



Community Supported Agriculture
Member Handbook

MOUNT SINAI CSA

Farm Mailing address: PO Box 216, Aquebogue NY 11931

Pickup Location Street address: Land and Sea Fish
Market, 524 Rt 25A, Mt Sinai. (631) 473-0011

www.gardenofvefarm.com
farmer@gardenofvefarm.com

Welcome to the Garden of Eve!

We hope you enjoy being a member of our CSA. We take great pleasure in providing our members with fresh, high quality produce, love the connections we are able to make with our members, and feel good about providing an experience which lets you and your family participate in local agricultural cycles. This handbook is intended to provide you with information about the logistics of how the CSA actually works. If you have other questions please don't hesitate to email us!

How do we get in touch with the farmers?

We are a small business with no "administration" or "customer service" departments. It is mainly just us and our farm crew, growing your vegetables, handling all the financial and paperwork and marketing aspects as well. Which is why once your share starts, it is extremely difficult for us to make changes in share types or locations, and we CAN NOT make week to week changes. We check email at farmer@gardenofvefarm.com more or less once per day but do not always have time to respond immediately. We usually return phone and email messages within 2-3 days. If you need an answer quicker, feel free to try us back again. You can contact Eve directly at 631-523-6608 with questions.

When does the CSA go until?

The last pick up dates for this year's CSA will be November 19th (WED).

How can I get more involved in the CSA? JOIN THE "CORE" GROUP!

We are looking for 3-4 people willing to form a "core group" for next year to organize the CSA at this location in future years. In exchange, core group members get a discount on their vegetable share. Duties require about 2-4 hours per week, depending on the season, and include: Member Outreach (talking to people about the CSA, handing out fliers/brochures and signup forms, etc.), Distribution Coordinator, Membership Coordinator (putting together all the member info in the spring), Volunteer Coordinator, and Farm Trip Coordinator. Please see the last page of this handbook for a detailed description of all these positions.

Is there a newsletter?

We also have a weekly e-newsletter with recipes, etc. If for some reason you are not receiving it once the season starts, you can go to www.gardenofvefarm.com and sign up for the e-newsletter there.

When is pickup? Standard pickup time is Wednesday 12pm – 8pm.

What happens to the leftover vegetables and other items?

They are donated to charity or staff at Land and Sea take it home.

What if I know in advance I am going to miss pickup?

You may send anyone in your place to pickup your share if you are unable to make it to pickup, including other CSA members, friends, family, etc. If you do miss the pickup, you can not get more another week. We will circulate member information among members who are comfortable with this, so you can coordinate pickups.

Oops! I missed a pickup!

Sorry, but we are not able to make up missed items unless there was a shortage that was our fault.

How does the pickup work?

When you arrive at the pickup, you will let the staff know you are there to get a CSA share. It is most helpful if you already know which shares you receive, and if you are A or B week. If you want to bring a printed receipt of your signup for the first few weeks, that is also helpful. Remember these guys sell fish, they do not work for the farm, they are just helping us out. If you send a friend or family member, please tell them what share types you should get, so everything is clear when they get there. And please keep track of your A/B week schedule (biweekly people!) because if you pick up on a week that is not your schedule, someone else will not get their share!

A AND B WEEK DATES ARE LISTED AT THE END OF THIS HANDBOOK FOR YOUR EASY REFERENCE.

Do I need to wash the produce?

Yes. We wash most of the produce after harvesting (except tomatoes), it helps cool the veggies off so they stay fresh longer. You will need to giving everything another rinse once you get it home to take care of any residual grit. Baby greens and head lettuces generally have a lot of dirt and need to be soaked in a bowl of water.

What if I don't like something? What is this and how do I cook it?

You may be surprised at how different fresh, organic produce tastes from what you buy in the store. Not sure what something is, or how to cook it? Ask one of your fellow members! We will be making available a cookbook called *An Endless Harvest*, later in the season. Other good ones are Farmer John's cookbook, *Simply in Season*, or *Preserving the Harvest*, among others.

What are some of the "perks" of CSA membership?

You are welcome to come out to the farm ANY TIME and pick your own herbs and some vegetables and flowers located in the fields behind our farmstand as an extra share bonus. You also get 10% of ALL purchases at the farm (just let the person at the register know you are a CSA member), and FREE admission to all festivals, cooking classes, and kids' activities. Garden of Eve Farm Market and Garden Center is newly expanded, and selling our produce, organic foods, herb and vegetable plants, annuals and perennials every day 9am-6pm daily from April 1 through Halloween. Please come see the farm! You'll have a great time.

August 16 & 17, Sat-Sun: TOMATO TASTE-OFF FESTIVAL 10am-6pm, rain or shine, Come judge the taste of 20 varieties of heirloom and traditional tomatoes, learn to can your own, make salsa, enjoy tomato cuisine. Enter your homegrown organic veggies in our veggie judging competition and win prizes!

September 20-21, Sat-Sun: Tenth Annual LONG ISLAND GARLIC FESTIVAL. 10am-6pm, Rain or shine. All-day celebration of the wonders of "Garliciana," with festival vendors featuring a wide variety

of garlic inspired foods, crafts, music, and just plain organic garlic to eat and plant. Enter the Garlic Eating Contest or the Garlic Iron Chef! Admission just \$3 per person, children under 6 free.

October weekends, Sat-Sun: PUMPKIN FESTIVAL. Enjoy roasted sweet corn and squash, fresh-squeezed lemonade, organic hot dogs and more. Pick out a pumpkin and some beautiful fall mums, and enjoy our live music every weekend as you try our homegrown Farm Café' fare. Time will fly by as the kids disappear into the many attractions including our pedal kart track, maze, and lavender labyrinth, and friendly farm animals.

October 25-26, Sat-Sun: OKTOBERFEST 11am-5pm, Rain or shine. Featuring Long Island's favorite Craft Brewers with beer to taste and buy, pumpkin picking, hayrides, family fun, and more!

October, date TBD: GLEANING OF THE FIELDS Come out and join us for this Biblical ritual which still makes a difference to people, even today! Help pick vegetables that have been left behind to donate to those less fortunate than we are through food pantries across Long Island. Free, kids of any ages welcome.

Do the farmers want feedback?

Yes! Once each season we'll be asking you to fill out an online survey, feedback that we use for planning the following year. But don't wait for us! If there is something that you'd like us to know that would make the CSA work better for you, please let us know.

2014 A & B WEEKS – IN CASE YOU LOSE TRACK!

A WEEKS

June 11
June 25
July 9
July 23
August 6
August 20
September 3
September 17
October 1
October 15
October 29
November 12

B WEEKS

June 18
July 2
July 16
July 30
August 13
August 27
September 10
September 24
October 8
October 22

November 5
November 19

HOW TO TREAT RIPE FRUIT: FOR FRUIT SHARE MEMBERS

1) RIPE FRUIT MUST BE EATEN WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF YOUR CSA PICKUP.

The fruit in your share is picked no more than one or two days before we bring it to you. Because it is picked ripe, it does not have a long shelf life. Therefore, instead of engineering the fruit to suit your schedule (i.e. picking fruit hard and unripe, cooling it, growing varieties that stay hard for a long time but have no taste, etc.) you will sometimes have to mold your eating schedule to the fruit.

Ripe berries, heirloom tomatoes, ripe peaches, etc. will begin to soften and then mold after a few days... that's just what happens. If you can't eat them by then, cut them up and put them in the freezer, which will give you a source of delicious smoothies for the rest of the year. You can also bake fruit muffins and pies using frozen fruit.

2) DON'T CONFUSE SOFT WITH ROTTEN

Some of the fruit and tomatoes you get may be soft. This does not mean they are rotten. This means they are ripe or sometimes perhaps have spots that are slightly over-ripe. Again, this makes them good candidates for cooking rather than eating raw. Even moldy spots can often just be cut out of fruit and the rest of it used in cooked dishes.

Make a sauce, chop them up and put them in pancakes or an omelet, make jam or cobbler or anything else tasty that occurs to you. Remember, our ancestors invented all these dishes in the first place as a way of using up their over-ripe fruit! Follow their good example of creativity and you will be rewarded.

3) LEARN HOW TO RIPEN UN-RIPE FRUIT

Some of the fruits you get will NOT yet be ripe, because they can't be handled at all when they are ripe and soft. Peaches are picked and delivered to you hard. Some tomatoes may need another couple of days to reach their peak. **DON'T TRY TO EAT HARD FRUIT until it is RIPE!**

To ripen, just let the fruit sit on a counter **OUT OF THE FRIDGE** for a couple of days to let the sugars develop. Some people put it in a brown paper bag, which keeps the plant hormones (ethylene) inside and aids ripening. You can put unripe fruit near some ripening bananas etc. to speed ripening. Don't put it near anything you don't want to over-ripen, like cut flowers, tomatoes, or fruit that is already ripe. Good luck, and yum

Flower Share Care

We want your cut flowers to last after you get them, and so do you. Realistically they are likely to last 3-6 days, due to the types of flowers we grow, and often some flowers in a mixed bouquet will die before others. If you pick the dying ones out, you can enjoy the longer-lived varieties for a few more days.

Here are some simple things you can do to help flowers last longer:

1. KEEP THEM IN WATER

This may seem self-evident, but try not to let them be out of water for too long. If you're not going straight home after your CSA pickup, bring some paper towel and a plastic baggie and wet down the stem ends before you put the bouquet in your bag. Try not to leave flowers anywhere hot, like in your car. Once they have wilted, some types of flowers will perk up when put back into water, but some will not.

2. CUT THE STEMS ONCE YOU GET HOME

Trim the stems (anywhere from 1 cm to as much as you want) once you get home, with a knife (not a scissors). This opens the stem water vessels that have hardened from exposure to the air (xylem - remember from biology class?) so that the flower can drink again. They say to "cut under water", but logistically I've never figured out how to do this. If you can, great.

3. ADD PRESERVATIVE TO THE WATER

You can add a tablespoon of sugar, bleach, or commercial floral preservative to your vase water if you want. I usually don't at home, myself, but if you do they will last longer.

4. CHANGE WATER FREQUENTLY AND RECUT STEMS

Every couple of days, dump the vase water out and recut the stems an inch or so. This will slow the decay process and keep the flowers drinking

5. KEEP FLOWERS AWAY FROM RIPENING FRUIT

Hormones (ethylene) from ripening fruit or tomatoes will make your flowers ripen (die) faster. So don't put them next to the banana bowl. Also, if you can keep them out of direct sunlight that will help.

That's about it. Some flowers just intrinsically last longer than others, some wilt more easily, etc., which is not your fault. Unfortunately some of the prettiest flowers have the shortest vase life... but we use many that hold up well, and we hope that your bouquet will last 4-6 days on average.

If you learn tricks that seem to help, or have feedback on which flowers did well/not well, please feel free to share them here - it will help us for future seasons!

WANTED: CORE GROUP MEMBERS for 2014!!!

Distribution Coordinator - On-site

4 hours / week

(NB: this could be one person, or a rotating crew which would be organized by one person)

- help/direct volunteers to arrange vegetables on table, make signs
- make sure people sign in
- answer questions about share amounts/vegetables
- keep tables tidy
- replenish Swap Box when necessary
- supervise clean up and wait until the food collection people have taken the leftovers

Volunteer Coordinator

1 hr / week

- keep Volunteer Sign up Sheet between every pick up date
- email volunteers to remind them the week they have signed up (email Monday)
- keep track of which members still need to complete their volunteer shift, fill empty slots

News Coordinator

2 hours / week

- collect reports from other core group members for publication, when relevant
- coordinate with farmer about feature food of the week (check Garden of Eve online forum on Monday) then find recipes/food facts
- email newsletter to all members

Membership Accounts Coordinator

(5 hrs/week March-June, then it's over)

- receive membership forms
- input data into a spreadsheet
- keep track of registration fees and send batched of checks to the farm
- assign A/B weeks to members, etc.

Membership Outreach Coordinators:

(2 hrs/week Jan-June, then it's over)

- Create and keep lists of organizations, synagogues, co-ops etc. to outreach to
- Make calls/establish relationships with these partner orgs. etc.
- Follow up with the marketing plan and make sure items are completed
- Work with Temple Sinai to promote events

Farm Trip Coordinators:

(3 days during CSA season, and about 1 hr/wk)

- Promote CSA farm visit days to membership
- Help coordinate carpooling to the farm