



SECTION 3: Workplace CSA for Organizers

The third section of the toolkit contains information explaining in detail what type planning is required for running a successful CSA distribution at the Workplace. It will cover all of the steps prior to gauging interest from co-workers and obtaining approval from administration to recruiting CSA organizers, determining your distribution location, outreach and much more to assist you in setting up your Workplace CSA.





What a Workplace Needs to Start a CSA

1. Interest from co-workers

The CSA organizers will help identify co-workers interest in being members of a CSA at the Workplace. There are a few methods you can use. Surveying is a good way to gauge the interest of potential CSA members. Another way is by organizing a staff meeting, luncheon or info session where the concept of a Workplace CSA is introduced to company employees. Those interested in joining the Workplace CSA can indicate so on a sign-up sheet. Some companies send an email blast to employees describing the Workplace CSA concept and will answer potential member questions via one-on-one conversation.

2. Support from administration

CSA organizers must obtain approval from the company's management to start a Workplace CSA. Before speaking with management, it is important that you have a good idea of how a Workplace CSA will work for your company. Just Food can assist you with explaining the concept. In addition, CSA organizers will require support and aid from their human resources, legal departments and office manager in obtaining clearance from the building owner or manager, security and facility departments as well as loading dock staff.

3. Members to help organize

The CSA organizers will have to take time out of their work schedule to handle some administrative tasks related to running a Workplace CSA. Such tasks may include:

- performing outreach
- recruiting CSA members
- possibly maintaining member records
- coordinating and running distribution
- responding to CSA member inquiries
- communicating with the farm regularly
- setting CSA member rules
- enlisting volunteers to help with distribution
- possibly handle treasury
- planning in house events
- arranging a food donation connection for left over produce

This can be easily resolved by recruiting other employees who are very interested in the idea of having a CSA at their workplace. Forming a solid group of CSA organizers depends on the size of your company and the number of CSA members.

4. Distribution Location

Workplace CSA distribution sites are typically located inside the company building. The distribution location does not need to be a refrigerated space. Commonly, distribution takes place in a lunch room, staff lounge, conference room, a common hallway, open office space, kitchen or a mailroom.

When deciding on the distribution location, Just Food encourages CSA organizers to choose a site that:

1. Is located near a freight elevator and does not require climbing stairs when moving the shares from the truck to the distribution location.
2. Is set in an indoor open space, large enough to accommodate the number of shares being picked up and the CSA members picking up shares.
3. Is easily accessible and easy to find.
4. Should have counter or table space to place the wax boxes or bags of vegetables on and a place for CSA members to sign in and for educational materials such as a newsletter, veggie tipsheets or recipes they can take.
5. Is visible to others during the distribution. This is a good way to attract employees not participating, for the next season.
6. Is not in an area with heavy foot traffic.
7. Is near the storage area in which empty wax boxes will be stored between distribution deliveries.
8. Does not expose the produce to direct sun or inclement weather.





Ideal Timeline for CSA Organizing Activities: 1st Year

Month	Activities	Ongoing activities throughout the year
November/ December	Initiate contact and communication with Just Food regarding interest in starting a Workplace CSA	
January	Survey workplace staff to gauge interest in starting a Workplace CSA, pitch Workplace CSA concept to upper management, organize an info session where Just Food can explain and present the concept of a Workplace CSA, start to recruit CSA members	Communication between your company and Just Food
February	<p>With support from your legal department and office manager, work on obtaining clearance from building management, facilities and security departments</p> <p>Just Food will start research on partnering a CSA farmer with the Workplace CSA group</p> <p>Hold initial farmer/company meeting to discuss length of season, share sizes and prices, delivery options, distribution location, insurance, security or facility requirements. Discuss payment options.</p> <p>Identify the distribution location</p> <p>Develop an agreement form between the farmer and the workplace; obtain/distribute signed waivers/agreements</p> <p>With CSA organizers input, create an organizational plan and roles for CSA organizers to help with administrative tasks such recruitment, outreach, promotional materials (flyers, company email, info poster) to increase employee awareness</p>	<p>Communication with Farmer, Just Food and CSA organizers recruited.</p> <p>Outreach and recruiting efforts</p>

March	<p>Start to develop record keeping/handling payments (if farmer does not have any options for members to use)</p> <p>With CSA organizers input, create CSA organizer roles for communicating with the farm, collecting member applications, answering member inquiries, handling payments, tracking information, coordinating distribution, recruiting volunteers to help with CSA, in-house events.</p>	CSA Organizers Group Development
April	Begin collecting signed member agreements and money according to payment plan discussed with the farmer; set a sign up deadline date.	Start money collection early
May	Set up a volunteer sign up for the season to begin to organize volunteers for distribution	Recruit volunteers
June–November	Launch CSA distribution; ongoing communication with the farmer	Communication
August–September	Plan year end farm visit (transportation, dates, activities)	Plan with the farmer



Connecting with a Farmer

Part of Just Food's role is to help connect workplaces with CSA farmers. There are several factors that Just Food considers when matching a workplace with a CSA farmer:

Logistics

The distribution location; the day and time of delivery.

Share

The size, price and number of weeks of the share.

Members

The number of potential members.

Once a farmer is identified, Just Food facilitates an initial meeting where the farmer and workplace group will assess whether they are a good match and meet to work out details.

After the initial meeting, the farm and the workplace group can move forward. They will have all the specifics on how the CSA will work and can start selling CSA shares.





Workplace CSA Farmer Criteria

Just Food's CSA Program staff works with a Farmer Advisory Committee (FAC). The Farmer Advisory Committee is made up of experienced CSA farmers and Cornell Cooperative extension agents to conduct a peer review process for selecting CSA farmers. That includes reviewing applications and conducting farm visits. The committee also provides feedback on general farm issues to enable Just Food to further develop programs from the farmer perspective.

The criteria for farmers to join the Just Food Farmer Network and to match farmers with CSA groups are as follows:

- Farm within a 250 mile radius from NYC
- Have a basic understanding of and commitment to the CSA concept and goals
- Be experienced in growing and marketing for CSA
- Are diversified vegetable growers
- Have at least two years market garden production experience
- Be open to and enjoy regular communication with their CSA Group (especially being upfront when there is a problem)
- Have the capacity to be flexible and adapt to changing circumstances
- Have the capacity to deliver produce weekly to CSA groups, including having a vehicle and adequate labor
- Are growing produce organically (certified or non-certified)
- Ability to manage member sign up and money collection
- Ability to pack shares individually





Size and Variety of Shares

The selection and amount of produce in a weekly share varies by season, by farm, and by CSA. There are no rules about which or how many vegetables should make up a weekly share. The share size and content should be designed to meet the needs of both the farmer and the CSA members.

Talking with Your Farmer

At the initial farmer/company group meeting, Just Food will help begin the conversation about what your farmer is able to provide your CSA members. The kinds of vegetables that are included in a share will be determined by the farmer's expertise, equipment and soil as well as by the members' preferences. As your relationship develops, the farmer will try to take into consideration member suggestions for requests for larger or smaller amounts of vegetables and new crops. The farmer will have to balance all of the requests. Still, it can take more than one season for a farmer to learn to grow a new crop and for CSA members to learn to incorporate a new vegetable into their diets. Have patience, share recipes, and don't be afraid to try new things.

Share Content

At the beginning of the season your farmer will explain to you the size and content of a basic vegetable share. The share will be described in terms of how many people it will feed (i.e. 2-3 non-vegetarians a week) and the number of different items each week (i.e. 7-10 types of vegetables). The farmer will also share their crop plan of all the different vegetables growing throughout the season.

In the spring, the shares will be smaller (6-8 items) and later in the season you may get larger shares (9-12 items). This varies throughout the season as the farm only brings only what is ready to be harvested. CSA Farmers will plant 70-150 different varieties of vegetables but not everything will grow successfully. They plant many varieties so that members get a good assortment of vegetables through the season and so that CSA members are not overwhelmed with specific vegetables in season (for example, zucchini season).

This information will help you to explain what is in the share to potential new CSA members.

Risk Sharing

Since one important aspect of a CSA is sharing the risk of farming, there is no guarantee of how large or varied the shares will be each week.

Share Size Options

Although farms may vary, most Workplace CSA farms offer only one size share. Others may offer a half share option or additional share options. In the next section, we will discuss both



Spring Share

half shares and additional products, in depth. Keep in mind that offering multiple share options increases the amount of work for the farmer and the CSA organizers. The farmer must plan for, pack and deliver different amounts of vegetables and the CSA organizers will need to manage the options such as membership sign up, collecting money and distribution logistics for various shares being delivered.



Summer Share



Fall Share



Half Shares

Most Workplace CSA farms offer one size shares because multiple share options increase the amount of work for the farmer and complicate the packaging and delivery. The farmer must plan for, pack and deliver different size shares and amounts of vegetables per share and the CSA organizers must manage these options during member sign up, money collection and distribution. CSA organizers must keep in mind that offering half shares means that they will have to recruit more CSA members to meet the farmer’s minimum number of shares sold.

Half Share Options

Some farms will offer a half share option. Half shares can be organized in two different ways:

Member Splits with a Partner

Co-workers can partner together on their own to share one full share or the organizers can help to facilitate partnerships between co-workers. Partners decide on their own how to split the share- halve each share, alternate weeks or choose items in the share.

Members pick up their share every other week

With this method, the farm sends the same amount of full shares every week. Half share members are assigned either an “A” week or a “B” week. Then members pick up their share every other week. The organizers keep track of A and B week members, making sure that the two groups are the same size. The farmer should take into account that some members are only getting items every other week. They should keep track of which items they are giving to both “A” and “B” groups to keep shares consistent and fair.



Half Share Bag Tags



Kohn Pederson Fox CSA members splitting their share





Other Products

As the Workplace CSA concept continues to grow CSA members have become interested in getting additional products such as fruit, meat, milk, eggs, cheese, flowers, honey and value added products from local farmers through their CSA.

CSA farmers will decide whether they have the capacity to supply more products in addition to vegetable shares to the CSA. If the farmer is not interested in offering additional products, the CSA can source these from other farmers with the agreement of the vegetable farmer.

Where Do Additional Products Come From?

There are three ways that CSAs source these additional products.

1. Some **CSA farms produce these items themselves** and make them available to their CSA members in the form of “Additional Shares”.
2. Farms that don’t produce these additional products themselves often **connect with a neighboring farm** that produces them. Talk to your neighbors about collaborating. Together, farmers can coordinate ordering, delivery, and profit sharing for the additional products.
3. If a CSA farmer is not interested in providing Additional Shares from their farm or a neighboring farm, **CSA groups in NYC can contact Just Food**. Just Food’s Additional Product List has contact information for farms in the NYC region interested in selling meat, fruit, dairy, and other products to CSAs. These products are delivered by that provider to the CSA distribution location at the same time vegetable shares are distributed.

Here are some things the CSA organizers should consider:

Administrative Work

The CSA organizers should first decide if they are willing to take on the additional administrative work necessary for having additional products delivered through their CSA. It is recommended that one or two CSA organizers or volunteer CSA members focus on the administrative work that will be related to additional products. This entails possibly keeping track of orders, payments and handling any problems that may arise so that members do not have to contact the farm about questions regarding their additional products share.

Available Additional Products

The CSA organizers should have a conversation with the farmer (either the vegetable farmer or an additional product farmer) about what potential products could be distributed through the CSA.

Additional Product Interest

The CSA organizers should assess which additional products are preferred by their members. Unlike the vegetable shares, members are not required to purchase an additional product share. For this reason, it is important to know how many of your members are interested so it is

worthwhile for both the CSA and the farmer. There are a few ways of gauging members interest for additional products:

- Members can complete a survey regarding which additional products they are interested in.
- Organizers can send a blast email to members with an additional products sign-up sheet.
- CSA organizers may informally speak to members one on one at distribution.

Share Quantities

After the initial discussion, the farm will follow up with the price and size of the share, and how many will be available. If using an ordering system, the farm will send the CSA organizers more details on how to place orders and payment systems available.

Liability Concerns

If choosing perishable products such as eggs, meat or dairy products, organizers must consider arranging additional set up requirements such as refrigeration for these products. Refrigeration will keep food safe and avoid foodborne illness.

Record Keeping

The CSA organizers and farm should come up with a system for keeping track of members' orders and a payment system (if one is not already set up by the farm).

Trouble Shooting

The farm and CSA organizers should come up with a system for how to deal with share order mistakes throughout the season.

Staying in Touch

Throughout the season, as products are being delivered, the CSA organizers should be in regular contact with the farm to make sure that the systems used for ordering and delivering the additional products are working well.



Fruit Shares



Getting Set Up at Your Workplace

Who to talk to about starting a Workplace CSA

Workplace CSAs can't happen unless you have the support and approval of your company and building management.

Just Food can assist you with presenting the concept to upper management and co-workers at a staff meeting, luncheon or info-session. CSA organizers will also need support from their office manager, human resource and legal departments as well as groups such as Wellness or Green Committees. In addition, it is likely you will need to secure clearance from the building owner or manager, security and facility departments.

Before speaking with your management team, it is important that you have a good idea of how a Workplace CSA will work for your company. Initially, you won't know the details of the share size or price but here are some basic points that are helpful when talking about the benefits of having a CSA at the workplace:

- Just Food, which has supported CSA projects in NYC since 1995, will aid in the initial support, evaluation and set up and of starting a Workplace CSA.
- Employees will receive fresh locally grown produce once a week at the workplace.
- A Workplace CSA can help support employee health and wellness.
- A Workplace CSA can increase job satisfaction and build camaraderie among employees.

For more information about the benefits of CSA, see Section 1, Introduction to CSA, page 15.

Working with Multiple Office Sites

If you have more than one office site, there are a couple of ways to ensure that all of your employees can participate in the CSA.

The company will choose the office site for the farmer to deliver to and employees would pick up their shares at the chosen site on distribution day. Some companies have days of the week that most employees are at one office. If employees from another site will be at a central location weekly, we can work to arrange the farm deliver to that location on that day.

Drop Off at Multiple Locations

The farmer could drop off at each office site. Please take into account that each office would be considered their own CSA, and therefore there would have to be enough members at each office site to meet the farm's minimum number of shares sold.

Drop Off at a Single Location

The company will choose the office site for the farmer to deliver to and employees would pick up their shares at the chosen site on distribution day. Some companies have days of the week that

most employees are at one office. If employees from another site will be at a central location weekly, we can work to arrange the farm deliver to that location on that day.

After speaking with your company management team, you will need to obtain authorization or instructions from the building management office or facility owner. They may refer you to other departments such as:

- Facilities or Maintenance departments that may be involved with cleaning after distribution. They may also provide a service cart or hand truck to transport the delivery from the loading dock to the distribution site.
- Loading Dock Management staff who can arrange for the recurring delivery to the dock, use of dock ramps or freight elevators. They may also provide a service cart or hand truck to transport the delivery to the distribution site.
- Security Office may want to be informed of the delivery especially if there will be several CSA volunteers involved with the delivery and if a main entrance or elevators will be used.
- A Union Representative who may have to be informed in case union workers are involved and work doesn't fall under their job description or work responsibilities.

For more information see Section 6, Resources, for Just Food's Workplace CSA Flyer, page 191.



Potential Stumbling Blocks

Your building management may have some of the following concerns when considering starting a CSA at the workplace:

Non Solicitation Clauses

Many companies implement non-solicitation policies which restrict individuals and organizations from soliciting (a) employees, (b) customers or (c) business opportunities from another company or organization. This includes no-solicitation and/or no-distribution of literature to help control and prohibit employees from promoting non-job related causes during work time. These policies are governed by the National Labor Relations Act for all union and non-union employees. The enforceability of these clauses varies from state to state and organization to organization. Although there is nothing illegal about promoting or selling a Workplace CSA, a non-solicitation clause could affect the distribution of flyers or promotional materials that may benefit the CSA.

Concerns about Receiving Fresh Produce at the office

Cleanliness

Because the produce is coming directly from a farm, there may be concerns about the amount of dirt or water inside the office during distribution and how it will be handled. Deciding beforehand where the distribution location will be located, how the shares will be delivered and who will handle clean up after distribution inside the office will be helpful. Since most Workplace CSAs receive their shares pre-sorted and pre-packed in boxes or in pre-packed, re-usable bags, debris should be minimal. Some Workplace CSA farms pack the pre-sorted share in a plastic bag first and then insert the plastic bag of produce into the re-usable bag or box.

Odors

Because the produce coming directly from the farm is freshly picked, vegetables refrigeration is not necessary. The CSA vegetables are picked only when they are ready to be picked, just shortly before delivery. There are some vegetables and herbs that will be fragrant such as spring onions, basil, cilantro or dill, but because they are fresh and will be taken home by their members the same day, odors will be minimal.

Pests / Vermin

All of the farms in the Just Food Network grow their produce using organic practices. Because there are no chemical pesticides used and because the produce has just been harvested, there is the chance that insects such as slugs or beetles may occasionally be found on the produce. This is good! It is an indication of the freshness and lack of chemicals on the food you will be eating. These insects will not cause a pest problem in the office space. Removing loose debris and food scraps from boxes, bags or crates before storing them, as well as strict rules for members taking their shares home at the end of the day will ensure that the CSA does not attract other pests in the office space.

Food Safety

Our farmers follow strict best practices during harvesting, post-harvest handling (cooling, storage and packaging of vegetables), sanitation and food safety to maintain the quality and safety of the produce as it travels from the field to the distribution site. At the distribution site, shares should be placed on top of pallets, counters or tables, not on the ground. On the farm, food safety is controlled by our farmers in many ways: using a safe water source for irrigation and washing the vegetables; practicing sound fertilization and composting management; sanitizing harvest bins and washing areas; keeping storage areas and walk-in coolers clean; making sure vehicles are not a source of contamination; and using a record keeping system to track of crops grown and in which fields.

Time Commitment

In a Workplace CSA setting, the CSA organizers are also employees of the company. The CSA organizers will need to handle some administrative tasks involved with running the CSA at the workplace, such as coordinating and running distribution, responding to CSA member inquiries and making a food donation connection for left over produce. In addition, organizers will promote and conduct outreach to recruit members and volunteers. Management may have some concerns with how the administrative responsibilities of the Workplace CSA will affect the employees' completion of their regularly scheduled workload. These tasks can easily be taken care of by enlisting, from the beginning, other employees who are strongly invested in having the CSA at the workplace. The CSA organizers can divide the tasks so that the administrative responsibilities do not fall on one person.

Liability and insurance

Many building management companies or facility owners will request that the farmer provide a certificate of insurance. A certificate of insurance or COI is a document issued by the insurance company or broker verifying the existence of insurance coverage. The document contains information on types and limits of coverage, insurance company name, policy number, named insured, the effective policy dates and the entity to which the certificate is issued. The farm can provide you with the necessary documentation but may need some time to obtain it from their insurance provider.

WSP Case Study: Time Commitment

At WSP, six employees were committed to implementing the CSA at their workplace. In order to spread the time and responsibility the administrative tasks were split into several functions.

Farm Liaison / Communication with the farm – Lauren Segal, Engineer
Promotional materials / Photos – Stephanie Cohen – Shropshire, Graphic Design
Authorization from Building Management - Patricia Leydon, VP Administration
Outreach / Recruitment of members – Manda Magee, Associate Mechanical Engineer
HR Coordinator / WSP Farm Contracts and Treasurer – Osa Willis, JR. HR. Generalist
General Support / Distribution Help - Adam Gonthier, Engineer, Commissioning



Workplace Incentive Options

The popularity of workplace wellness programs and employee incentives is on the rise. Many employers are experimenting with different models of programs in hopes of improving employees' health, lowering health costs and making their employees happier. Check with your Human Resources or Employee Benefits Department for the possibility of adding these incentives.

The following are incentives Workplace CSAs are using to encourage employee enrollment in the CSA.

Subsidizing the Cost

Some companies are offering to support their employees by subsidizing CSA shares, which reduces the price of participating for the employee. The farm receives the full payment for the shares.

Automatic Payroll Deduction

A payroll deduction is an amount automatically taken from each paycheck. The employer deducts a specified amount from the employee's pay on specific payroll days, prior to the CSA season starting, and puts the funds toward the CSA share cost. It reduces an employee's gross pay and is voluntary. Some companies are offering this payment method to pay for CSA. Payroll deductions should begin in the winter or early spring so that the farm is paid in full by the beginning of the season.

Pre-Tax Benefits

Some companies offer CSA membership as an employee benefit. Pre-tax benefits are excluded from gross income, lowering the cost of a share by allowing employees to use pre-tax dollars to pay for the CSA share. It offers the employer the ability to enhance their benefits package with a no-cost incentive.

Healthcare Discounts / Insurance Rebates

In other parts of the country, healthcare insurance companies have begun to offer discounts or rebates to employees who join a CSA. They have acknowledged that people who join a CSA tend to eat more fruits and vegetables, which can contribute to overall health and decrease healthcare costs. This is similar to the discounts provided to employees who join a gym. Unfortunately, none of the health insurance companies in the New York City area are offering this benefit to CSA members. If you would like to explore this benefit for your employees, we encourage you to talk with your company's health insurance provider. Just Food can provide more information to help with this initiative.

See Section 6 for sample flyer, "Benefits to Joining the Program," page 193.





Working with Other Companies

In order to make sure that the stop at a workplace makes sense for them financially, most farms will request a minimum number of shares per site. This number varies by farm and depends on other factors such as other CSA stops on their route, but the average number farms request is 20-50 shares. For some smaller companies making this minimum may be difficult. One way to address this issue is for the Workplace CSA to see if other companies in their building would be interested in connecting with the farm and starting their own Workplace CSA. This is ideal for the farmer as it is easier to have multiple deliveries to one location than to have multiple deliveries throughout the city.

In some cases, the building management company can assist by communicating information to other businesses within the building about starting their own Workplace CSA. The management company may allow the Workplace CSA organizers to engage other companies by posting flyers, sending an email to promote the CSA or by word of mouth.





Delivery and Distribution at the Workplace

Workplace CSA is a growing phenomenon. It offers local farmers another secure market for their produce. Although Workplace CSAs vary from company to company, they share very similar traits to community-run CSAs.

What is unique about workplace CSA locations?

The farmer most often delivers pre-sorted, pre-packed individual shares weekly to the workplace. The distribution takes place at the workplace, during work hours and is run by employees of the company, who volunteer as CSA organizers.

Here are some elements to consider regarding the logistics of a Workplace CSA:

Delivery

How will delivery process work? What time of the day, how long will it take, who will assist with the delivery of shares?

Space

What space is available for use as a distribution site once a week?

Timing

What time of the day and how long will distribution run?

Manage distribution

Who will manage the distribution?

Supplies

What supplies will be needed to run the distribution site?

Rules

It is recommended that rules are set for the distribution of shares. Some rules in place at other Workplace CSA locations are:

- Shares must be picked up during the designated distribution time.
- Shares must be taken home the same day as distribution.
- Shares are not to be left at your desk overnight nor stored in staff refrigerator.
- If an employee will miss the distribution time or will be out on vacation, alternative arrangements should be made.
 - Another co-worker can pick up their share
 - It can be donated along with the rest of the leftover produce to a food pantry. Many companies will give them to custodial, mailroom or other department staff who assisted with loading and unloading shares or clean up.

Just Food can help with planning the CSA logistics, both with the company and with the farm, before the first delivery, so that distribution runs as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

See Section 6 for samples of member rules set by Workplace CSA organizers, page 201.



Finding a Distribution Site

The CSA distribution takes place at the workplace, during work hours and is run by employees of the workplace who are CSA organizers. Typically, the distribution site at a workplace is located inside the company building; commonly in a cafeteria, lunch room, kitchen, staff lounge, conference room, Corporate Social Responsibility or other department spaces, a common hallway, open office space or mailroom. During the initial meeting between the farmer and workplace CSA, Just Food helps the CSA organizers think through choosing the distribution location.

The size of the distribution site will depend on how many shares will be delivered and the number of members participating. You will also have to consider space for setting up equipment such as folding tables if there is no counter, desk or table space available.

Here are some things to consider when choosing your distribution location:

Location

- It is located near a freight elevator and does not require climbing stairs when moving the shares from the truck drop off site to the distribution location.
- It is easily accessible to CSA members.
- It is not in an area with heavy foot traffic

Space

- There should be sufficient space for the flow of CSA members coming in and out of the site during distribution
- It has tables and/or counter space to set shares on or should have enough room for tables to set shares on and a member sign in area.
- The location should be in a secure area where produce can be kept until distribution with minimal access to non-employees and non-participants.
- It is an area that is easy to clean. In spite of the CSA shares being pre-sorted and pre-packed in boxes or re-usable bags, there will be some residual dirt and moisture from the shares. We recommend against choosing a distribution site that is carpeted. If the distribution site is carpeted, placing cover mats over the carpet before the delivery arrives is recommended. This will protect the carpeting from dampness and stains.

Timing

- Distribution should run during a period when heavy foot traffic is minimal. For example, it is best to avoid using the cafeteria during the lunch rush.
- Depending on the delivery time, some companies will start distribution immediately following the delivery of shares. Other companies set the distribution time at the end of the work day.



WSP Flack & Kurtz Distribution Site, Staff Kitchen

Refrigeration

- The space does not have to have access to refrigeration, but should be located indoors, out of direct sunlight or inclement weather.

Maintenance

- The location may need to be cleaned after the distribution time. Supplies would have to be on hand to wipe down counters or tables, sweep or mop the area after distribution. Storing supplies near the distribution site is suggested.



Rabobank Common Hallway, Corporate Social Responsibility Department

Before the first delivery, it will be helpful to plan the set-up of your distribution site so that your first distribution will run as smoothly and efficiently as possible.



Google's Distribution Holding Area

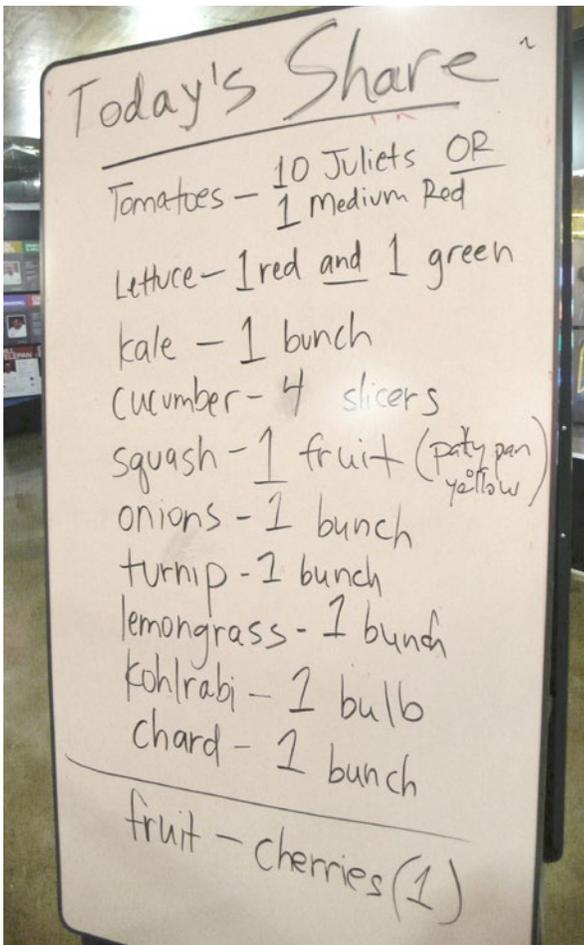


Supplies for Distribution

The supplies needed for distribution will vary based on the space you are using, the number of members and shares being delivered.

Supplies you will need:

- White board, chalk board or flyers to tell members what is in the share.
- Tables for member sign-in, unpacking shares and a swap box
- A member sign in sheet and extra pens
- Copies of recipes or Just Food Veggie Tipsheets
- Signage – A farm sign or banner to hang at the distribution site.
- Extra bags for employees who may have forgotten to bring their own bags.
- Some cutting boards and knives for members splitting shares during distribution.
- A lined garbage can or a garbage bag especially when CSA members are splitting shares at the distribution site, as there may be loose lettuce leaves, etc.
- Cleaning supplies - It is possible that you won't need them if the custodial or facilities crew is in charge of cleaning up after distribution. If the organizers or member volunteers are responsible for clean up, they will need an all-purpose cleaner, paper towels, a broom, dustpan or dust mop for loose debris. To soak up water or moisture they may also need a floor mop. It is recommended that the distribution site not be carpeted. If the distribution site is carpeted, we recommend placing carpet cover mats over the carpet before the delivery arrives. This will protect carpeting from dampness and stains.
- Some companies will use plastic sheet covers on top of desks, counters or filing cabinets being used to hold shares.
- A plastic bin or large basket to use as a swap box.
- A designated area to store folded wax boxes or crates after distribution.



Google

receives shares delivered in bulk. On Distribution day, the CSA organizers transfer the information from the farms list pictured above and onto a whiteboard to describe to members what is in the share.

Mountain View Farm

emails the CSA organizer, what will be in the share the day before distribution. Rabobank creates a flyer and posts several at the distribution site.

IN TODAY'S FARM SHARE

- Cabbage
- Swiss chard
- Hakurei turnips
- Broccoli
- Summer squash
- Zucchini
- Kale
- Beets
- Chinese cabbage
- Cucumbers
- Head Lettuce
- Green Onions
- Fennel





Swap Box

What is a Swap Box?

A swap box is a box used during distribution where members can trade produce for other produce. Although part of the idea of joining a CSA is to try new things and find recipes for produce members have never used, having a swap box gives the members an option to trade produce they don't enjoy or don't want to try for produce they will use. A swap box should be used as a back up to avoid food from being wasted.

How do you do it?

The swap box starts off empty or, if you know you have an extra share, you can put something in to get it started. Members may have to wait until other members start the swap box off by putting something in it. The idea of the swap box is to put one produce item in and take another produce item out. Basically, you leave something, take something, one item in exchange for another.

Normally the swap box is placed away from all other shares to avoid congestion during the distribution process. Placing it at the end of the distribution line or on a separate table are effective ways to avoid congestion.

Any produce that is in the swap box at the end of distribution can be added to the leftover produce being donated.







Set Up Before Distribution

Because Workplace CSA organizers and members are usually working when the truck arrives at their location, making sure that CSA organizers are ready for the delivery and that the distribution site is set up is very important. It will facilitate both the delivery and distribution process. After receiving the delivery, CSA organizers and member volunteers will be in charge of supervising the distribution of shares. The following information will be helpful in the set of your distribution site before the delivery arrives:

Set up before the delivery

- Arrange through the facilities department the use of hand trucks or service carts needed to transport the shares from the loading dock or sidewalk to the distribution site.
- Before receiving the delivery, make sure you have all of the supplies needed for distribution. *For more information on supplies needed for distribution, see Section 3, Supplies for Distribution, page 111.*
- Set up the member sign-in table first, then the share tables. Having the sign-in table separate from the share tables will avoid congestion around the shares. Have a couple of chairs set out for CSA members volunteering at the member sign-in table.
- Make a copy of the member sign-in sheet to place on the member sign-in table along with recipes, Just Food Veggie Tipsheets or farm newsletter copies. Make sure you make enough copies of take away materials.
- Make sure the sign-in sheet has an area to make a note. (For example, a member might tell you they will be on vacation the next 2 weeks and will miss distribution or has someone else to pick up the share while they are gone)
- Make sure you have sufficient pens to check off members' names as they arrive to pick up their shares.
- Post this week's share list in visible areas or use the white board or chalk board to list all of the items in the share. Hang up any other farm or company signage.
- If providing bags for your members, make sure they are easily accessible at the distribution site.
- Set garbage bins nearby for loose pieces of vegetable debris.
- Make sure you have cleaning supplies nearby in case an immediate clean up is required (for example, if the floor is wet to prevent anyone slipping.)
- Set swap box and the swap box sign "SWAP BOX leave one, take one!" at the end of or away from share tables to avoid congestion and so that members understand what to do when swapping.
- Designate an area for the breakdown and collection of share boxes, bags or crates to be stored between deliveries.

See Section 6, Resources, for sample set up instructions, page 196.





Distribution Flow

Meeting the delivery

Typically, the driver will call the CSA contact when they are close to arriving at the site. The CSA organizers and member volunteers will meet the truck and help transfer the shares from the truck drop off location to the distribution site, sometimes using hand trucks or service carts, depending on the number of shares being transferred. Some companies have fewer shareholders and receive their shares in pre-packed bags. They transport the shares by carrying them up to the distribution location.

Setting up the Shares

Arranging the boxes or bags on tables or counter space makes the distribution process convenient. The shares should not be placed on the floor, unless you have a smaller space for distribution and have to replenish boxes or bags as members take their shares. Placing plastic lining or craft paper on the floor would be an effective way to protect the bags or boxes positioned directly on the floor.

Delicate items that arrive packaged in individual cartons inside of flats must be arranged on top of tables or counters as they aren't enclosed and are less protected from the surroundings.

Place the swap box at the end of the distribution line away from the other shares or on a separate table.

Additional products like meat or dairy will require refrigeration or use of a cooler(s).

Flowers may be delivered in plastic storage bins. These can be placed on the floor as they are in enclosed packaging.

If using a crate system, most CSAs label the vegetables either with a sign on each crate or on a white board or chalk board with all vegetables listed and the amounts members should take. List the vegetables in the same order that they are arranged.

Announce Share Arrival

Once the distribution site and shares have been set up with the help of CSA organizers and volunteers, it is a good time to announce that the shares have arrived. This can be done in a few ways:

- CSA organizer can send a blast email to the CSA member contact list.
- Some companies use their PA system to announce that the shares have arrived.

Member Sign-in

The CSA organizers should have at least one CSA member volunteering at the sign-in table. It is also helpful if one or two other CSA organizers or volunteers are present during distribution to help to guide employees through the pick-up process and answer questions about the share.

As people arrive, make sure to greet them and then mark by their name to indicate that they have picked up their share. This is a good time to distribute any materials (newsletter, recipes, Just Food Veggie Tipsheets) and encourage members to sign up to help with distribution or company events related to the CSA (farm trips, potlucks). In addition, sign in is a good time to inform members of any CSA related news or information.

Member Sign-in Sheet

The member sign in sheet will contain the following:

- Date of Distribution
- Names of all CSA members, organized by last name, and co-sharer info if splitting the share.
- A checkbox or initial box to sign members in
- An area for adding notes. For example, the member will be on vacation, and is arranging for someone else to pick up the share or would like to have their share donated.
- Share size and/or additional products ordered info, if applicable

Member Pick Up

Most Workplace CSAs, use the pre-boxed or pre-bagged delivery method. This method is the most efficient and neat way of distributing shares. CSA members will arrive and check in. They will empty the box of produce either into their own bags or pull out of the box, a pre-sorted and pre-packed bag. When using this method, posting the share list is helpful so that members know exactly what they will be getting in their box or bag. During the process of packing their shares, members take this opportunity to chat and share ideas and recipes for produce in their share.

Breaking down share boxes / bags

This procedure can occur in a few ways:

- There is a possibility that the farm's driver will wait for the CSA organizers and volunteers to take pre-packed bags out of the boxes during delivery and return them to the driver immediately to take back to the farm. This commonly occurs with Workplace CSAs that have fewer members, where bags can be taken out of the box at the drop off site while the farm truck waits.
- CSA members can break down the wax boxes themselves after emptying their box, then place them in the designated area where they will be stored until the following delivery. See Just Food's video tipsheet, *How to Open a Wax Box*:
<http://www.justfood.org/csa/video-tipsheets>
- CSA organizers can have a different CSA member volunteer every week to break down the boxes to keep the flow of distribution going.

For more information see Section 6, Resources, "How to Open a Waxed Box," page 205.



After Distribution

Volunteer Recruitment

It is important to plan ahead for the clean up of the distribution site each week. At some workplaces, breakdown and clean up of the distribution site will be carried out by the facilities or maintenance. At others organizers and member volunteers will take responsibility for this task.

The following tasks occur after distribution:

Member Sign In Table

- The volunteers supervising the member sign in table will be responsible for removing materials and securely filing the completed member sign in sheet(s). It is recommended to keep the member sign in sheets in a binder, filed with the most current copy first.

Clean up

- Wipe residue from tables, counters and/or desk tops with paper towel and an all purpose cleaner. If using folding tables, wipe tables down before storing.
- There may be vegetable scraps, dirt and moisture left behind from members' shares, especially the area designated for the breakdown of shares boxes. Sweeping the area free of debris or soaking up moisture with a mop may be necessary.

Breakdown

- If using folding tables, fold and store.
- If needed, wipe dry shares boxes or bags to prepare them for storage. Finish folding share boxes or bags and moving them into the designated storage area, where they will be kept until the next delivery.
- If using crates, wipe crates out with paper towels, before collapsing or nesting them and storing.

Storage of share boxes, bags or crates

- Boxes – Share boxes are corrugated, foldable, sometimes waxed, food approved boxes. After wiping off debris and moisture, they can be folded flat and can be stored flat inside of a plastic container or placed into a neat pile and set aside until the following delivery or recycled if not returning them to the farm.
- Bags – Share bags are totes made of recycled materials. It is good idea to shake the debris out and dry them with paper towels before storing them. Commonly, bags are stored in a plastic storage container or cardboard box inside of a closet. Some companies use a file cabinet to store share bags week to week.
- Crates – For companies that receive bulk share deliveries, the farm delivers in crates. They are plastic, stackable crates that either fold up or nest for easy storing. Crates

are expensive for the farm to replace so they will need to be stored in a secure area between deliveries.

- Additional products packaging materials (if applicable)– CSA organizers and the farmer will decide before deliveries begin if the packaging materials used for additional products will be returned to the farm and stored week to week between deliveries or recycled. Some items that may be stored week to week are coolers, icepacks, cardboard boxes etc. CSA organizers should discuss how materials should be stored. Most likely, the cooler will have to be wiped clean and dried along with the icepacks and stored together.

Whichever way shares are received, delivery material should be kept in a clean storage area and any vegetable residue should be removed prior to storing to prevent attracting pest or vermin.

For examples of distribution details and instructions, see Section 6, Resources, page 199.



Leftover Produce

Inevitably, each week you will have members who are unable to pick up their shares resulting in extra produce left after the CSA distribution. The goal is not to have this extra produce go to waste. Donating this extra produce is a great way to reduce waste and give back to your community. Arranging the donation will require some planning. Once your CSA has established a system it will be easy and rewarding to sustain.

Examples of Organizations to Give Your Extra Produce

- Food Pantries
- Soup Kitchens
- Church/Synagogue
- Homeless Shelters
- Elder Care Facilities
- Day Care Programs
- After-School Programs

See Section 6, Resources, for a sample of a CSA Share Donation Log, page 207.

Finding an Organization

It is easiest to donate to a place near your company's location. Ask your fellow CSA members if there is a place that they are affiliated with that would appreciate the donation or your company may have an organization with which they already are connected. If your CSA members or company don't have a connection and would like help finding an organization, Just Food can help you find one through our connections with City Harvest and United Way. Community Boards may also be a good resource because they will know of the different organizations in your neighborhood that would appreciate the donation.

Arranging Transportation

Transportation is an important aspect of donating. The best arrangement is to have the donation picked up by the recipient organization each week. If this isn't possible, you may also arrange to drop off or deliver the donation to the organization.

Communication

Whether the donation is being picked up or you are arranging drop off, it is best to maintain solid communication between the CSA and the recipient organization. This task should be handled by one of the CSA organizers in collaboration with the CSA volunteer who is in charge of clean up at the end of distribution. Be sure to have exchanged appropriate contact information and have backup contact as well.

This will ensure a smooth donation process. It is a good idea to let your CSA members know about the connection between the CSA and the donation recipient organization via email or

newsletter. It will make your CSA members aware of what happens to the produce when they don't pick up, and can facilitate connections to the organization in other ways.

Tracking Your Donation

You can keep track of your donations weekly by using a donation log or by some other means such as an excel sheet. This will help you monitor the amount of produce donated. If delivery is arranged via messenger service, the service will give you a receipt for the donation and also weigh your donation. The donation log should include:

- CSA Name
- Farm Name
- Donation Recipient Name
- Distribution date
- Crop or Variety
- Amount of Each Crop or Variety donated

Donation to a local soup kitchen

Rabobank donates the left over produce to the soup kitchen at St. Bart's Episcopal Church. St. Bart's serves breakfast to 150 – 200 people on Sunday, Monday and Wednesdays'. In 2012, Rabobank donated over 2,000 lbs. of leftover produce. They arranged the pick-up and delivery of leftover produce via messenger service each week when distribution ends. Rabobank also encourages their employees to donate a share to St. Barts periodically or to buy a share to be donated for the whole season.

Donation to other departments or staff who help make the Workplace CSA happen

Martha Stewart Living donates left over produce to their mailroom staff. The mailroom staff provide man-power support for the CSA on distribution day. They receive the CSA delivery from the farm truck and transport it using service carts to the distribution site. They also oversee the distribution of shares.



Boxes, Bags, or Crates

The way shares may be delivered is based on the farm and will vary. The majority of Workplace CSAs need shares to be pre-sorted and pre-boxed or bagged. This cuts down on the amount of space required for distribution and keeps the space cleaner. There is the possibility that a workplace group would be able to accommodate delivery in bulk crates if this works for their setting. The main objective is that it is easy for the employees to organize and take their shares in the midst of their workday and for the farm to transport them.

The following two packing methods are the most common used by Workplace CSA farmers.

Boxes

At the farm, the farmers pre-sort and pack a box of produce for each member. The members transfer the share from the box to their own bags during distribution. The set of boxes are folded and stored by the CSA organizers and, ideally, returned to the farm the following week.

This system works well for transporting the shares and for distribution sites that have limited distribution and storage space.

Bags

At the farm, the farmers pre-sort and pack a reusable tote bag of produce for each member. The farmers place the bag into individual share boxes or crates, for ease in packing the truck. Either the members take the bag of produce out of the box during distribution or, if the farmer is able to wait for the CSA organizers to remove the bags from the boxes and fold the boxes, the boxes or crates can be returned to the farmer during the delivery. If the boxes or crates aren't returned to the farmer immediately, they can be stored at the workplace site and then returned to the farm the following week. The CSA organizers return the bags collected from the prior week's share to the farm during delivery.

The bags used are re-usable, tote style bags. They can be branded with the company and farm logo. Many Workplace CSAs purchase their own branded re-usable bags for members to use. The bags are soft and can be folded or stored easily in a plastic bin, cardboard box, or a cabinet, drawer or closet.

Bulk Crates

Traditional CSAs are delivered in bulk plastic crates. Each crate has one type vegetable in it. The members come to the distribution site at the set time and collect from each crate the number of vegetables in their share that week. Members will know what number of items to take based on the share list of produce given to them by the farm. They pack their share into their own bags.

Farmers use many different versions of crates for packing produce. Plastic crates that nest or collapse are easiest to store. Crates easily stack in a truck and are easy to transport. CSA organizers will store the crates between deliveries and return these to the farmer the following week for the entire share season. Companies will have to consider additional space at the distribution site as well as storage space to house the crates until the following delivery.

Storage between deliveries

Boxes

Share boxes are corrugated, foldable, sometimes waxed, food approved boxes. After wiping off debris and moisture, they can be folded flat and can be stored flat inside of a plastic container or placed into a neat pile and set aside until the following delivery or recycled if not returning them to the farm

Bags

Share bags are totes made of recycled materials. It is good idea to shake the debris out and dry them with paper towels before storing them. Commonly, bags are stored in a plastic storage container or cardboard box inside of a closet. Some companies use a file cabinet to store share bags week to week.

Crates

For companies that receive bulk share deliveries, the farm delivers in crates. They are plastic, stackable crates that either fold up or nest when empty for easy storing. Crates are expensive for the farm to replace so they will need to be stored in a secure area between deliveries.



Rabobank CSA member transferring boxed share



KPF CSA Bag

Whichever way shares are received, delivery materials should be kept in a clean storage area. Any vegetable residue should be removed prior to storing to prevent attracting pest or vermin.



Google CSA members picking shares from bulk crates



Delivery

Drop Off Sites

Drop off sites vary with Workplace CSAs. Typically, drop off locations in NYC are:

Loading Docks - Loading docks are very busy as deliveries are being made throughout the day. Therefore, timing is essential and there are some mandatory requirements when delivering to a loading dock.

1. CSA organizers must work with the building manager before the season begins to arrange approval of the farm delivery, use of the dock and any insurance requirements.
2. The recurring drop off must be scheduled to occur within a specific window of time.
3. The loading dock is staffed with loading dock personnel trained to handle dock lifts, indicator lights and accident prevention. They also manage the timing of all deliveries, check in the scheduled deliveries and guide drivers back into the loading dock area.
4. There may be truck height and size restrictions. For example, if the farm uses a van to deliver, they may not be allowed into the dock area and will be required to use the access ramp as the van would be at a much lower level than the loading dock height.

Drop off at the sidewalk near a service entrance located outside the building - CSA organizers and volunteers helping with distribution will meet the farmer outside the company building on the sidewalk, by a service entrance, or by the curb with hand trucks, utility carts or service carts acquired from loading dock or facilities staff.

Because of employee foot traffic, delivery regulations and security reasons, deliveries through the front main entrance are rarely authorized.

Timing

Delivery times vary based on the farm's schedule and what works best for the company. This is decided at the initial meeting with the farm. Delivery drop offs normally take 15-30 minutes. The farm's driver will call a contact person at the company when they are close to arriving or if they are running late. CSA organizers and volunteers will meet the farmer at the drop off location. The farmer will explain to the members any details about the share. The farmer unloads the boxes from the truck, onto the loading dock or onto a hand truck or service cart for the members to take to the distribution site. The CSA members give the farmer any boxes, crates or bags from the previous week's distribution.

CSA organizers the use of hand trucks or service carts needed to transfer shares from the truck to the distribution site in advance with the facilities or custodial departments. This should be organized as a recurring request prior to the season starting.





Working with the Farmer

CSAs are partnerships between farmers and members and developing this relationship includes learning about the best way to work with each other. Farmers may not initially understand all of the challenges that organizers face at the workplace and organizers/members may not always know the challenges that a farmer faces on the farm.

One important thing to know about working with a farm is that the season often dictates when a farmer is the busiest. While the CSA share season runs from June through November, most farms begin planting in their greenhouse as early as March. Seeding and planting continues through August. Harvest begins in May or June and goes on through the end of the season in November. During peak times--May through August--when farmers are both planting and harvesting, communicating with your farmer may be difficult as they are spending most of their time caring for their fields and plantings, harvesting, and delivering your shares.

Even if your farmer is busy during these times they will try their best to communicate with you regularly and respond to any questions or concerns. It will help to realize that you may need to be a little patient if they do not get back to you right away. Additionally, these can be difficult months to plan other events such as a visit to the city or a farm trip. The best time to communicate with your farmer and to plan events is during the late fall through the winter. Farmers continue to be busy during the off season, maintaining of the fields and farm equipment and traveling to farming conferences, but their schedules are usually more flexible.

Even during the busy season, it is important that when there is a problem, the CSA should communicate with the farmer right away to try to resolve the issue. Depending on their system, the farmer doesn't always see everything that leaves the farm. However, equally important is communicating with the farm positive feedback from the CSA. In the midst of the season, it is wonderful for farmers to hear that members are enjoying the fruits of their hard work. The farmer appreciates both types of communication to gauge whether their CSA members are satisfied with their weekly shares.





Member Participation

Each participant in a CSA has a role in making it happen. The farmer works with the CSA organizers to set the share price, day and time of delivery. The CSA organizers take on much of the work involved in managing the CSA, so that the farmer can focus on what they do best-- growing vegetables.

While the role of CSA Organizers is often less demanding than it would be in a Community CSA, there are some tasks that are important for a few people to take on:

- Communication with the farm (1 person plus 1 backup person)
- Promotion of CSA and outreach (1– 2 people)
- Volunteer recruitment to help with Distribution and Delivery (1-2 people, depending on the number of members)
- Coordinating distribution-delivery; set up; break down (1-2 people)
- Treasury/Membership agreement (possibly) (1-2 people, depending on group size)
- Planning in-house events (optional) (1 person)
- Managing leftover food donation (1 person)

Some of these tasks happen only during part of the season. For example, outreach is complete once all of your members are signed up in the spring. Some tasks can be shared by more than one person and one person can take on more than one task. At some workplaces, interns can also be recruited to help with some of these tasks.

How to get people involved in helping to organize the Workplace CSA?

While doing outreach for CSA membership, CSA organizer(s) can also recruit members to help organize the CSA. Having clearly designated roles that need to be filled can help potential organizers decide what they are interested in doing. *For more information on CSA Outreach, see page 137.*

Member Work Shift (Volunteer) Management

While CSA organizers take on some of the bigger tasks of managing the CSA, CSAs typically rely on a contribution of time from all of the CSA members to run smoothly. Each member is asked to do a set amount of volunteer work each season, usually 2-4 hours per person depending on the tasks that need to happen and the number of members in the CSA. Members usually to help with delivery and setting up distribution, but members can also contribute by submitting recipes or helping to plan an event. The work shifts can be a fun experience that builds community within your Workplace CSA.

Signing Up For Member Workshifts

A Google Doc or internal webpage is an easy way for members to sign up for and to keep track of work shifts.

For an example of a volunteer sign-up sheet, see Section 6, Resources, page 203.





Working with Existing Committees

Your company may have existing committees and resources available to help make the Workplace CSA happen and possibly provide aid in the set up of the CSA.

Green Team

A Green Team is a collaborative group of dedicated employees committed to improving the environmental sustainability of their workplace, often involving representatives from various departments. Initiatives of a Green Team can include: setting up recycling and composting programs, putting into place energy or resource saving office procedures, and starting waste minimizing measures. They may also create environmental and sustainability events for staff to participate in, to ensure a healthy working environment and increase awareness.

Workplace CSAs fit into Green Team initiatives as a way to get great food with less environmental impact and supporting local farmers, which protects open space.

Human Resources

In its role in supporting employees, human resource departments support Workplace CSAs as an added benefit for employees, as a way to support employee health and as a way to increase employee satisfaction.

Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR departments support many initiatives and projects that help companies have a positive impact on the broader community. Corporate Social Responsibility programs minimize the company's impact on the environment and contribute to building a sustainable society. Supporting a Workplace CSA is consistent with CSR department efforts to benefit employees by providing them a source of good food while producing benefits for the broader community by supporting regional farmers.

Wellness Programs/Health Initiatives

Many employers offer wellness promotion initiatives programs. Programs often include initiatives to reduce health risks and promote healthy lifestyles. Providing support for a Workplace CSA encourages employees to eat more healthfully and inspires more conversation around healthy lifestyle choices.





Signing Up Members

Once a workplace and farm are matched with each other and all of the logistics of delivery, price, number of weeks and number of shares have been worked out, members can start to sign up for CSA shares. There are two parts to signing up for a CSA-- signing a membership agreement form and paying for your share. These two steps can happen in various ways:

CSA organizers collect the membership agreement form and money

Members can sign up and purchase a share by completing a membership agreement form, either created by the farm or the organizers, and returning it along with a check or money order to the CSA organizer who handles this task. The CSA organizer will keep a copy of the agreement and forward a copy of the membership agreement form along with the payment to the farm.

Farm collects the membership agreement form and money via mail

Because companies may have restrictions around CSA organizers handling co-workers' money, Workplace CSAs may need to rely on the farm to take on collecting share payments. The farm creates a membership agreement form, which can be given out by the organizers or accessed online. Members complete the agreement, print out and mail both the payment and agreement directly to the farm.

Farm collects the membership agreement form and money online

The farm manages both member sign ups by farm creating an online membership sign up system. The members can sign up by creating an account, log into their account and fill out a membership application form. They will have the option to mail the farm a check or to pay online with a credit card. Member registration and money collection is all handled by the farm.

Regardless of which system the CSA group and the farm choose to use, a system for sharing information between the farm and the CSA organizers will be necessary. If the CSA organizers are in charge of collecting member information and payments, that information must be shared with the farm. If an online application sign up system is used, it is important for the farmer to share member information with the CSA organizers.

What Happens if a CSA Member Leaves the Company During the Season?

There are a number of options if a CSA member's employment is terminated or he/she resigns anytime during the CSA season. Normally, with CSA shares, there are no refund options available. In some cases, Workplace CSA organizers will help find a co-worker who may be interested in buying the remaining weeks of the employee's share. If the farm has other New York City CSA drop off sites, they may allow the employee to change their pick-up to another location. If none of these options work, the employee's share will be forfeited and will be donated with the weekly left over food to a local food pantry.

For samples of Member contracts see Section 6, Resources, page 173.





Options for Payment Flexibility

While paying the full price for a CSA share upfront during the winter is ideal for the farmer, it may be difficult for some members to afford to do this. We want to encourage members who are able to pay the full amount upfront to do so to support the farmer and to make it easier for the farm to be flexible for members who are not able to pay upfront. In order to ensure that anyone who wants to join a CSA can, regardless of their income, Just Food and many of the CSAs have worked together to develop options for flexible payment of shares.

Payments Over Time

The most common strategy is to allow a member to make an initial deposit when they sign up and then pay off the remainder of the share price on a set schedule. The exact schedule — once a month, each pay period, etc. — is agreed by the CSA organizers and the farmer.

Revolving Loan Fund

Many CSAs that offer the option of members paying over time will create a revolving loan fund that enables the CSA to pay the farmer upfront for shares and then have members pay back their share price to the fund on a very flexible schedule.

Other Strategies

The strategies below are somewhat more complicated to set up and manage. We do encourage workplaces to explore ways in which all of their employees can participate in the CSA and to consider whether any of these strategies can help support that goal. Just Food can help you work out the logistics of these strategies.

Sliding Scale

Members pay different amounts based on their income. Two or three different prices are offered based on the share price given by the farmer. This strategy works well for workplaces or communities with potential members at different income levels.

Half Shares

Members can purchase half rather than a full CSA share. *For strategies for making half shares available, see Section 3, Half Shares, page 95.*

Subsidize Shares

Companies can contribute money to provide lower cost shares to CSA members or to develop a revolving loan fund.

Share a Share Fund

Members are encouraged to make donations above their share cost in order to subsidize shares for other members with lower incomes.





CSA Outreach

Recruiting members for a Workplace CSA requires some strategy. Different workplaces will have different resources available to them for recruitment. It is helpful to use a variety of approaches to get the word out to co-workers.

Promotional Materials or Flyers

Creating promotional materials that co-workers can take away is a good way of reaching a sizeable amount of potential members. Flyer content should include:

- An attention grabbing phrase or slogan
- The farm or company logo
- A brief explanation of CSA
- Information on the farm
- Contact Information for more information

Common areas such as the staff lounge, cafeteria, kitchens, bulletin boards, hallways, etc., are visible areas to post promotional CSA material. CSA organizers can use other methods of distributing promotional CSA material or flyers. They can send an email blast to company employees or have the materials inserted into the employees mailboxes.

Keep in mind that your company may have a non-solicitation policy in place. In this case, distributing flyers may not be permitted. Check with management before sending anything out to potential members.

Holding Outreach Events

When holding an outreach event, CSA organizers can engage co-workers as a group or one-on-one. Promotional material can be handed out as you explain how the CSA will work. Those interested in participating in the CSA can sign up at the event. This is also a good time to recruit co-workers as CSA organizers. To make the event successful, pull together a team that can assist in planning of the event. Recruit co-workers who are best-suited for each of the specified tasks. Examples of outreach events include:

Lunch information sessions

Several companies have held lunch info sessions. Employees are invited to a lunch where Workplace CSA can be explained in detail. Just Food staff are available to assist with this type of session and present the CSA concept to your employees. At the end of the session, employees interested can ask Just Food's presenter questions regarding the CSA program or about the farm or farmer.

Meet your farmer events

Winter or early spring is a great time to invite your farmer to your workplace to meet current and potential members. Farmers will come to the site, show pictures of the farm and talk about the history of their farm, why and how they farm, and how CSA helps them. This type of event

also allows our farmers to learn more about the company and meet the employees participating in the Workplace CSA.

Tabling events

Events where different groups set up tables with information, allow CSA organizers to engage people one-on-one and pitch the idea of CSA to different individuals. Tabling also provides an opportunity to hand out CSA promotional material and have co-workers sign-up immediately at the table. You can include the CSA promotion in tabling events that your workplace already holds- sustainability fairs, health and wellness fairs, Earth Day events, etc.

Whichever type of event you choose to promote the CSA, consider the following additional ways to encourage attendance:

- Have gift bags or takeaways available such as magnets, cookbooks, t-shirts, flashlights, etc.
- Offer lunch from a local organic or sustainably conscious caterer; include fruits and snacks that co-workers can take home or to their desk. (include vegan/Allergy free food in the menu)
- Beverages – Some companies will serve beer and wine along with other types of beverages
- A power point presentation with pictures of the farm and CSA shares
- A raffle opportunity. Prizes can be vary, but it's good to have a specific prize in mind for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place if raffling more than one item. One workplace CSA raffled off a free CSA share.

For samples of outreach and promotional materials, see Section 6, Resources, pages 187 - 193.



Key Recruitment Talking Points

In order to effectively recruit employees into the Workplace CSA it is helpful to know the basic information that will help them understand how the CSA will work and to set realistic expectations. Below are some key talking points to help you communicate with company management and potential members.

How the CSA Works

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture and is a way of buying fresh, locally grown food directly from a farmer. Just Food is a non-profit organization that connects communities and local farms through CSAs. Just Food has partnered our company with a local farmer who is selling vegetable shares of the farm's harvest before the season starts. Starting in June, each week during the season, our farmer will deliver the CSA shares (a portion of their harvest) to our workplace. Employees who join will pick up their shares at a set time and location within the building the day it is delivered.

Benefits of CSA

The money that you pay for your share helps to support the farm operation. CSA provides our farmer with a guaranteed season long market. During the winter and spring months, since there is nothing yet to sell, farmers have little or no farm income. However, the money you pay for your share will help the farmer pay for expenses such as seeds, equipment and other supplies. Since members pay before the start of the season, CSA provides farmers with money when it's most needed. In return, our CSA members benefit by receiving fresh, nutritious, organically grown produce at a great value.

Share Size

Each week the share will have 7-10 types of vegetables, enough to feed a family of 2 – 3 people depending on how much of your diet consists of vegetables. If a full share is too much food for you each week, splitting a shares may be possible. The shares will arrive individually pre-boxed or bagged for easy distribution.

Seasonality

The size of the share will vary at different times of the year because of the changing weather and seasons. In the spring, the shares will be smaller (6-8 items) and filled with items like cooking greens and lettuce, garlic and herbs. Later in the season, the share will get larger (9-12 items) with things like tomatoes, carrots, beets, onions, garlic, eggplant, peppers, squash and more.

The farm will only bring what is ready to be harvested each week. Over the course of the season, members will get at least 40 different types of vegetables.

Sharing the Risk and the Bounty

By purchasing a share, members' share in the risk and bounty of the farm. Risks involved with agriculture such as poor weather, drought, disease, early frost and crop failure. CSA farmers purposely plan to minimize these potential risks by using techniques that protect the harvest.

During a good season, members share in the rewards of a bountiful harvest. Through shared risks and rewards, the CSA builds a relationship between the farmer and CSA members.

Weekly Drop Off

Each week, between June through November, for approximately 20-22 weeks, the farmer will come to our workplace and drop off our CSA shares. The employees who join, become CSA members. They arrive at a set day and time to pick up their individual shares. Members will bring their own bags to pack the produce in the individual CSA box or use bags provided by the farm to take home their shares.

Member Commitments

Members who join the CSA commit to the entire season, 20-22 weeks. If you leave your job or cannot continue your share for some reason, you can sell the remainder of your share to a co-worker or donate the remaining shares to the food pantry or soup kitchen that we are connected with. Depending on the farm, you may be able to transfer your share to another CSA location that our farmer is connected with.

Timely Payments

Ideally, share payments will be paid in full when you join the CSA. If you need to pay in installments, the full amount must be paid in full prior to season starting or before the payment deadline date.

Helping at the Distribution Site

CSA organizers will have a number of tasks to complete in order to start the Workplace CSA and run distribution efficiently. A volunteer sign up system will be in place so that members can sign up to help with tasks such as unloading the vegetables, setting up the distribution or planning in-house events. Our CSA will thrive if everyone contributes a little of their time.

Join the CSA Organizers

Each CSA has a small group of organizers who coordinate with the farmer and the company. If you are interested in being part of our CSA organizers group, please let us know. We are always looking for folks interested in helping with the Workplace CSA program.

Farm Visit

CSA members will have the opportunity to visit the farm during the season. We will get to see and hear how our food is grown, and enjoy on-farm activities such as tours, hay rides, harvesting, lunch etc.

Missed Share Pick Up

If you are unable to pick up your share, another co-worker may pick it up for you or it can be donated along with any leftover produce from distribution to the local food pantry or soup kitchen that we have chosen. If an employee will miss the distribution time or will be out on vacation, alternative arrangements should be made.



Sharing Risk and Bounty

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a partnership between CSA members and a farmer. In a CSA relationship, farmers and consumers agree to share in the risks and rewards of a farmers' season.

Before the growing season begins, members purchase a share of the upcoming harvest. Generally, farmers receive all or most of the share payment in advance. Share refunds are not an option. CSA farmers feel a great sense of responsibility to their members because of their willingness to commit to the farm for a full season.

Farming is risky. Things such as weather and pest problems can greatly affect the amount and types of produce that a farmer is able to harvest each season. The CSA model helps farmers withstand the impacts weather on their business. For example, if the farm had a bad tomato season or a hailstorm wipes out the farm's pepper crop, CSA members will receive little or no tomatoes or peppers. However, farmers realize that members would be disappointed if they didn't receive tomatoes or peppers and will do everything that they can to minimize their crop losses. A primary reason CSA farmers grow such a wide variety of vegetables is that if one crop is negatively affected, they have many others that will still be available to offer their members.

When certain crops are scarce or unavailable, the farmer will make sure the CSA group is aware of issues affecting those crops and the steps that the farmer has taken to minimize their losses.

In our experience, most long-term CSA members will be supportive when they learn that the farm has suffered a loss. They will empathize and support the farm, taking into consideration the abundance of produce they have received in the past. New CSA members, who are unable to compare the situation to previous seasons, may have a much harder time with the concept of risk sharing. They may feel anxious about potentially "not getting their money's worth".

On the other hand, CSA members also enjoy the bounty of a good year. Farmers, however, need to balance sharing bounty without overwhelming members with more produce than they can use or over burdening them with too much of one item.

Each CSA season is different and sharing risk and bounty is an ongoing conversation between the CSA members and the farmer.





Cooking Demonstrations

Cooking demonstrations are entertaining and informative and can be held as an optional workplace community building or member involvement events. They can be held during CSA distribution or held as separate team building activities.

Commonly at the workplace, members and non-members can attend the demonstration. CSA members who attend will learn one or more new recipes that they can use to prepare the veggies in their shares with. Non-members will learn about the CSA program, what comes in a share and get a chance to interact with CSA members, further building a community in the workplace and potentially enticing non-members to join the CSA next season.

Following are some helpful guidelines if you are thinking about holding a cooking demonstration:

Decide Who Will Do the Demonstration

CSA members don't have to be a professional chef to run a great cooking demo! Having members conduct demonstrations is a great way for them to share their talents, get to know each other and build a community feeling amongst your employees. Each spring Just Food provides a CSA Chef workshop for CSA members who are interested in doing cooking demos but would like additional training. However, if you don't have anyone from the CSA interested in doing demos, Just Food can also help you connect with one of our Community Food Education Program trainers to come in and do a demo for you.

Using Food from the CSA

The CSA organizers can talk to the farmer who may be willing to send a little extra produce to be used in the cooking demonstration. You can also use produce that you know will be left-over such as from a member who is on vacation or choose something out of the swap box.

Planning

It is helpful if the CSA Organizers choose one or two committed individuals to coordinate a cooking demonstration. Having an organizer who is in charge of planning company events could be a good fit. Their responsibilities would include coordinating with the person doing the demo, getting approval from the appropriate people at the company, working out the logistics and promoting the demonstration to employees.

Food Safety

It is important to keep basic food safety ideas in mind in order to provide the safest food possible at the cooking demonstration. Keep in mind that you may want to avoid using items that require more attention to food safety such as meat and dairy.

Tips to ensure food safety during a cooking demonstration:

- Keep hot food hot and cold food cold!
- If food you have in a mixing bowl needs to be kept cold, and there is no refrigeration readily available, place the mixing bowl you're using over a bowl of ice.

- Keep hot food on the burner until it is served
- Use a cooler to keep ingredients chilled if needed
- Keep hands clean or use food service grade disposable gloves
- Wash all produce before cooking or using
- Use compostable vegware or plastic spoons for tasting purposes. Discard each time you taste an item.
- Using separate, color-coded cutting boards for different ingredients is a great way of preventing cross-contamination.

Avoiding Physical Dangers

- limit jewelry, wear an apron, put hair up or wear a hat
- Be aware of common allergies (Common allergies include egg products; shellfish; wheat; soy; peanuts and nuts, dairy and gluten)
- Have potholders available
- Keep knives safely away from the edge of the table
- Be careful when using gas or electric burner

Cooking Demonstration Equipment List

Cooking demonstrations can range from showing how to prepare a few fresh vegetables or fruits (such as sliced strawberries) to preparing an uncooked salad, slaw, or dessert to using a hotplate or burner to cook a simple main dish. It is helpful to have printed recipes of your dish for members to take with them.

For a cooking demonstration you may need:

- Cutting board
- Knife
- Several large and small mixing bowls
- Dishtowels/Apron
- Serving tools (large fork, spoon or ladle)
- Burner
- Paper towels
- Appropriate pots and pans (with lids)
- Cooking tools (wooden spoon, spatula, ladle, whisk, slotted spoon, etc.)
- Can opener
- Large colander
- Box grater
- Steaming basket
- Gloves
- Ice to keep food cool or a cooler
- A service cart if moving the equipment to a demo location that is not located in a kitchen
- Large Bowl or Plate to present food
- Small plates, cups, forks or spoons to serve audience members a taste



Outreach Meeting Agenda

Creating an agenda is useful for planning outreach events. Use the following outline as a guide for setting up your outreach meeting:

Introductions

- Basic & short introduction of who you are, and anyone else that will be presenting.
- Thank people for coming.
- Purpose and what the company is trying to do.
- Explain that you are volunteer CSA organizers and what your role is in the CSA
- Introduce additional guests; example- “we have Paula Lukats from Just Food here today; Just Food is a non-profit organization that helps communities start CSAs.”

Warm-up

- If less than 20 people, have attendees introduce themselves and their interest in community supported agriculture? CSA organizers can volunteer first to get the ball rolling.
- If more than 20 people, ask some questions and have attendees raise their hand. Who’s heard of CSA? Who’s belonged to one? Who’s frustrated with how unavailable local produce is?

General Overview

- How a CSA generally works. During winter & spring, CSA farmer sells farm shares; during summer & fall, the CSA farmer delivers produce to the CSA site. *For more information, see Section 3. Key Recruitment Talking Points, page 139.*
- What is a farm share?
- Why join? It’s affordable; it’s healthy; it’s about access; it’s good for farmers and the environment. *For more information, see Section 1, Benefits of CSA, page 19.*

Logistics

- Distribution runs mid-June to mid-November, what day and time has been chosen.
- Partnering with farm name which is located # hours NSEW of NYC
- Farm share price - set and payment plan options available:
 - Payment in Full
 - Installment payments
- Volunteer recruitment - in order to make CSA at the Workplace happen, members can sign up to volunteer during the season to help manage the distribution, delivery or other pertinent task. .
- How much food you will receive.
- What type of food (early season - spinach, beet greens, peas and broccoli; mid-season - zucchini, snap peas, corn, melons, tomatoes; late season - potatoes, winter squash, cabbage, parsnips).

- Risk Sharing – An aspect of CSA is that members support the farmer by sharing in the inherent risks of agriculture (poor weather, drought, disease, early frost, and so on) and rewards (bounty of a good season) involved in farming. While CSA farmers purposely plan for such contingencies, there is no guarantee on the exact amount or type of produce you will receive in your share

Q&A about buying a farm share

Wrap up

- Our Workplace CSA will not happen without people like you: We need your help - Volunteers to get this up and running.
 - Need CSA organizers, and people to help with other tasks involved. Pass along the Volunteer sign-up sheet.
- Next meeting: CSA organizers and Volunteers meeting
- If anyone is interested in signing up right now, please complete the membership agreement. Checks should be made out to the farm or paid online at