



## Small City Farm, Charlotte, NC 2017 CSA Guidelines and FAQs

### What is a CSA?

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture. Originally – this referred a group of people who pooled money to purchase a farm or land – then worked it as a group & harvested the benefits. Now more commonly it is an up-front commitment by a consumer to a farmer. The consumer pays for produce at the beginning of the season, giving that farmer necessary capital for seeds etc. In return, the consumer is rewarded with weekly produce and relieved of the necessity of going to the farmer’s market at the crack of dawn on a Saturday for the best selection.

### Who should join?

Sounds like a silly question, but it it’s not. Rather than talk about who *should*, here’s who *shouldn’t*.

Folks who don’t like lots of different kinds of vegetables. Seriously – if you just want some great tomatoes in the height of summer – head to the farmers market instead. If you really, really dislike something & want to exclude it from your box, let us know. Once that something comes into season, we’ll put it in your box as a freebie with a great recipe. If you make the recipe (you’re on your honor here) and *still* don’t like it, we’ll 86 it from your CSA. Remember though – it’s almost impossible for us to deal with people who tell us they “don’t like: tomatoes, corn, basil, onions, lettuce, radishes, beets, eggplant etc. etc.”

People who don't like to cook. While lots of veggies are great raw – some are gonna have to be cooked, hey, no one wants a raw sweet potato. We include herbs in our CSA – so a decent knowledge of cooking with them is a help. We'll give you some really nice recipes – easy ones – but if you don't like to cook, a CSA can just seem a lot like work.

People who don't like to plan ahead. Once produce starts ripening in mid summer, you may have more in your CSA than you did in spring (simply because a lot of summer produce isn't as expensive as spring produce). You're gonna want to freeze some of it. Too much basil? Pesto freezes really well. Too many tomatoes? Easy to freeze or can. We usually have at least one "all tomato for putting up" week. That means your *entire* share will be roma tomatoes, at least 10lbs. Remember, fresh produce more about preserving than you think – and it's a lot of fun.

### **What's in the box?**

It just depends – in spring, expect a lot of lettuce mix and other early crops like radishes, green garlic and arugula. Later think beets, sugar snaps, swiss chard and onions. During the summer we should have tomatoes of course, squash, peppers, eggplant, cucumbers, beans, muscadines and herbs, in fall we have greens, lettuce mix again, broccoli, and radishes again. We add tree fruit from time to time (peaches and apples From Davis & Son orchards in South Mountain). Last year we had a great crop of plums, but since fruit trees tend to bear every other year, we may not have them this year, but we'll see. This isn't a complete list, just off the top of my head. Crop failures are part of farm life – & that's part of being a CSA – you're agreeing to buy stuff ahead of time – we hope we'll do well enough to get you everything we promise, but mother nature's pretty rough sometimes, and you might just be disappointed.

### **How many meals should I expect from my box?**

That, I'm afraid, is an impossible question to answer. It just depends on how you fix any given item – if you're just making tomato sandwiches, a couple of

pounds of tomatoes should be plenty. If you want to make salsa – a couple of pounds will be plenty too – but you won't have made an entrée.

### **When the CSA start and how long does it last?**

We should be ready by late April, the CSA lasts 18 weeks. Bye weeks may be announced – there might be 2 of them, but depending on crop conditions there may be more or less. In the past 4 years, we have not used the bye weeks, so we'll see.

### **What does it cost?**

The 2017 CSA is once again a small share. This should be enough for couples or for small families who don't eat at home every night. We estimate an *average* of \$22.25 in produce and herbs each week. Please note that some weeks will seem as though there is more produce, and some weeks less. This is because we base our pricing on our farmer's market prices, which vary throughout the season. The cost is \$400. Half shares are available. This means you pick up *every other* week, starting week 2. This gives you 9 weeks. The cost is \$200.

**What about eggs?** We have a flock of 30 Golden Comet Chickens, known as "Chicken Nation." The cost to add eggs is an additional \$90 for the 18 weeks (1 dozen a week) or \$45 for the ½ share of 9 weeks. The commitment must be for the entire CSA, we cannot add eggs on a weekly basis.

### **What are the rules?**

Your signed contract and full payment is due by February 20th, we absolutely **cannot** hold spaces for those who miss this deadline.

You gotta come pick it up. We will send an e-mail on Monday or Tuesday containing a product list, and any other pertinent information concerning that week's CSA. This serves as your reminder to pick up. If you cannot pick up or have someone else pickup for you, you must make other arrangements by contacting us by **6pm the Monday before the CSA pickup, or you will forfeit your CSA. We will make NO exceptions.**

You have to pay up front. The driving force behind a CSA is for us to receive some operating costs before planting and harvest.

You have to bring your containers back. Please don't forget – we don't want to be scrounging for containers on harvest day. Please bring your containers back **clean**, that goes for your flower containers, should you add them.

### **Flower CSA**

We will offer a flower CSA for the 2017 season. The cost is \$65 for **13** weeks of flowers. You can also add flowers to your ½ share (**7** weeks) for a cost of \$35. Bye weeks may apply, and coincide with the regular CSA bye weeks. **The flower CSA begins on week 6.** Flower arrangements will come in jars, please be sure to return your **clean** jar every week. The flower CSA payment is due, along with the regular CSA payment, on February 20th. The flower CSA, might I add, makes a really nice Valentine's gift or Mother's Day gift for about the same price as one arrangement bought on either of those very expensive flower holidays.

### **Where/what time is pickup?**

**SO** important – pickup is at the farm only! Pickup day is Wednesday between **1:30pm and 6:30pm**. We will send an email on Monday with details about the week's share. That will serve as your reminder to pick up. If you are unable to pick up (or have someone else pick up for you) on Wednesday & you want to make other arrangements, you must let us know by **6pm on Monday. If you do not, you will forfeit that week's CSA. There are NO exceptions to this.**

We're really easy to find – 6.5 miles from downtown Charlotte, 1401 Auten Road. If you are considering joining the CSA, I urge you to do a test drive to the farm on a Wednesday, at the time you will ordinarily come and pick up. That way you can figure the amount of time it will take you to get here & help you make your decision on whether or not you want to join.

Know that I spend a lot of time in the garden over the summer – it's unlikely that you'll ring the doorbell & find me in the house. Either call/text when you're close

& I'll meet you at the barn, or come look for me in the garden. **Please** put my phone number in your phone, which is 704-962-1025. Also, please put a CSA reminder in your phone, so it'll tell you to come pickup every week.

**Can we have someone else pick up for us? What happens if I'm on vacation/have a family emergency etc.?**

If you cannot pick up, we recommend sending someone else to collect your share. We will make other arrangements for you as long as you contact us by 6pm the Monday before pickup. If you are unable to do that, you will forfeit your share for that week.

If you are planning a vacation, we'll make every effort to double a future CSA for you. You must let us know about your vacation by the **Monday before the CSA.**

**So there you have it! I'm sure I've overlooked things & we'll have to figure stuff out as we go along – but thanks for coming along for the ride – we hope you enjoy it!**

**Kim, Rohan, Porkchop, Emily Spinach, Daisy & Chicken Nation Kim's Cell  
704-962-1025**