

# **March Farm CSA Member Agreement**

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## **CSA Member Agreement for 2019**

March Farm

160 Munger Lane, Bethlehem, CT 06751

Farm Store: (203)266-7721  
Fax: (203)266-6076  
Web Site: [www.marchfarm.com](http://www.marchfarm.com)  
Email: [marchfarms@marchfarms.com](mailto:marchfarms@marchfarms.com)

We, March Farm, wish to provide you with fresh, local, seasonal produce and you, the member, wish to receive a portion of our harvest. This agreement outlines our shared commitments to that relationship. By purchasing a share, you agree to these terms.

### **Section 1. Introducing March Farm's CSA Program**

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#### **A. Becoming a Part of March Farm's CSA**

Families and households sign up to purchase a "share" of the upcoming season's harvest. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a relationship between our farm and you as our customer. Rather than simply purchasing food, our customers become "members" of this CSA farm who receive a portion of the farm's harvest. This commitment in advance, partners with us on the costs of running the CSA, including seeds, fertilizer, labor, equipment and insurances, most of which are incurred during the spring planting season.

Our CSA runs for 16 weeks, from June thru September. Members are responsible for showing up at the farm each week to pick up their share. Detailed information regarding pick-up is discussed below in Section 3. Variety and quantity may vary as described below in Section 2. The starting week will be based upon production conditions and emailed to members.

#### **B. Our Growing Practices & Farm Tours**

We are proud of the significant efforts we employ to minimize our environmental footprint while balancing the need to be economically viable. We have achieved this using a sound, structured IPM program. IPM is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of scouting, timely action steps & overall knowledge – in regards to both the life cycles of the crops & the pests that prey on them. IPM programs use current, comprehensive information on the lifecycles of pests and their interaction with the environment. This information, in combination with available pest control methods, is used to manage pest damage by the most economical means, and with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment. A number of our crops are grown conventionally this way while others are grown completely chemically free – especially our greenhouse grown offerings which enjoy the advantages of growing in a controlled environment under the protection of a number of beneficial insects. Growing practices for each produce item will be outlined on our web site. Members will be notified of any changes to a particular practice due to unforeseen environmental damage or pest pressure.

Interested in seeing how your produce is grown in person? We'd love to show you! Monthly group tours of our growing areas/facilities will be exclusively available to CSA members who will be notified via email with specific tour topics/dates beginning with greenhouse tours in March & followed by field & orchard tours through the spring & summer as various crops are planted, maintained & eventually harvested.

### **C. The Produce We Expect to Harvest**

Throughout the 16 week period members will receive a variety of fresh produce from the farm. For example, in June we will have fresh asparagus, cherries, English cucumbers, mini cucumbers, herbs, lettuce, strawberries & a number of tomato varieties. July will bring out fresh picked beets, blueberries, green beans, nectarines, peaches, sweet corn & squash; followed by apples, black berries, carrots, pumpkins, raspberries, winter squash and more. Of course weather, pests, and other events will affect actual production and what is available each week. Please note our strawberries are 'ever bearing' varieties & will most likely be available through the entire CSA season. Greenhouse grown produce items including cucumbers, herbs, lettuce & tomatoes will also most likely be available through the season. Members will be notified via weekly emails as to what can be expected in that week's share. This information will also be posted on the March Farm web site. The March Farm 2019 growing season is expected to include:

*Dutch Variety Tomatoes, Cherry Tomatoes, Plum Tomatoes, Asparagus, English Cucumbers, Mini Cucumbers, Basil & other Herbs, Beets, Kale, Lettuce, Cherries, Strawberries, Summer Squashes, Blueberries, Raspberries, Blackberries, Peaches, Nectarines, Sweet Corn, Carrots, Peppers, Apples, Pumpkins, various Winter Squashes & more!*

## **Section 2. Our Shared Commitments**

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### **A. Sharing in the Risk of Crop Failure**

Our goal is to provide members with a bountiful share of produce each week. The variety of produce, however, may vary from week-to-week due to extreme weather, insects, or other production factors despite our best efforts. By joining the March Farm CSA, members agree to share the risk of crop failure with the farm. In the unlikely event of a crop failure, our procedure is as follows:

If only a small portion of crops fail, we compensate for the failed crops by filling your share with other crops grown on the farm that are ready for harvest at that time. We may also cover for a crop loss by cooperating with other local farmers who share similar growing practices. Members will be notified if produce from other local farms is to be included in a particular weeks share along with detailed information as to how the item(s) are grown. Members will always receive the full value of their share over the course of the season.

### **B. Sharing in the Reward of Crop Surplus**

We work to maximize the diversity of our product offerings & will avoid over-delivery of any one product. But just as members share in the risk of a crop failure, they will also enjoy the benefits of a crop surplus; where certain items will be left on a 'CSA Only' table free of charge for members on pick-up days.

A crop surplus can occur for a variety of reasons, but usually (at least at March Farm) happens when inclement weather is either occurring or forecasted for the days leading to & on CSA share pick-up days. For example, a rainy weekend will keep most 'Pick Your Own' patrons out of our strawberry field. That leaves us with a surplus of berries that need to be picked before over ripening occurs. In this event the ripest berries would be harvested CSA pick-up mornings & offered to members free of charge in addition to what would have been normally part of their share for that week. Advance notification of a crop surplus will be provided to members via email & posted on the March Farm web site.

### **Section 3. Picking-Up Shares**

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Members are responsible for picking up their share each week on their selected day (Wednesday or Thursday). Adhering to the following rules makes for an enjoyable pick-up day each week:

1. Each week shares will be packaged in a cardboard box & labeled for each member. Please return the previous week's box each week, or bring your own bags and leave the box at the farm.
2. Notify the Farm Store if you cannot pick-up on your designated day, need to do so after hours or are sending someone else to pick-up for you. We start with high-quality produce, and the effects of temperature and weather may cause it to decline if not picked up in a timely manner.
3. Always respect the farm property, your fellow members, parking lot courtesy and safety.

We take the safety of our produce seriously; most of which is freshly picked for members the morning of their pick-up day. For your added protection, wash all produce before use and keep products properly refrigerated or frozen as soon as possible.

### **Section 4. Member Fees**

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By selling membership in advance of the growing season, CSA's reduce the burden of up-front costs for the farmer. Your membership fees provide a degree of cash flow to purchase seed and fertilizer, repair buildings and equipment & pay weekly labor bills before the season starts. This is a huge benefit to farmers, especially those growing produce, who otherwise have no cash flow & need to work on a budget dictated by the previous year's harvest during the winter & spring months. This is difficult enough without considering the many unknown expenses that occur each year, especially in terms of equipment maintenance. Your commitment to a share of the upcoming growing season cannot be appreciated enough; as we will strive to provide ultra-fresh produce with all the flavor & vitamin benefits, exposure to different produce items & interesting ways to prepare them, designated farm visits & tours to see how your produce is grown and the development of a relationship with the farmers growing them.

Full payment is required in advance to secure a share. Payment and sign-up is online only, with Payments made using debit or credit cards (Discover, MasterCard & Visa). A limited quantity of shares is available on a first come first serve basis. Once you are a March Farm CSA member, you will have first option to purchase shares each year. The March Farm CSA is here to serve the community, and encourages you to share its bounty with friends, family, and neighbors. We will not facilitate any transfer of the share but it is our policy that anyone can pick up a share for the registered shareholder. All payments and shares are nonrefundable.

#### **Share Types:**

##### **"Full Share" - \$525.00 (approximately \$33-\$35/week)**

Our CSA season will only feature a 'Full Share' option providing produce to feed 4 to 5 people on a weekly basis. Members pre-pay before the season begins supporting the farm during a time of the year when financial help is needed most. Once the season begins members visit the farm once a week (for 16 weeks) to pick up their share of fresh berries, fruits and vegetables picked & prepared that morning! The season runs from June through September and will include a wide variety of produce, all of which is outlined in *Section 1, part C* of the March Farm CSA Member Agreement. All produce, along with specific harvest times will also be posted on the March Farm web site.

## ***Section 5. Communicating With Us***

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Ben March, our program director, handles all CSA communication. He can be e-mailed at [marchfarms@marchfarms.com](mailto:marchfarms@marchfarms.com), attention CSA. Upon registration members can also leave messages for them at the Farm Store (or speak with them directly if they happen to be there at the time of your call). Members will receive weekly email updates that provide important information, updates about farm and other topical happenings related to the season. E-mails are the primary source of important information so it is important that the shareholders read them. Ben & Lisa will also attend most pick-up days so you will have ample time for questions or concerns.

By clicking the '**Place Order**' button on the March Farm CSA Application patrons agree to purchase the membership share and abide by the terms of this agreement. Members understand that, although unlikely, March Farm may change parts of this agreement related to production and distribution from time to time. Members understand that they will be contacted via email in advance of any changes to this agreement.