



2017 Colchester Farm CSA Work Share

What is a “work share”? It is a system by which, instead of exchanging cash for a share of vegetables, you contribute your labor to the farm operation in exchange for a share of produce.

Here at Colchester Farm CSA, we like to encourage as much community involvement as possible. We enjoy interaction with our community members; these relationships enrich our work experience. We also like to share what we know about farming and food and learn from you as well, and we like to be transparent about our farming methods. Participating in our work share program is a way to become more involved at Colchester Farm CSA; this may appeal to those who want to learn a little more about farming, who appreciate physical work and who might benefit economically. The CSA benefits from a committed work share person who over the course of the season contributes significant time in the fields, develops some skill and speed, and becomes a part of our team. Experience is not necessary but the desire to learn and work hard and the physical capability to perform farming tasks is essential.

The following outlines our expectations for the work share program. Please note: if our expectations and stated requirements for the work share program are a bad fit for you, an alternative arrangement may be possible --- we would be happy to discuss other possibilities with you.

The Colchester Farm CSA work share works as follows:

We ask that applicants come out and work at least once in April or May prior to the start of the CSA season as an orientation/trial period. Then, in exchange for 26 weeks of vegetables, members would commit to working ½ day (4 hours) per week for a small share of 5 units per week or a full day (8 hours) of work per week for 10 units per week. The time period of the work share matches the 26-week long CSA season and would begin in late May and continue until mid-November.

We prefer that you commit to the entire season and keep a regular schedule. You may schedule hours Monday through Friday during the farm crew’s regular work hours: Monday–Friday 7am–4pm (late May through September) and 8am–5pm (October and November) with a one hour lunch (usually 12-1pm). (Tuesdays and Fridays are harvest days with the rest of the week devoted to field work.) You would be expected to be on time and ready to start with the rest of the farm crew first thing in the morning and/or after lunch. If you can’t make your scheduled work time or need to reschedule, please notify us in advance.

You may pick up your share of vegetables either at the pick-up on the day you’ve worked (if a harvest day) or a pick-up following your work-day. You must fulfill your work requirement for the week before picking up your share of vegetables. If you can’t commit to a weekly schedule and prefer a guaranteed share of vegetables each week, we recommend that you purchase a share.

- Workers may be asked to perform hard physical work for 4 to 5 hour periods of time (lifting, bending, sitting, squatting, standing, carrying, pulling, etc.). You must be able to work hard to participate in our work share program.
- Workers may participate in a variety of tasks, including, but not limited to: weeding, hoeing, thinning crops, planting, harvesting, digging, washing produce, dividing shares, packaging produce, cleaning, etc.
- There will be days when the weather is less than desirable, but we will still work. We ask that you always review the weather report for your work share day, but also prepare for the possibility of varied weather conditions; dress appropriately for the weather and come out to the farm.
- We ask that if you must bring children, they are accompanied by a responsible person to watch over them while the worker is fulfilling his/her hourly requirement. We do welcome children to visit the farm as long as they have a responsible person watching over them.
- You can arrange to alternate your work share with another person, but only if the person you are sharing with comes on a regular basis. It takes time for us to teach new people and for them to learn how things work and if someone new shows up just once that slows everyone down.
- The most important thing to keep in mind is that we are working farm. We must work fast and efficiently. Chatting is fine as long as you do it while doing another activity. It’s important that you focus on the task at hand and refrain from using telephone/electronic gadgets.

If you are interested in participating our the work share program, please fill out and submit the following form to manager@colchesterfarm.org or mail to: Colchester Farm CSA, ATTN: Work Share, PO Box 191, Georgetown, MD 21930. **Forms must be received by April 30th for full consideration. Submissions received after that date will be considered on a space-available basis.**

