinguish these special shares, they are labeled with a yellow “Unite for Her Share” sticker. Site Hosts will be contacted prior to the start of the UFH sessions if they have any members at their sites.

### Q: I have a member who is repeatedly late or forgets to pick up their shares. What should I do?

We ask all site hosts to keep us in the loop if you ever deal with “repeat offenders.” We are happy to email folks with instructions and reminders based on the issue. We want you to know, as a site host, that your time is valuable and should be respected!

### Q: I have a member who is asking where their missing item is (veg box, meat share, eggs, etc). What should I do?

If you can confirm the delivery, please ask them to contact our Customer Service team directly at [csa@lancasterfarmfresh.com](mailto:csa@lancasterfarmfresh.com), and we will assist them.

### Q: What if I’m going to be away during a CSA delivery day?

If you will be away or unavailable by phone or email on a CSA delivery day, we ask that you please notify the Customer Service team at least 2 weeks in advance. We also ask that you provide us with an alternative contact person who will be able to check the site to ensure the delivery and pickup went smoothly.

**Q: My CSA delivery driver is late...**

Please call us on the customer service line 717.656.3533 x 2! We are not always aware of late deliveries so please contact us right away if the driver is late. We will contact our transportation department and notify the site members.

