

Colchester Farm

Community Supported Agriculture

2008 Annual Report



Board of Directors

Jennifer Hicks, *President*
Stuart Cawley, *Vice President*
Jonathan East, *Treasurer*
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*Annual Report Prepared by
Theresa Mycek*

2008 Staff

Theresa Mycek, CSA Manager
Ali Linthicum, Intern
Carey Page, Intern
Matt Jones, Intern
Rachel Arenas, Intern
John Arbuckle, Intern

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are always welcome.
Please call to coordinate hours and activities.

Contact Information:

Phone: 410.648.5609
Email: colchesterfarm@friend.ly.net
Address: P.O. Box 191
Georgetown, MD 21930

Dear Friends,

2008 was another great year for Colchester Farm Community Supported Agriculture (CFCSA). What started six years ago as an idea in someone's head is now evolving into a self-sustaining organization shaped and supported by a group of dedicated people. We are people with shared interests and a dedication to our community, local agriculture, and environmental stewardship, but perhaps the driving force of our group—we are a group of people who like to eat good food.

This past year the CSA was made up of over 150 member families, interns, volunteers, a board of directors, and other friends and neighbors. Most of our CSA members join for the fresh, local produce. Every year, we survey our members and the desire for fresh local produce is the most popular reason why people join the CSA, just ahead of the desire to support local agriculture and to eat healthier. As one of our members stated on the survey, I joined for "the desire for fresh, just picked produce. I used to have a vegetable garden. Now that I don't, this seemed like the next best thing."

Perhaps the desire for fresh produce draws people to the CSA, but a member of Colchester Farm CSA receives more than vegetables. As a member of the CSA, you have the chance to visit and become a part of this farm and reconnect to where your food comes from and the process it goes through to get from the field to your table. You are helping to support a local farm and keep it a functioning farm. You are supporting sustainable farming practices that result in healthier land and healthier people. You are allowing us to continue to educate and serve our community.

I am reminded of people gathering around the dinner table. The food brings us all together, but while we are eating, we can also enjoy and benefit from the company and conversation.

Thank you,
Theresa Mycek, CSA Manager



"I loved my first season with Colchester Farm. I was amazed at the flavors of fresh produce and at how long it would last if we didn't get a chance to eat it. I thought it was great that you offered recipes for some of the more unusual items, and enjoyed having the opportunity to try some new things. Even my husband, a dedicated veggie hater, found some things he liked, things we wouldn't normally buy like beets and kale!" ~CSA Member

CSA Welcomes New Board Members and Officers

Letter from Former Board President:

Dear CSAers

It is with mixed joy and sadness that I write to confirm that I have resigned as President of the Board of Colchester Farm CSA and am happily turning over those duties to the capable hands of Jennifer Hicks. When Andy Andrews and I started out six years ago I could imagine as healthy a CSA as we have now but had no idea when we would get there!

I will remain on the CSA Board until my second three year term expires. I care about it and what happens at the Farm perhaps more than you can know, but I am delighted to turn operations over to the "younger generation" of residents, Theresa Mycek, Rob and Suzanne Etgen, John and Holly Arbuckle and our wonderful new and energetic CSA Board Members. Mazel tov! Here's to another great six years! Charlotte

Letter from New Board President:

Thanks to the leadership and commitment of Charlotte and the past Colchester CSA boards I am able to take over the reigns of an organization with an abundance of capability and possibility. The 2009 CSA board, I believe, is the largest and most diverse board yet and it's no accident. Our members, made up of people of all ages living through out the upper Eastern Shore and Delaware, have always been willing to step up and lend a hand to help our organization. Serving as a board member is only one of the many ways to support our work so please contact the board to learn how you can offer your service this year.

The board is looking forward to another busy year in 2009. We will continue to oversee the general operations, as well as, make sure we take advantage of opportunities to grow. This year we'll continue offering our many social events on the farm, scheduling two share pick ups a week, selling produce at the Chestertown farmer's market. In addition Theresa and her staff will be selling their produce at the Middletown, Delaware farmer's market with the help of a second truck to be purchased in January.

I look forward to hearing from the membership through out the year. You can contact me at jhicks72@yahoo.com. Jenn Hicks

Equal Exchange Fundraiser

In spring of 2008, the CSA board ran a fundraiser selling high quality Fair Trade chocolate, coffee, teas, and snacks through Equal Exchange. The response was great - raising over \$400 to help pay for Theresa's health benefits, something the board committed to do for our only full-time staff person for 2008 and beyond. In October 2008, the board set up an ongoing fundraiser where 10% of an Equal Exchange purchase goes to Colchester Farm CSA. That opportunity will continue through 2009. To participate go to the Colchester Farm CSA website www.colchesterfarm.org and click on the Equal Exchange logo to go to the specialty designed fundraiser page for Colchester Farm CSA. Then start shopping!



Events at the Farm in 2008

- Project Clean Stream shoreline litter pickup
- Wine-tasting and CSA Sign-up Party
- Open House in May
- 4th of July Potluck and Celebration
- Fall Hoe-Down
- Walking Meditations
- Cooking and Nutrition Workshops
- Acupuncture Happy Hours with Holly Arbuckle
- Yoga Classes with Ronni Diamond

Visitors to the Farm

- Echo Hill Outdoor School — mystery tours
- Girl Scouts—camp visit
- The Weather Channel
- Center for Whole Communities

Mission Statement

CFCSA is a community-based organization that grows pesticide-free vegetables, provides wholesome food, and offers education on sustainable agriculture to its members and surrounding communities. It strives to be an alternative model of farming, dedicated to maintaining the agricultural heritage of the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Vision

CFCSA will lead and inspire a broad movement of people who eat and live in close relationship with their communities and the land. CFCSA will be economically and environmentally self-sustaining and will be recognized as an alternative model of sustainable agriculture by the people of the Eastern Shore.

Values

The work of CFCSA is driven by a core set of values:

- **Land Stewardship** — Farming has been a defining characteristic of the Eastern Shore heritage for hundreds of years. We must preserve farmland and farming if we are to pass on that heritage intact into the future.
- **Community** — People thrive in communities which bond them together and provide them support. We will be active participants in a vibrant Eastern Shore community, drawing our support from our neighbors and returning that support through all our activities.
- **Support for Our Workers** — The mission of CFCSA is achieved only through the efforts of its employees and volunteers. All work on behalf of the CSA will be highly valued and those who work for pay will have a sustainable livelihood.
- **Accessibility** — We will work to make our food and education programs available to all members of our community, regardless of income.

Approved by CSA Board 12/6/07

"Thanks for all your hard work! We really enjoyed participating and look forward to next year." ~ CSA Member

Member Survey Results

Every year, CFCSA conducts a survey of its members so we can improve our operation the next season (61% of our members responded).

Every year is a learning experience for us as much as it is for our members. We are always looking at what more we can offer to improve our members' experience as CSA members. We get a lot of feedback throughout the season, but the survey is also a great way to get some responses to some new ideas. We found strong interest in pick-your-own options (77.9%) and an extended season (73%). There is also interest (63%) in receiving more information about the farm, gardening, and the vegetables we offer and what to do with them, whether that be through a blog, newsletter, or workshops. We've found that keeping our members informed about how the season is progressing, explaining the types of produce we offer and what to do with it when you bring it home, and offering opportunities to come out to the farm are important components of the CSA membership.



Internships Available

For our seventh season, Colchester Farm is looking for a team of 4 or 5 full-time interns who will work closely with the CSA manager in all aspects of our farm operation. The length of an internship ranges from 3 to 9 months. This is an opportunity to gain hands-on experience in sustainable vegetable production, marketing, Community Supported Agriculture, and educational programs.

Interns learn the most by doing. Most of an intern's time is spent producing vegetables alongside the CSA manager who will instruct them in a wide range of responsibilities including soil preparation, transplant production, greenhouse management, planting, weeding, insect and disease control, compost preparation, irrigation, harvesting, packaging, CSA marketing and distribution.

Interns will also have the chance to participate in discussions and on-farm seminars with topics such as non-profit organization, the organic certification program, crop rotation, insect and weed management, and the history of agriculture. We also announce opportunities for, and encourage visits to, other farms and participation in workshops and informational meetings.

Interns enjoy comfortable housing, plentiful vegetables, and a stipend starting at \$300 every other week with a raise to \$400 after three months.



Who grows and picks all those vegetables?

Interns play an important part of the CSA operation here at Colchester Farm CSA. In return for receiving training and hands-on experience raising vegetables, they offer us their time, creativity, and hard work.

In 2008, we had a great crew who worked hard to provide CSA members with a fresh variety of vegetables and a positive and educational experience. Theresa Mycek returned for her third year as CSA manager. She was joined by Ali Linthicum, who arrived for some hands-on experience to complement her masters program focusing on socio-ecological food at Goddard College. We were also joined by Carey Page, a recent graduate in Nutrition and Food Sciences at UVM, who brought valuable past experience growing and selling vegetables in NH. Matt Jones, was adventurous to take the summer off from his full-time job at PRS, and join us for some good old-fashioned hard work. Rachel Arenas, with a desire to explore farming as part of her future, joined us after graduating from Warren Wilson College and volunteering on a farm in Costa Rica. And, John Arbuckle, managing to fit working with us part-time into an already full schedule of helping to raise his son, Noah, and caring for his flocks of chickens and turkeys, returned to help us for a second year.

We also were joined by some volunteers who helped ease the work and lighten the atmosphere. The Betley Family and Nuha Ahmed, often accompanied by children and other relatives, returned for a second season. This year we were also joined by Wen Chin Liu and her son and two volunteers from Washington College, Alyse Bensele and Ricky Davis.

We had another great team of interns and volunteers in 2008 making another great season possible. Thank you.



Pastured Poultry Project

This past year John Arbuckle, an intern at Colchester Farm CSA, carried out his own farm venture, a pilot project for poultry. He raised pastured egg-layers, meat chickens, and heritage turkeys which he then offered for sale to CSA members and the community. In 2009, he will be expanding his operation and will again offer pastured chicken and eggs for sale during the weekly CSA farm pick-up and fresh heritage turkeys for sale near Thanksgiving.

"The difference in taste, nutrition and life quality of pastured poultry as compared to conventional birds is profound. Try it and you'll know what I mean." ~John Arbuckle

Financial Statement

Carry over from 2007		
Contingency Fund	4,824	
MHAA Grant	1,374	
2008 Revenues		
Cash:		
CSA Memberships	41,209	
Sales	12,690	
Charitable Donations	13,089	
MHAA Grant	7,750	
In-Kind: housing and operations	10,560	
In-Kind: MHAA Grant	2,316	
Total Revenue		93,812
2008 Expenses		
Cash:		
Personnel	39,308	
CSA Operations	24,493	
MHAA Grant	6,844	
In-Kind: housing and operations	10,560	
In-Kind: MHAA Grant	2,316	
Reserve for 2009	10,291	
Total Expense		93,812

Thank you to the following people for your generous support

Susan and John Arcuicci	Sheila Faulkner	Joe Moran
Melissa Baile	Carl Gallegos	The Nobles
Clare and Donald Barker	Georgetown Yacht Basin Inc.	Vernon and Susan Pizzi
Philip Beachy	Carla Gerber	Planitaction, Inc.
Wayne and Joyce Bell	Alan Girard &	Ress Family Foundation
Catherine & George Bellarin	Meredith Lathbury	Gary and Nancy Robson
Bob Bennett and Kitty Baxter	Ralph and Mary Hall	Joseph and Gertrude Rogers
Io Betley	June and Ford Hall Sr.	Melissa & James Rosenberg
Donald and Marion Boon	Pierre and Danalee Henkart	Carl Schaumann &
Debbie and Coley Brown	Jane Hukill	Beth Renzulli
Stu Cawley	Jennifer Hicks & Tom Briggs	Lawrence Schroth
Jim and Clara Daining	Bob and Jeanne Johnson	Charlotte Staelin
Bob Denison & Edie Hanson	Ben and Judy Kohl	Jim and Sandra Starkey
Jennifer Dindinger	Cathleen Lehmer	John Vail
Lena Donnini	Joan Marta and Doug Hill	Charles Whitmore &
John Duggan	Ivey and Jeffrey Mask	Karen Sheen Roos
Guy and Gerry Edwards	Chris Mason	Catherine Woodall
Rob and Suzanne Etgen		Joan and Ed Zellers

And a special thanks to Rob and Suzanne Etgen for having their friends and family donate to Colchester Farm CSA as their wedding gift.

What is a CSA?

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture. A CSA is a community of individuals who support a farm operation with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and benefits of food production. Members buy shares in advance which help cover the anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer's salary. In return, once a week produce is harvested and distributed to members according to the size of the share they have purchased at the beginning of the season.



To become a member, please fill out and send this form with payment to Colchester Farm, Box 191, Georgetown, MD 21930. Please make checks payable to Colchester Farm CSA. If you have any questions about pick-up options, please contact us.

Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____ (We send out weekly news and recipes.)

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Please sign me up for:

- a small share (5 units) for \$275 _____
- a medium share (8 units) for \$400 _____
- a large share (14 units) for \$600 _____
- minus \$15 returning member discount _____
- minus \$15 for signing up before March 31 _____
- plus donation to support educational activities _____

Preferred pick up option:

- Mon. 4-6 pm, Farm
- Chestertown Options:
- Wed. 4-6 pm, Kingstown Garden Center
- Wed. 3:30-4:30pm, Chestertown gov't building
- (other) _____

TOTAL PAID