

CARETAKER FARM CSA

WHAT IS A CSA? Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a collaborative local effort linking community, farmers and farmland in a mutually beneficial relationship. In exchange for financial support from “shareholders”, the farmer commits to providing healthy, high quality, locally grown food throughout the growing season. Shareholders benefit from knowing who grows their food and where it originates. The farm also provides seasonal celebrations, social events and educational opportunities that build community and strengthen ties to the land.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE At Caretaker Farm, we are committed to growing food in ways that care for and protect the total ecosystem: its flora and fauna, cropland, hedgerows, meadows, woods and streams. The farm is cared for as a living organism, whose elements work together to build and maintain soil fertility and the diverse ecosystem that nurtures all life. We do not spray chemical fertilizers, herbicides, or insecticides whether they are allowable under the USDA organic standards or not.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FARM Caretaker Farm was established in 1970 and is known as one of the first small-certified organic farms in New England. In 1991, Caretaker became a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm, which presently serves 260 households. Of its 35 acres, 7 are maintained for vegetable production and 15 acres provide pasture for a small herd of cows, pigs, goats, and 100 laying hens. The remaining 13 acres are woods, wetlands, two ponds, greenhouses, barns and the farmhouse. The west branch of the Green River runs through the farm. An apiary and bakery are also located on the farm.

2014 MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE

Please sign this Pledge after you have read it thoroughly and return it with the requested information. If you have questions about your membership or the farm, please email Don Zasada at don@caretakerfarm.org.

JOINING THE FARM

Community members “share in the harvest” by paying a membership fee up front to cover annual expenses. In return, members collect a weekly share of fresh, organically grown produce and additional U-Pick crops.

Your Share Includes:

- Weekly choice of harvested vegetables (June-Oct) and twice-monthly pick-up of winter storage vegetables from the root cellar (Nov-Jan, or until the root cellar is empty.) Our 2014 harvests should include 7 varieties of head lettuces, 7 varieties of baby lettuce, 5 varieties of Asian greens, bok choy, spinach, spring turnips, 2 varieties of spring radishes, red and golden beets, orange and purple carrots, white/red/yellow onions, leeks, yellow & zucchini squash, pie pumpkins, acorn squash, delicata squash, butternut squash, garlic, celeriac, parsnips, green peppers, hot peppers, eggplant, rutabagas, daikon radish, cucumbers, slicing tomatoes, kohlrabi, collards, various potatoes, sweet potatoes, melons, Napa cabbage, red cabbage, green cabbage, kale, garlic, and others.
- U-Pick annual herbs (basil, dill, cilantro, parsley), 12 perennial herbs, 4 mints, over 15 varieties of annual flowers, raspberries, snap peas, wax beans, green beans, edemame, cherry tomatoes, husk cherries, tomatillos, canning tomatoes, brussel sprouts, and others.
- Opportunities to buy our freshly baked breads and pastries, honey, free-range eggs, meats, and winter hoop-house greens when available.
- Access to the farm for recreational use.
- Invitations to our farm workshops and seasonal celebrations.

PICK-UP SCHEDULE: June-October: Members collect their vegetables once a week on either Tuesdays or Fridays between 1:00 PM and 6:00 PM; or on Saturday mornings between 8:00AM and NOON. **After October:** Members collect their share from the root cellar on the first and third Friday-Saturdays of each month during daylight hours. This continues until the root cellar is empty. During the winter distributions we will also be offering for sale items grown in our hoop-houses.

HELPING ON THE FARM: Every adult member is asked to volunteer two hours per season to help on distribution days, work in the gardens, or assist the farm in other ways.

MAY I SHARE A SHARE? Every adult in a household must be a member of the farm regardless of their affection for vegetables or the farm. Likewise, people from two or more households may all join the farm together and take turns picking up the share of food, provided they have all paid the Membership fee of \$110 each. They may alternate pick-up days or come together in one car, but the share must be collected at one time and divided off the farm. All adults in every household must be full-fledged members of the farm.

CARETAKER FARM SHARE FUND: People, regardless of their financial situation, should have access to locally grown, high quality produce and the opportunity to know the land that grows their produce. We have priced our shares so that they are well below what you would pay in a grocery store or farmer’s market. Every year some farm members have inquired about the possibility of donating money towards a share for a family in need, and there are some families who require assistance to pay for a share. We have therefore created a fund that will allow you to help subsidize a share for another family. Also, if your family requires assistance (up to 20% of the total fee) please let us know. We will be able to assist according to the money that has been donated to the fund. There are spaces on the membership form to indicate your donation or your need.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM WITH A \$100 DEPOSIT

First and last names of all adults (over 21) in your household or who will be sharing your share:

First Names of children

Mailing address:

E-mail (to receive newsletter): _____ Telephone number: _____

Community fee: \$110 X _____ # of Adults = \$ _____

Share fee: 1 unit (one bag / week) \$450 _____
2 unit (two bags / week) \$815 _____

Subtotal: _____

Working share option: (deduct \$50) _____
(Need to work an extra 10 hours on the farm)

Total Cost of Membership _____

Donation to Caretaker Farm Share Fund _____
(*Suggested increments of \$25)

I/We would like to request financial assistance _____
(Up to 20% of share cost)

PAYMENT OPTIONS*:

_____ I (we) will pay the complete Pledge by Feb 1st.

_____ I (we) will pay 1/3 of my (our) Pledge by Feb 1st, 1/3 by April 1st and 1/3 by June 1st.

*We will send payment reminders in January. Please speak with us if you require a different payment option.

PLEDGE:

I/We have read all the information on this pledge form and agree to share the risks and responsibilities of membership in Caretaker Farm CSA for the 2014 season.

SIGNED: _____

Please make checks out to **Caretaker Farm**

Mail this Pledge: Caretaker Farm, CSA 1210 Hancock Rd., Williamstown, MA 01267
For further information please contact Don: don@caretakerfarm.org or (413) 458-9691