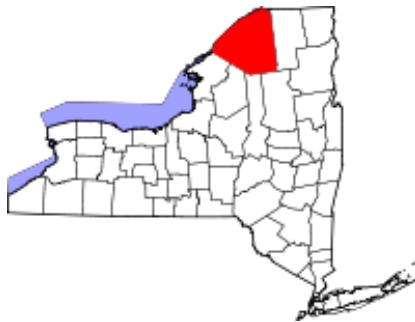


Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)



in St. Lawrence County



by

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for

GardenShare, Inc.
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GardenShare, Inc. is a non-profit organization working to end hunger in northern New York State. GardenShare works to build a North Country where all of us have enough to eat and enough to share—where our food choices are healthy for us, for our communities, and for the environment.

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Cover photo: Mary Wert unpacks her CSA box from Kent Family Growers. Photo taken by Phil Harnden.

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Executive Summary

This report was prepared for GardenShare, Inc., a non-profit community food security organization based in St. Lawrence County in upstate New York. The purpose of the research was to assess the viability of CSA ventures in the North Country. Specifically, this project focused on the question of how we can support existing CSA farms and promote the development of greater access to CSA for more members of the community.

This research was conducted over the course of the year 2007 and included three phases: a self-administered survey of CSA members, a phone survey of the general public, and interviews with CSA farmers. The major findings include:

- Most people in the general public were unaware of the CSA concept, but when given a description of CSA they tended to find the model attractive.
- Members of the general public rated environmental impact and farmland preservation as the two most attractive features of CSA.
- Among those who already belong to CSAs, there was a high level of satisfaction with the experience.
- The top reasons members gave for joining a CSA include the desire for fresh locally grown produce, the opportunity to support a local farmer, and concern for the environment.
- Members report that the experience would be enhanced by the inclusion of other local products.
- Most CSA members get a partial share and some share their weekly allotment with another household. The majority of CSA members get a high percentage of their weekly produce through their CSA.
- Participation in a CSA has tended to increase both the amount and variety of produce consumed by CSA members.
- A large majority of CSA members are in favor of the shared risk component of the CSA model.
- CSA farmers are very satisfied with the CSA model. They like the connection with the consumer, shared risk, a guaranteed market, and payment in advance of the growing season. They tend to feel pressured by the need to produce and the fear of crop failures. They report that the CSA model helps them make a living as a farmer, but none can rely solely on CSA or other income from the farm itself for their total household income.

The report concludes with some recommendations. The survey instruments and complete results appear as appendices at the end of the report.

Introduction

GardenShare’s mission is to “build a North Country where all of us have enough to eat and enough to share—where our food choices are healthy for us, for our communities, and for the environment.” GardenShare envisions a secure and fair regional food system that meets the needs of low-income people while empowering local communities to control their own food resources. To that end, GardenShare supports programs that connect food, farming, and rural revitalization in the North Country. **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** is just such a program.

Originating in Switzerland and Japan, the first CSA project in the United States was launched in 1985 at Indian Line Farm in Vermont (Henderson and Van En 2007). CSA is a model where members (also called shareholders) buy shares in a farm’s produce at the start of the growing season, share the burden of risk with the farmer, and receive a weekly delivery of harvested goods throughout the season. Typically CSA shares are made up primarily of vegetables, with some CSAs offering fruits, flowers, eggs, cheese, honey, meats and other local agricultural products.

According to the Hunger Action Network of New York State (HANNYS), “CSA programs are a key component of achieving **community food security**: that all people have access an adequate amount of nutritious food, at all times, through local, non-emergency sources (2004, p.4).

According to the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY), “a typical CSA might provide 4-15 pounds of vegetables to a family each week from June through November, often for less than it costs to buy the same conventional produce in supermarkets” (NOFA-NY 2007, p. 1). Season length and share price vary widely, but in 2007 the average share price in New York State CSAs was \$442 (NOFA –NY 2007). Some CSAs offer winter shares as well or operate year-round. Paying up front for the share is difficult for low-income families and many CSAs have created programs to provide access including flexible payment plans, sliding scale, working shares, acceptance of food stamps/EBT among others.

The purpose of the research is to assess the viability of CSA ventures in the North Country. Specifically, this project is focused on the question of how we can support existing CSA farms and promote the development of greater access to CSA for more members of the community.

Study Methods

This project is based on three sources of data:

1) CSA Member Surveys - Self-administered surveys were completed by members of the two major CSAs operating in St. Lawrence County in 2007. There are currently a total of four active CSAs in St. Lawrence County. The majority of CSA members belong to the Birdsfoot and Kent Family Growers CSAs. Of the two others, one produces exclusively meat products and cooperates with Birdsfoot and Kents for distribution to their members (8 O'Clock Ranch) and the other (Food for Thought) has a very small number of members (<10 households). The survey was distributed to the 94 member households of the Birdsfoot Farm and Kent Family Growers CSAs with their newsletter through their weekly box of produce in fall 2007. There were a total of 47 respondents - 18 Birdsfoot CSA members, 23 Kent CSA members, and six who were members of both. See Appendix A for the complete survey and results.

2) Phone Surveys - A phone survey was administered to a random sample of St. Lawrence County residents between March and December 2007. The process employed random digit dialing and computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). There were a total of 92 respondents. However, ten respondents failed to complete the entire survey. See Appendix B for the complete survey and results.

3) Farmer Interviews - In-depth interviews were completed with the operators of four CSA's - Birdsfoot Farm, Food for Thought, Kent Family Growers, and one CSA no longer in operation in 2007. Farmers were asked about their CSA operations, challenges, and needs for support. See Appendix C for complete list of interview questions.

The survey and interview questions were initially developed by Phil Harnden of GardenShare. They were further revised by the author with input from Rick Welsh of Clarkson University. The survey questions were also informed by previous CSA survey research by Oberholtzer (2004) and Kane and Lohr (1997). The statistics reported below have been rounded off to whole numbers. Comments from study respondents are quoted throughout the text in side boxes.

Survey Respondent Profiles

CSA Members - Respondents to the CSA member survey were overwhelmingly female (85%), middle and upper income (80% had household incomes of \$50,000 or higher, 22% had incomes higher than \$100,000), and highly educated (79% had a graduate or professional degree). Most were between the ages of 30 and 49 (53%). The majority grew up on a farm or with a family vegetable garden (66%), were already eating organic foods (85%), and lived in households with another adult (87%) and one or more children (55%). Almost half also grow their own vegetable

garden (45%), about one in six are vegetarians (15%), and approximately one in ten live in completely vegetarian households (11%). About one in six had been members of CSAs in other regions in the past.

Phone Survey - Respondents to the phone survey of the general public were also overwhelmingly female (72%), but were largely lower and middle income (42% had household incomes of less than \$50,000), and were less educated (only 31% had an undergraduate, graduate or professional degree). Most of the respondents were aged 50 and up (65%). This likely reflects the phone survey methodology and greater chance that seniors or retirees are available/willing to participate. The vast majority grew up on a farm or with a family vegetable garden (81%) and currently live in households with one or more others residents (85%). Most grow their own vegetable garden (59%) and only 2% reported being vegetarians. Only 3% had ever belonged to a CSA and none were currently CSA members.

Results and Discussion

CSA Awareness

There is little awareness of the CSA concept among the general public. Most phone survey respondents stated they had never heard of CSA (59%). Of those who were familiar with the concept, most cited media coverage as a source of the information. About one-fifth had family or friends who were CSA members and 29% cited publicity from GardenShare as a source of CSA information. The least cited source reported by the general public was publicity from CSA farms themselves (13%). This suggests a direction for further outreach and marketing.

Among CSA members, the vast majority first learned about CSA from family or friends (64%) and 53% cited that as the most important source in their decision to take part in CSA. The second most important source was publicity from a CSA farm (24%). When asked about how they heard of the specific CSA they had joined, CSA members reported friends or family (49%), publicity from that CSA farm (43%), and GardenShare publicity (36%) as sources with friends or family (33%) and publicity from that CSA farm (28%) as the single most important sources.

Attractiveness of CSA Model to General Public

The general survey respondents were read a brief description of the CSA model and then asked to rate each item in a list of twenty-eight potential features of CSA membership in terms of their attractiveness. The following is the list in rank order of those features rated very attractive or

attractive. Those with a combined rating of 75% or higher are indicated in bold. Only the lowest six items received a combined rating below 50%. See Appendix B for complete details.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive impact on environment 2. Promotion of farmland preservation 3. Opportunity for less expensive food 4. Personal choice of box contents 5. Opportunity to reduce packaging 6. Opportunity to support a local farmer or farm 7. Choice of share sizes 8. Inclusion of or access to other local products (such as meats, cheeses, syrup, honey) 9. Access to locally grown produce 10. Access to fresh produce in season 11. Discount for low-income or fixed-income members 12. Opportunity for greater sense of community 13. Opportunity to know where/how your food was grown 14. Recipes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Allowance for when you're away 16. Convenience of receiving a weekly box of fresh produce 17. Newsletter with information about the farm and the produce 18. Flexible payment plan 19. Access to sustainably grown produce 20. Opportunity to try new foods 21. Discount for working at the farm 22. Interaction with the farmer 23. Opportunity to educate self and/or family about food and farming 24. Access to certified organic produce 25. Invitations to member events at the farm 26. Opportunity to be part of a "core group" of volunteers involved in the CSA 27. Opportunity to visit a farm 28. Opportunity to work on a farm
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Interestingly, focusing on those items rated as **very** attractive, the top three were opportunity for less expensive food, positive impact on environment, and opportunity to reduce packaging. The least attractive features were opportunity to work on a farm, opportunity to visit a farm, and opportunity to be part of a “core group” of volunteers, respectively rated by 72%, 37%, and 37% of respondents as not at all attractive.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated that they were somewhat (35%) to very likely (20%)

“When I am unable to have my own garden I would be interested in joining a CSA.”

to join a CSA in the future. Those who indicated they were not at all likely to do so cited several barriers to their interest in CSA membership with growing their own vegetables (57%) and inconvenience (27%) topping the list following by issues related to

economic access, being away much of the summer, and choice of produce (see appendix B, questions 9 and 10).

Reasons for Joining a CSA and Choice of CSA

A similar list of twenty features was provided to CSA members and they were asked to rate them in terms of their importance in their choice to participate in CSA. The top three rated as very important were desire for locally grown produce (96%), desire for fresh produce (85%), and

“When I joined the CSA it was with the expectation of fresh locally grown produce. It was after I joined that I understood the sense of community and belonging - this is even though I never visited the farm and only met the farmer once! I loved receiving new vegetables I’ve never tried before and the newsletters were terrific. I will definitely join again next year.”

desire to support a local farmer or farm (81%). The following is the list in rank order of those features rated very important or important. Those with a

“It might have been nice to select what I wanted each week; on the other hand sometimes it was nice not to have to make the decision. I’m really not into being involved in the farm work and/or another ‘community.’ I just appreciated the fresh food, and want to support local, for economic and environmental reasons.”

combined rating of 75% or higher are indicated in bold. See Appendix A for complete details.

1. **Desire for locally grown produce**
2. **Desire for fresh produce**
3. **Desire to support a local farmer or farm**
4. **Concern for the environment**
5. **Knowing where/how your food was grown**
6. **Desire for organic/sustainably grown produce**
7. **Desire to eat produce in season**
8. **Concern for farmland preservation**
9. Health/dietary reasons
10. Desire to reduce packaging
11. Convenience of receiving a weekly box of fresh produce
12. Desire for a sense of community

13. Desire to try new foods
14. Opportunity to share burden of risk with the farmer
15. Desire for less expensive food
16. Opportunity to educate yourself about food
17. Opportunity to educate your family/children about food
18. Opportunity to educate your children about farming
19. Opportunity to visit a farm
20. Opportunity to work on a farm

Like the general public, CSA members are least interested in working on or visiting a farm, with 77% and 50% respectively rating these two items as not at all important. When asked the importance of a variety of factors in the choice of that particular CSA more than 50% rated guaranteed sustainable farming practices and the farmer as very important. More than 50% rated flexible payment plan and invitations to member events at the farm as not at all important.

The following is the list in rank order of those features rated very important or somewhat important. Those with a combined rating of 75% or higher are indicated in bold. See Appendix A for complete details.

1. **Guaranteed sustainable farming practices**
2. **Pick-up location**
3. **The farmer**
4. **Choice of share sizes**
5. **Cost of share**
6. **Certified organic**

7. Newsletter and/or recipes
8. Availability of delivery
9. Flexible payment plan
10. Invitations to member events at the farm
11. Discount for low-income or fixed-income members
12. Discount for working at the farm

Delivery Options

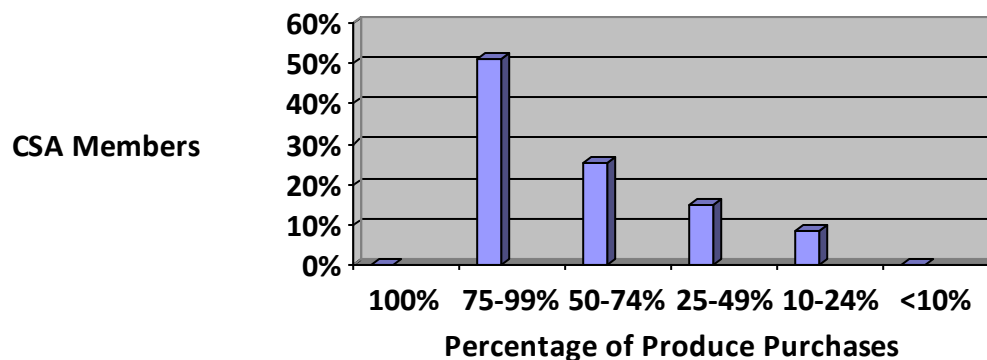
Typically CSAs either deliver member shares to a central pick-up location or ask that their members come to the farm to get their weekly share. Both of the CSAs in this study delivered the weekly shares to off-farm locations. Members could arrange to pick up their shares at the farmers' booth at a local farmer's market (22% chose this option) or at the home of another CSA member (62% chose this option). A handful of members picked up on the farm (7%) while others arranged for home delivery (13%). For most respondents, the drop-off points were within three miles of their home or workplace while the farms were between 5 and 25 miles away from most members.

The respondents to the phone survey of the general public were asked about delivery preferences. About two-fifths were willing to pick up at the farm or at a farmer's market and most would travel up to 20 miles to do so; 17% would pick up at another site and most of these were willing to travel 10 miles; and about one-fourth would only join a CSA if they could have delivery at their home or workplace.

The CSA Experience

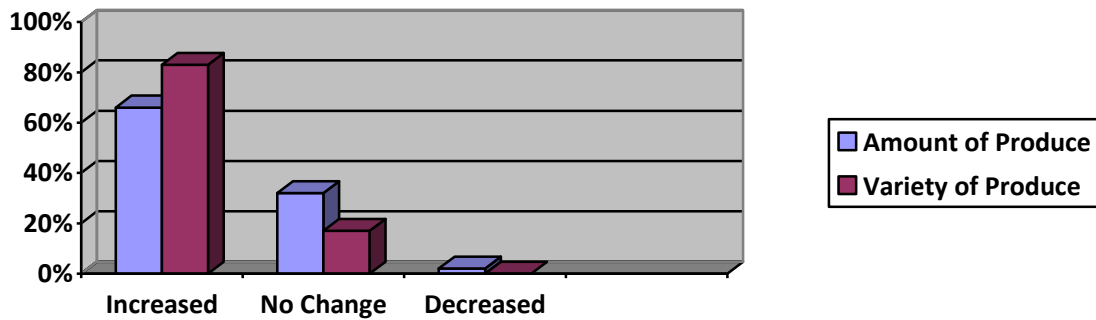
Most CSAs offer a variety of share sizes. The majority of CSA member respondents (66%) had a partial share, while 30% received a full share and 6% shared a share with another household. CSA members had the majority of their produce needs met by their CSA share with about 75% of members getting between 50 and 99% of their produce from their CSA. A slight majority (51%) of CSA members reported that 75-99% of their produce purchases came from their CSA, while 26% of members reported that 50-74% of their produce came from their CSA (see Figure 1).

Fig. 1. Percentage of Member Produce Purchases Provided by CSA during Growing Season



Most members also report that being in a CSA increased both the amount and the variety of the produce they consumed. Figure 2 shows changes in the amount and variety of produce consumption as a result CSA participation.

Fig. 2. Changes in Amount and Variety of Produce Consumed as a Result CSA Participation



People often site the time needed for preparation as a barrier to consuming fresh, unprocessed vegetables. In this survey, CSA members were somewhat split over the impact of CSA participation on their meal preparation time. A little over half of the members (53%) reported no change in meal prep time, while 43% reported an increase.

One of the issues of concern to farmers is the appropriateness of the share size. Indeed, only 21% of CSA members reported using 100% of their share each week. Most members (64%) used 75-99% of their share while 17% of members reported using 50-74% of their share each week. In some cases, the produce not used in a given week was frozen or stored for later use. In most cases, the unused portion of the CSA share was given to friends (61%), composted (47%) or thrown out (21%).

Another concern, especially for potential shareholders, is missing out on their weekly share due to vacations, scheduling or transportation issues. Among the CSA members in this study, the great majority (74%) were able to collect more than 90% of their weekly shares. When members were unable to collect their share they used a variety of strategies to get their share or make sure that it was put to good use. Many asked someone else to pick up their share for them (38%) or asked someone else to pick it up and use it themselves (45%). In other cases members made alternative arrangements with the farmer (24%), donated their share (5%), or even abandoned their share (5%).

Risk

An important element of the CSA model is sharing of risk between the farmer and the consumer. The 2008 Birdsfoot Farm “CSA Membership Agreement” contains the following statement:

As a member of the CSA, I will receive a weekly share consisting of 7-12 items. The share will vary in size and weight depending on the time of season. One aspect of CSA is that the members support their farmer by sharing the risks of farming (poor weather, drought, disease, early frost, crop failure...) and rewards (the bounty from a good season) involved in farming. Birdsfoot plans for such contingencies and uses techniques that protect the harvest such as growing a wide variety of crops that thrive in different conditions and using crop rotation, cover cropping, row covers, and irrigation. If there is still a crop failure on one crop, it will be substituted with another crop of similar value. If there is a total crop failure, I will not be expected to pay for the season. The goal is to build a relationship of trust between us. On the whole I will get a variety of vegetables in plentiful amounts. I understand the principle and agree that there is no guarantee on the exact amounts or type of produce I will receive in my share. By participating in the CSA, I am supporting my local farmer as well as helping to create a more environmentally just, economically fair, and healthy society.

There seems to be some lack of awareness of this component of the model among CSA members. When asked whether the concept of shared risk was part of their CSA’s philosophy 63% of members said no. However, 81% said they were willing to accept a lower than expected amount of produce should the harvest be lower than projected. Most (62%) did not believe their share had been diminished that season, but many (38%) were unsure.

Among the general public surveyed by phone there was a mixed reaction to the sharing of risk. More than half (55%) reported that this would not decrease their likelihood of joining a CSA, while 31% said it would make them less likely to join and 15% were unsure.

Member Satisfaction

Members reported high levels of satisfaction with their CSA experience. All respondents described their experience as either very good (79%) or satisfactory (21%). Most reported that the experience exceeded (37%) or matched (58.7%) their expectations. Most felt the share price was just right (80.4%), but about one-fifth said they were willing to pay more. Of those willing to pay more, half said they would pay up to ten percent more and the other half was willing to pay 11-20% more. Nearly four-fifths were planning to renew their membership the following year. Of those who were not going to renew, their reasons included dissatisfaction with the amount or selection of produce,

“It was a wonderful experience- a gift every Friday. It was fun to try new vegetables, get recipes and the newsletter, be able to ask question of the Kents.”

“This was our first experience as a member of CSA. It was exciting to receive our box each week - wondering what vegetables we would receive and planning our meals around them. They were always beautiful, colorful, and fresh. It was great experience and I can’t wait for next year.”

the inconvenience of the pick-up time or location, being away much of the summer, or a pending move out of the area.

CSA members were provided with a list of potential CSA features and asked “What would improve your CSA experience?” Respondents rated each item in terms of its desirability. The following is the list in

rank order of those features rated very desirable or desirable. Those with a combined rating of 50% or higher are indicated in bold. See Appendix A for complete details.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion of or access to other local products (meats, cheeses, syrup, honey, etc) 2. Recipes 3. Certified organic 4. Newsletter 5. Guaranteed sustainable farming practices 6. More personal choice of box contents 7. Allowance for when I’m out of town 8. More “staple” foods 9. Invitations to member events at the farm 10. Flexible payment plan | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Home delivery 12. Discount for low/fixed-income members 13. Opportunity to be part of a “core group” of volunteers involved in the CSA 14. More unusual produce items 15. Discount for working at the farm 16. More interaction with the farmer 17. Smaller share sizes 18. Fewer unusual produce items 19. More convenient pickup location 20. Larger share sizes |
|--|---|

Many of these items are already at least occasional features of the CSAs to which the respondents belong. In rating those items highly they were most likely affirming their favorite features. Alternatively, the following features were rated by 45% or more of the respondents as not at all desirable: smaller share sizes, larger share sizes, fewer unusual produce items, and opportunity to be part of a core group of volunteers. However, even for those items there were some respondents who rated them as desirable to some degree. For example, the discount for

low or fixed income members was rated as desirable or somewhat desirable by almost half of the respondents with nearly half checking “not applicable.” This clearly reflects the demographics of the current CSA membership. In another example, more than half rated home delivery as

“I think the single most relevant improvement for me would be home delivery and I would be willing to pay a higher price for this.”

either not applicable or not at all desirable. However, other respondents strongly favored this feature. CSA members have diverse needs and interests that they hope will be met by their CSA. Farmers may want to consider providing a variety of options with this information in mind.

The Farmer's Perspective

CSA farmers love what they do. They care deeply about food and farming and find the connection with the people eating the food they have grown to be one of the most valuable aspects of CSA farming. As one farmer put it, "It is the most direct connection. There are no middle people." Another stated:

I really like getting feedback. I really want to know if that melon was sweet. Please tell me. I can't learn anything unless you tell...Some of our CSA superstars write us letters every other week... I like the exchange, a real rewarding part of this whole enterprise is interacting with customers. And CSA offers a chance to do that.

The direct connection has an economic side as well. In contrast to wholesale, direct marketing provides the best price for a farmer's produce. For most of the farms in this study CSA was just one of several methods used to sell the produce. Most also sold at local farmer's markets and sold wholesale to restaurants and/or retail outlets like local grocery stores and a food cooperative. All of the farms also had off-farm income through a spouse's paid employment or work the farmer did in the winter months to supplement the farm income.

The CSA farmers I interviewed see their role as wider than simply that of a grower of food. They often noted the community-building and educational aspects of their enterprise:

We said let's do the CSA because, one, it is going to bring the community to our farm. They are going to come out here and they are going to assist us. They are going to learn from us, they are going to work with us and they are going to give us capital early in the spring.

As this quote illustrates, CSA farmers are also motivated by other major components of the model: shared labor, shared risk, a guaranteed market, and payment in advance of the growing season. However, as one farmer stated, there is a "shadow side":

The shadow side of that is when somebody prepays you all for the season you feel the need to perform and to provide. That causes stress and it has caused a lot of stress and I think for everybody who does CSAs--until you are so wise and you just know all the things that can go wrong and how to deal with it and not worry about it.

Although the farmers were in part motivated by the shared risk aspect of the CSA model, they were loathe to actually apply it and would cut into produce intended for other markets or make up for losses with future product:

We always had full value - maybe not the very first share - but we did make up for it - and we had more variety. That is the other good thing about growing so much variety is that you can fill in when something doesn't come up good.

The farmers also placed a high value on retention and their CSAs had high retention rates, between 75 and 100%.

I feel deeply honored that people come back here year after year... there is something in my mind that places a pretty high value on keeping people satisfied, having them be faithful customers. I want to be faithful to them, if they can be faithful back.

Unfortunately, a major question behind this study – whether CSAs are a viable way for farmers to make a living – remains unanswered. None of the farmers interviewed for this study relies solely on CSA for their farm income (they also sell wholesale and at farmers' markets) and all rely on supplemental household income. They did not have specific records tracking the income generated by the CSA as separate from the other farm income. As one farmer put it:

The thing we should be doing if we were serious is, for each crop, to determine what are our costs of production and then determine what are our costs of distribution with our three different marketing and then compare. And then we could have a really specific dollar figure on what does a CSA share cost. What is our profit from a CSA share vs. what it is to sell at the FM? We haven't done that. You were asking what got us into it. I had said that it sounded like a good idea. That's how we operate around here. Asparagus? Sounds like a good idea. Can we make money on it? I don't know.

One thing is clear, however. These CSA farmers are not earning a living wage. For one farmer, the annual farm income was \$10,000 with about half that coming from the CSA. Another farmer stated, “yes, we cover our costs and make a profit. Well, we value our labor very low. We figured it out this fall and if we ignore a lot of hours we are making about \$6.00 an hour.” In terms of labor, these farms are mainly a family affair. Some CSAs also have some volunteer labor from their members or others and in one case, the paid labor of a neighboring youth for weekly harvests. As noted elsewhere (NOFA-NY 2007, Oberholtzer 2004), farm income and farm labor are significant challenges for CSAs.

Recommendations

As noted earlier, this research is focused on the question of how existing CSA farms can be supported and how to promote the development of greater access to CSA for more members of the community. The following are some recommendations for achieving these goals. Some may be undertaken by the farmers themselves while other suggestions may be pursued by organizations supporting CSAs.

Supporting Existing CSA Farms:

- **Marketing assistance.** CSA farmers may need assistance with developing brochures and advertising. This could be a local college class project for marketing, graphic design, or technical writing students.
- **Business planning assistance.** CSA farmers may need assistance with tracking and projecting costs and revenues, setting share prices, etc.
- **Enhance network of producers.** Many CSA members expressed an interest in receiving other farm products like syrup, honey, or eggs. CSA farmers need assistance in developing partnerships with other producers to enhance their CSA.
- **Create opportunities for farmer development.** Regional workshops or conferences can create an opportunity for developing the network of local producers as well as provide an opportunity to share ideas and learn about new developments in sustainable agriculture.

Expanding CSA Membership:

- **Increase public awareness.** As the phone survey of the general public revealed, few people are aware of the CSA concept, but when they learn about it, they like the idea. Greater media coverage is needed. CSAs can advertise in local publications and put flyers in libraries, restaurants, and other public locations. One local CSA holds informational meetings before the start of the season.
- **Tap into the networks of current members.** Most CSA members first learned about CSA from family or friends and they cite this as the most important factor in their decision to join. There are many ways to encourage CSA members to spread the word: rebates or discounts for signing up new members; sending extra sign-up forms in the spring with a note to pass them along; and, encouraging current members to pass their weekly share along when away on vacation.
- **Offer a trial period.** Some people may be interested in CSA, but reluctant to commit to a whole season at first. A few trial shares could be made available each year to give prospective members a taste of the CSA experience.
- **Expand access to CSA membership.** Some CSAs provide mechanisms for food stamp recipients to use them for CSA membership. This has great potential for expansion. Other programs like WIC and senior nutrition programs could be explored as well.
- **Do site-based recruitment.** CSAs can target central locations such as workplaces and apartment complexes for recruitment. These have large numbers of people built in to logical drop-off points. Targeting low-income or senior housing complexes can also help achieve the goal of greater access.

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Appendix A

Results for Current CSA Members

This survey was given to members of two St. Lawrence County CSAs (Birdsfoot Farm and Kent Family Growers) in fall 2007. There were a total of 47 respondents (18 Birdsfoot CSA members, 23 Kent CSA members, and 6 who were members of both). Note: In many cases the percentages do not add up to 100% either because of rounding error or because respondents could choose more than one answer.

Part I: CSA Information and Experiences

1) Where did you first learn about the Community Supported Agriculture concept? (check all that apply)

- Friends or family who are CSA members – **63.7%**
- Publicity from a CSA farm – **23.3%**
- GardenShare publicity – **25.5%**
- TV, radio, magazine, or newspaper coverage – **12.7%**
- Other: - **21.2%** (co-workers, flyer at food co-op, from farmer at farmer's market, apprenticed on organic farm, pamphlet in town, on organic farm)

1a) Please circle the source that was *most important* in your decision to join a CSA.

- Friends or family who are CSA members – **52.9%**
- Publicity from a CSA farm – **23.5%**
- GardenShare publicity – **5.9%**
- TV, radio, magazine, or newspaper coverage – **11.8%**
- Other – **5.9%**

2) Which CSAs have you been a member of in the north country?*

- Birdsfoot Farm – **48.8%**
- Kent Family Growers – **61.7%**
- Other: - **6.3%** (8:00 Ranch, Steve Johnson)

*Note: six of the respondents were members of both Birdsfoot and Kent Family Growers CSAs at the time of the survey.

3) Have you ever been a member of a CSA in another region?

- No – **84.4%**
- Yes – **15.6%**

4) How important were the following in your choice to participate in Community Supported Agriculture?

	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not at all important	N/A
a) Desire for fresh produce	85.1%	14.9%	-	-	-
b) Desire to eat produce in season	64.4%	24.4%	8.9%	2.2%	-
c) Desire for locally grown produce	95.7%	4.3%	-	-	-
d) Desire for organic/sustainably grown produce	74.5%	19.1%	6.4%	-	-
e) Desire to try new foods	19.6%	28.3%	45.7%	6.5%	-
f) Knowing where/how your food was grown	61.7%	34.0%	4.3%	-	-
g) Health/dietary reasons	29.5%	43.2%	18.2%	9.1%	-
h) Concern for the environment	53.2%	42.6%	4.3%	-	-
i) Concern for farmland preservation	43.5%	34.8%	21.7%	-	-
j) Desire to support a local farmer or farm	80.8%	17.0%	6.4%	-	-
k) Opportunity to visit a farm	6.5%	6.5%	37.0%	50.0%	-
l) Opportunity to work on a farm	-	2.3%	18.2%	77.3%	2.3%
m) Opportunity to educate your children about farming	8.7%	15.25	32.6%	32.6%	10.9%
n) Opportunity to educate yourself about food	21.7%	15.2%	43.5%	19.6%	-
o) Opportunity to educate your family/children about food	15.2%	21.7%	28.3%	26.1%	8.7%
p) Opportunity to share burden of risk with the farmer	13.0%	34.8%	34.8%	17.4%	-
q) Desire for a sense of community	25.5%	34.0%	29.8%	10.6%	-
r) Desire to reduce packaging	44.7%	25.5%	23.4%	6.4%	-
s) Desire for less expensive food	10.9%	26.1%	34.8%	28.3%	-
t) Convenience of receiving a weekly box of fresh produce*	32.6%	32.6%	19.6%	13.0%	-
u) Other**	-	-	-	-	-

*One respondent wrote: “This did not turn out to be convenient. I’d rather select my own things at a time when I will use them.”

**Responses to “Other”:

- “As a dietitian/nutritionist I wanted to try it so I can encourage others to try a CSA themselves with first-hand experience.”
- “I like it when someone else decides what I’ll cook this week. It’s an awesome adventure, and it means I might try new things!”
- “Local sustainability & food security”
- “Surprise factor”

5) In your most recent CSA experience, what type of share did you have?

- A full share – **29.8%**
- A partial share – **65.9%**
- I shared a share with another household – **6.4%**

6) How many people in your household eat from your share?

1 Adult – 4.3% 2 Adults – 87.2% 3 Adults – 8.5% 0 Children – 44.7%
 1 Child – 25.5% 2 Children – 25.5% 3 Children – 2.1% 5 Children – 2.1%

7) How did you hear about the particular CSA farm where you became a member? (check all that apply)

- Friends or family who are CSA members at that farm - 48.9%
- Publicity from that CSA farm - 42.5%
- GardenShare publicity – 36.2%
- TV, radio, magazine, or newspaper coverage – 8.5%
- Other: - 21.3% (Farmer’s Market, co-worker, farmers, Nature’s Storehouse, Birdsfoot info meeting, sustainability conference SUNY Canton, Aware of Birdsfoot farm because I’m aware of the Little River Community School)

7a) **Please circle the source that was most important in your decision to join that particular CSA.

- Friends or family who are CSA members at that farm - 33.3%
- Publicity from that CSA farm - 27.8%
- GardenShare publicity – 5.6%
- TV, radio, magazine, or newspaper coverage – 5.6%
- Other: - 27.8%

8) How important were the following in your choice to join the CSA in which you were most recently a member.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not at all important	Not applicable
a) The farmer	60.0%	22.2%	8.9%*	6.7%
b) Cost of share	17.8%	62.2%	17.8%	2.2%
c) Choice of share sizes	44.7%	36.2%	19.1%	
d) Flexible payment plan	8.9%	20.0%	55.6%	15.6%
e) Certified organic	40.9%	38.6%	6.8%	11.4%
f) Guaranteed sustainable farming practices	62.2%	31.1%	4.4%	2.2%
g) Pick-up location	45.7%	43.5%	6.5%	4.3%
h) Availability of delivery	25.0%	27.3%	27.3%	20.5%
i) Discount for low-income or fixed-income members	2.2%	20.0%	28.9%	48.9%
j) Discount for working at the farm	2.2%	2.2%	44.4%	51.1%
k) Invitations to member events at the farm	4.4%	24.4%	53.3%	17.8%
l) Newsletter and/or recipes	15.6%	48.9%	24.4%	11.1%
m) Other: **	-	-	-	-

*Respondent wrote: “ I knew none of the farmers - I would choose the Kents again so now it is important.”

** Respondent wrote: “farming practices” and rated as “very important”

9) Approximately how many miles is the farm from your house?

Answers ranged from 0 to 80 miles; most were between 5 and 25.

10) What types of activities did you participate in at the farm this past season? (check all that apply)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visited farm – 26.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> None – 54.3% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helped with farm labor - 26.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm did not offer opportunities to visit or volunteer – 4.4% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended party or festival – 21.9% | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: - 6.6% (house is pick-up; provided recipes for the farmer to distribute to members) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helped with distribution - 0% | |

*Note: Six of the respondents belonged to both Kent and Birdsfoot CSAs. Birdsfoot had a labor expectation and Kent did not.

11) How did you receive your share in your most recent CSA membership year?

- Pick up on the farm - **6.6%**
- Pick up at the farmer’s booth at a farmer’s market? -**22.2%**
→How many miles is farmer’s market from your house? **Answers ranged from one block to 70 miles, about half were within one mile)**
- Pick up at another site -**62.2%**
→How many miles is pick-up site from your house? **Answers ranged from ½ mile to 12 miles; most were within three miles; two respondents elaborated: “Pick up site is a few blocks from my worksite.” and “Live 40 miles east of Potsdam, work in Potsdam so pick up at a home in Potsdam.”**
- Home delivery – **13.3%**
- Other: - **2.2%**

12) What percentage of your produce purchases do you estimate that the CSA provided you during the growing season?

- 100% - **0%**
- 75-99% - **51.0%**
- 50-74% - **25.5%**
- 25-49% - **14.9%**
- 10-24% - **8.5%**
- Less than 10% - **0%**

13) How do you believe the amount of produce you consume has changed as a result of your participation in the CSA, if at all?

- Increased – **66%** Decreased – **2.1%** No change - **31.9%**

14) How do you believe the variety of produce you consume has changed as a result of your participation in the CSA, if at all?

- Increased – **83%** Decreased – **0%** No change – **17%**

15) How do you believe the amount of time you spend preparing meals has changed as a result of your participation in the CSA, if at all?

- Increased – **42.6%** Decreased – **4.3%** No change – **53.2%**

16) What percentage of your CSA share do you estimate you used each week?

- 100% - **21.2%**
 75-99% - **63.8%**
 50-74% - **17.0%**
 25-49% - **0%**
 10-24% - **0%**
 Less than 10% - **0%**

17) If less than 100%, what did you do with excess food? (check all that apply)

- Gave it to a friend – **60.5%**
 Donated it to a food pantry - **0%**
 Composted it – **47.4%**
 Threw it away – **21.1%**
 Other: **-23.6%** (froze/canned, fed to dog, gave away, fed to rabbit, storage, used in later weeks)

18) Over the course of the growing season what percentage of your weekly shares were you unable to collect (due to vacations, schedule or transportation issues, etc.)?

- 100% - **6.4%**
 75-99% - **6.4%**
 50-74% - **0%**
 25-49% - **4.2%**
 10-24% - **10.6%**
 Less than 10% - **74.4%**

19) Which of the following did you do when you couldn't pick up your weekly share? (check all that apply)

- Asked someone else to get share for me – **38.4%**
 Asked someone else to get share for their own use – **45.3%**
 Told the farmer not to pack a share for me that week – **7.2%**
 Abandoned the share – **2.4%**
 Donated the share – **4.8%**
 Other: **16.7%** (asked pick up home to hold for a day or 2 at the most, delivered at other time; add share to winter)
N/A – **11.9%**

20) What would improve your CSA experience? Rate each one on the level of desirability.

	Very desirable	Desirable	Somewhat desirable	Not at all desirable	Not applicable
a) Discount for low-income or fixed-income members	2.3%	20.5%	25.0%	4.5%	47.7%
b) Discount for working at the farm	4.5%	13.6%	29.5%	31.8%	22.8%
c) Flexible payment plan	9.5%	16.7%	31.0%	26.2%	16.7%
d) Smaller share sizes	-	11.4%	22.7%	50.0%	15.9%
e) Larger share sizes	-	2.2%	14.6%	48.8%	14.6%
f) More convenient pickup location	2.4%	7.1%	14.3%	28.6%	47.6%
g) Home delivery	11.9%	11.9%	19.0%	38.1%	19.0%
h) More personal choice of box contents	10.6%	31.9%	42.6%	8.5%	6.4%
i) More “staple” foods	5.1%	28.2%	25.6%	20.5%	20.5%
j) Fewer unusual produce items		11.4%	15.9%	59.1%	13.6%
k) More unusual produce items	9.3%	9.3%	39.5%	32.6%	9.3%
l) More interaction with the farmer	7.1%	9.5%	40.5%	11.9%	31.0%
m) Invitations to member events at the farm	15.8%	15.8%	34.2%	15.8%	18.4%
n) Certified organic	34.1%	29.3%	24.4%	4.9%	7.3%
o) Guaranteed sustainable farming practices	8.5%	42.6%	29.8%	8.5%	10.6%
p) Newsletter	20.9%	34.9%	30.2%	2.3%	11.6%
q) Recipes	25.0%	38.6%	25.0%	2.3%	9.1%
r) Allowance for when I’m out of town	11.4%	25.0%	29.5%	25.0%	9.1%
s) Inclusion of or access to other local products (such as meats, cheeses, syrup, honey)	38.6%	38.6%	15.9%	4.5%	2.3%
t) Opportunity to be part of a “core group” of volunteers involved in the CSA	7.1%	11.9%	26.2%	45.2%	9.5%
u) Other (please explain):*					

*One member wrote: “The main/only thing that is important is that I love the opportunity to visit Birdsfoot and would be sad if they stopped.”

Part II: CSA Expectations and Satisfaction

21) Please complete the following statement. My expectations of membership in this CSA were primarily influenced by (check all that apply):

- A previous CSA experience – **27.8%**
- The way the CSA was described by the farmer (either directly or through a brochure) – **42.6%**
- What I heard from other members – **36.2%**
- Information I received in other venues (such as the newspaper, other media) – **19.2%**
- I had no expectations – **19.1%**
- Other (please specify):- **6.3%** (my own research, satisfaction with purchases at FM from Dan Kent in previous years; what I saw they offered at the market.)

22) To what extent did your most recent CSA experience meet your expectations? Did it exceed them, match them, or fall short?

- Exceeded expectations – **37.0%**
- Matched expectations – **58.7%**
- Fell short of expectations – **4.3%**

23) Please choose the following statement that most fits your opinion:

- I would be willing to pay more for my CSA share. - **21.7%**
→ How much more? 10% - **50.0%**; 11-20% - **50.0%**
- I felt the share price was just right. – **80.4%**
- I felt the share price was too high. – **2.2%**

24) How would you describe your overall CSA experience?

- Very good – **79.0%**
- Satisfactory – **21.0%**
- Unsatisfactory - **0%**
- Undecided - **0%**

25) Will you renew your membership in the same CSA in 2008?

- Yes - **78.3%**
- Undecided - **13%**
- No – **8.7%**

25a) If you will not renew your membership, why not? Check all that apply:

- The share price was too high
- Inconvenience of pick-up day - **25%**
- Inconvenience of pick-up time – **25%**
- Inconvenience of pick-up location – **12.5%**
- Dissatisfaction with the selection of produce in the weekly box – **12.5%**
- Dissatisfaction with the amount of produce in the weekly box – **12.5%**
- Dissatisfaction with the farmer
- Dissatisfaction with the farming practices
- I'm away too much of the summer – **25%**
- Other (please explain):- **25.0%** (we're moving, (we moved even further away from the farm and planted our own garden; dissatisfaction w/organization of farm- they need a business plan and manager; more flexible)

Part III: CSAs and the Issue of Risk

Many (but not all) CSA farms expect the members to share some of the risks of farming. This means that the member pays the share price up front and accepts that the season's harvests may not meet expectations due to weather, disease, pests or other problems.

26) Are you willing to accept a lower than expected amount of produce should your CSA farm experience a lower than projected harvest?

- Yes - **80.9%**
- No - **0**
- Not sure – **19.1%** (wrote “Not unless there is an adjustment of price or quantity of satisfactory produce.”)

27) Is this concept of shared risk part of your CSA's philosophy?

- No – **63%**
 - Not sure – **2.2%**
 - Yes – **34.8%**
- 27a) If it is part of your CSA's philosophy, were you aware of it prior to joining?**
- Yes – **82.8%**
 - No – **17.2%**

28) Do you believe that the share you received was diminished in the last season due to the shared-risk aspect of the CSA model?

- Yes - **0%**
- No – **61.7%**
- Not sure – **38.3%**

Part IV: Background Information

29) Were you eating organic foods prior to joining the CSA?

- Yes – **85.1%**
- No- **14.9%**

30) Are you a vegetarian or is someone in your household a vegetarian?

- Self – **14.8%**
- Others – **0%**
- All members of household – **11.1%**
- No or no answer – **74.1%**

31) Do you also grow your own vegetable garden?

- Yes – **44.7%**
- No – **55.3%**

32) Did you grow up on a farm or with a family vegetable garden?

- Yes - **66%**
- No – **34%**

33) What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school diploma – **0%**
- Completed high school – **2.1%**
- Some college or technical school – **10.6%**
- Undergraduate degree – **8.5%**
- Graduate/Professional degree – **78.7%**

34) What is your gross household income?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$25,000 – 4.4% | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 - \$99,000 – 26.7% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000 – \$49,000 – 15.6% | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 - \$124,500 – 15.6% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 – \$74,000 – 31.1% | <input type="checkbox"/> \$125,000+ - 6.7% |

35) What age group are you in?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <18 – 0% | <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 – 21.2% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 19- 29 – 8.5% | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 – 17.0% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 – 31.9% | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 and above – 25.1% |

36) Gender

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male - 14.8% | <input type="checkbox"/> Female – 85.2% |
|--|--|

Final comments: Would you like to share any other comments or make suggestions for change in the CSA operation?

Again, remember that these comments are from folks who belonged to Kent only, to Birdsfoot only, or to both Kent and Birdsfoot and we can't be sure which CSA the person is referring to. Comments made by respondents who belonged to both CSAs are in italics below:

- I enjoyed the different produce (especially the pea shoots) and appreciated the newsletters and recipes and brief chats with the Kents now and then.
- I would actually like 1) Some choice-ideally early in the process- before planting and 2) Variety-if possible like Jerusalem artichokes, salsify.
- I would like to be able to “un-select” some things, and replace with more of other things. Perhaps more of a menu of options? I have been very pleased with my CSA share... I like the variety and quality, sustainability of methods. While certified organic is preferred, I trusted the Kents with their promise of essentially organic practices... and farming w/horses is fantastic! And while newsletters were not expected, I very much enjoyed them.
- It was a wonderful experience- a gift every Friday. It was fun to try new vegetables, get recipes and the newsletter, be able to ask question of the Kents. The produce was only good quality and clean. Organic is important, certification is not.
- When I joined the CSA it was with the expectation of fresh locally grown produce. It was after I joined that I understood the sense of community and belonging - this is even though I never visited the farm and only met the farmer once! I loved receiving new vegetables I've never tried before and the newsletters were terrific. I will definitely join again next year.
- I am 71 years old (hurray!) and have a huge flower garden. It's all the gardening I wish to do so I hope helping on the farm does not become an expected component of the program. Thanks for your great work.
- Recipes, especially for unusual items would be helpful!! ☺
- Eggs and Meat. Opportunities to work at/visit farm. Such beautiful and delicious produce.
- Was a great experience and recommend to anyone. One suggestion to those of us with less experience is to include the names of some of the more unfamiliar veggies each week so we can look them up.
- *It seemed like we received less produce in our share this year than the previous years. Also fewer greens but we love the farmer.*
- Publish newsletters as a book. Do not include over-ripe produce in shares. Share should reflect same quality as farmers market products.

- It was a wonderful first experience with CSA. I plan on joining again next year and have encouraged others to join as well.
- This was our first experience as a member of CSA. It was exciting to receive our box each week wondering what vegetables we would receive and planning our meals around them. They were always beautiful colorful and fresh. It was great experience and I can't wait for next year.
- It was a very satisfying experience and I look forward to next semester's CSA participation
- *Only identifying some of the more unusual veggies-but I know the farmers are busy already!*
- *I love it, I belong to CSA Birdsfoot and Kents- enjoy both a lot. Plan to continue with both next year.*
- Thanks for all of your hard work.
- Seems like they did not plant things we eat—peppers, chard, corn... A great idea, but the challenge of waiting till you got your box to plan other purchases was frustrating. Always another trip to store or farmer's market. Loved the Birdsfoot newsletters!
- It might have been nice to select what I wanted each week; on the other hand sometimes it was nice not to have to make the decision. I'm really not into being involved in the farm work and/or another 'community.' I just appreciated the fresh food, and want to support local, for economic and environmental reasons.
- I appreciate the work organic farmers do in every way.
- More internet/email presence. Better communication within farm when customer calls and gives a message. Business plan and manager and organized.
- If we were in Canton for most of the summer I would join again.
- Would love eggs, cheese, fruit etc.
- There is a real need for CSAs in all areas of the state!
- I think the single most relevant improvement for me would be home delivery and I would be willing to pay a higher price for this.
- The CSA gave out an initial handout with a list of vegetables and approximate dates we'd received them. They promised a lot that they didn't deliver on (at least for a partial share). It might be better not to make the promise in the first place. Overall, I've enjoyed belonging to the CSA. It makes me feel good and more connected to my food, the land, and this community.
- More communication between members and pick up point - we had lots of people who didn't pick up this summer and it was left to me (home-owner) to contact them.
- I love every aspect of the Birdsfoot CSA. Dulli has been great and ever modified our weekly package because we didn't want one of the included items. It's AWESOME!

Appendix B

Results for General Phone Survey

This survey was administered to a random sample of St. Lawrence County residents between March and December 2007. There were a total of 92 respondents. However, only 82 of them completed the entire survey. The number of respondents for each item is listed in parentheses after the question.

~~~~~  
We will begin with questions about your general CSA awareness.

**1) Which of the following statements best matches your level of familiarity with the concept of "Community Supported Agriculture"? (92)**

- 1) I've never heard of Community Supported Agriculture [go to q5] – **58.7%**
- 2) I'm somewhat familiar with the CSA concept – **35.9%**
- 3) I'm very familiar with the CSA concept – **5.4%**

**2) From which of the following sources have you heard about the CSA concept? (38)**

- a) Friends or family who are CSA members – **18.4%**
- b) Publicity from a CSA farm – **13.2%**
- c) GardenShare publicity – **28.9%**
- d) TV, radio, magazine, or newspaper coverage – **60.5%**
- e) Other – **50% (newspaper, co-op, various people)**

**3) Have you ever been a member of a CSA? (38)**

- 1) Yes – **2.6%**
- 2) No [go to q5] – **97.4%**

**4) Are you currently a member of a CSA? (1)**

- 1) Yes – **0%**
- 2) No – **100%**

**5) Next I am going to read a brief description of Community Supported Agriculture and then ask a few questions about your possible interest in the concept. CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture. At a CSA farm, customers pay in advance for a share of the farm's harvest. Then each week throughout the growing season, these CSA members go to an assigned location to pick up a box of freshly harvested produce. Each box contains an assortment of fruits and vegetables and sometimes a newsletter with information about the farm and tips for preparing less familiar items. Most CSA farms are certified organic or use sustainable growing methods. CSA members benefit by getting fresh food, hand-picked by a farmer they know and trust. Farmers benefit by having guaranteed customers for their crops before the seeds even go into the ground.**

**The cost of a share varies widely, but it is typically comparable to the cost of a similar box of produce purchased at a farmer's market times the number of weeks in the CSA's planned growing season.**

**6) Now I am going to read a list of potential features of CSA membership. Please rate each feature in terms of its attractiveness to you.**

| CSA Features                                                                                   | Very Attractive (4) | Attractive (3) | Somewhat Attractive (2) | Not at all Attractive (1) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| a) Access to fresh produce in season (83)                                                      | <b>45.8%</b>        | <b>32.5%</b>   | <b>12.0%</b>            | <b>9.6%</b>               |
| c) Access to locally grown produce (83)                                                        | <b>48.2%</b>        | <b>30.1%</b>   | <b>14.5%</b>            | <b>7.2%</b>               |
| d) Access to sustainably grown produce (82)                                                    | <b>35.4%</b>        | <b>31.7%</b>   | <b>19.5%</b>            | <b>13.4%</b>              |
| e) Access to certified organic produce (82)                                                    | <b>18.3%</b>        | <b>30.5%</b>   | <b>25.6%</b>            | <b>25.6%</b>              |
| f) Opportunity to try new foods (82)                                                           | <b>25.6%</b>        | <b>32.9%</b>   | <b>31.7%</b>            | <b>9.8%</b>               |
| g) Opportunity to know where/how your food was grown (82)                                      | <b>40.2%</b>        | <b>32.9%</b>   | <b>18.3%</b>            | <b>8.5%</b>               |
| h) Positive impact on environment (82)                                                         | <b>54.9%</b>        | <b>35.4%</b>   | <b>7.3%</b>             | <b>2.4%</b>               |
| i) Promotion of farmland preservation (82)                                                     | <b>47.6%</b>        | <b>39.0%</b>   | <b>11.0%</b>            | <b>2.4%</b>               |
| j) Opportunity to support a local farmer or farm (82)                                          | <b>48.8%</b>        | <b>32.9%</b>   | <b>9.8%</b>             | <b>8.5%</b>               |
| k) Opportunity to visit a farm (82)                                                            | <b>18.3%</b>        | <b>18.3%</b>   | <b>26.8%</b>            | <b>36.6%</b>              |
| l) Opportunity to work on a farm (82)                                                          | <b>9.8%</b>         | <b>4.9%</b>    | <b>13.4%</b>            | <b>72.0%</b>              |
| m) Opportunity to educate self and/or family about food and farming (82)                       | <b>23.2%</b>        | <b>25.6%</b>   | <b>24.4%</b>            | <b>26.8%</b>              |
| q) Opportunity for greater sense of community (82)                                             | <b>40.2%</b>        | <b>35.4%</b>   | <b>19.5%</b>            | <b>4.9%</b>               |
| r) Opportunity to reduce packaging (82)                                                        | <b>52.4%</b>        | <b>30.5%</b>   | <b>12.2%</b>            | <b>4.9%</b>               |
| s) Opportunity for less expensive food (82)                                                    | <b>58.5%</b>        | <b>26.8%</b>   | <b>9.8%</b>             | <b>4.9%</b>               |
| t) Convenience of receiving a weekly box of fresh produce (82)                                 | <b>34.1%</b>        | <b>36.6%</b>   | <b>12.2%</b>            | <b>17.1%</b>              |
| u) Discount for low-income or fixed-income members (82)                                        | <b>42.7%</b>        | <b>32.9%</b>   | <b>15.9%</b>            | <b>8.5%</b>               |
| v) Discount for working at the farm (82)                                                       | <b>22.0%</b>        | <b>34.1%</b>   | <b>17.1%</b>            | <b>26.8%</b>              |
| w) Flexible payment plan (82)                                                                  | <b>32.9%</b>        | <b>35.4%</b>   | <b>12.2%</b>            | <b>19.5%</b>              |
| x) Choice of share sizes (for example, a share for a family, a couple, or a single adult) (82) | <b>45.1%</b>        | <b>35.4%</b>   | <b>8.5%</b>             | <b>11.0%</b>              |
| y) Personal choice of box contents (82)                                                        | <b>48.8%</b>        | <b>35.4%</b>   | <b>9.8%</b>             | <b>6.1%</b>               |
| z) Interaction with the farmer (82)                                                            | <b>15.9%</b>        | <b>34.1%</b>   | <b>28.0%</b>            | <b>22.0%</b>              |

**6) continued**

| CSA Features                                                                                  | Very Attractive (4) | Attractive (3) | Somewhat Attractive (2) | Not at all Attractive (1) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Invitations to member events at the farm (such as festivals, parties, picnics, etc.) (82)  | <b>13.4%</b>        | <b>32.9%</b>   | <b>29.3%</b>            | <b>24.4%</b>              |
| 2) Newsletter with information about the farm and the produce (82)                            | <b>28.0%</b>        | <b>41.5%</b>   | <b>19.5%</b>            | <b>11.0%</b>              |
| 3) Recipes (82)                                                                               | <b>34.1%</b>        | <b>39.0%</b>   | <b>13.4%</b>            | <b>13.4%</b>              |
| 4) Allowance for when you're away (such as on vacation) (82)                                  | <b>40.2%</b>        | <b>31.7%</b>   | <b>11.0%</b>            | <b>17.1%</b>              |
| 5) Inclusion of or access to other local products (such as meats, cheeses, syrup, honey) (82) | <b>40.2%</b>        | <b>40.2%</b>   | <b>8.5%</b>             | <b>11.0%</b>              |
| 6) Opportunity to be part of a "core group" of volunteers involved in the CSA (82)            | <b>15.9%</b>        | <b>24.4%</b>   | <b>23.2%</b>            | <b>36.6%</b>              |

**7) If you were to join a CSA, which of the following methods would you be willing to use to receive your weekly share. (82)**

- a) Pick up directly at the farm? – **40.2%**
- b) Pick up at the farmer's booth at a farmer's market? - **43.9%**
- c) Pick up at another site? – **17.1%**
- d) I would only join a CSA if I could have delivery at home or at my workplace – **26.8%**

**For each one please indicate the number of miles you would be willing to travel from your home.**

A1) At the farm (# miles): **Most responded 5-20 miles, some 0-2, some 30-45.**

B1) At the market (# miles): **Most responded 10-20 miles, some 2-8, some 25-60.**

C1) At another site (# miles): **Most responded 5-10 miles, some 2, some 15-20.**

**8) What would be your [b]preferred[n] method of receiving your weekly share? (82)**

- 1) Pick up on the farm - **29.3%**
- 2) Pick up at the farmer's booth at a farmer's market? – **32.9%**
- 3) Pick up at another site - **6.1%**
- 4) Home or workplace delivery - **31.7%**

**9) If there was a CSA operating in your area, how likely are you to join one in the future? (82)**

- 1) Very likely [go to q11] - **19.5%**
- 2) Likely [go to q11] – **8.5%**
- 3) Somewhat likely [go to q11] - **35.4%**
- 4) Not at all likely - **36.6%**

**10) What are the barriers to your interest in CSA membership? (30)**

- a) Inconvenience – **26.7%**
- b) I can't afford it – **13.3%**
- c) Too difficult to pay in full at beginning of season – **10%**
- d) I'm away too much of the summer – **13.3%**
- e) Lack of choice of contents of produce box - **10%**
- f) Inconvenience of picking up the weekly box – **13.3%**
- g) I don't eat many vegetables – **10%**
- h) I grow my own fresh vegetables – **56.7%**
- i) Other: - **40%** (grow own garden, own a farm, rather run to local farmer's market, just not interested)

**11) Many (but not all) CSA farms expect the members to share some of the risks of farming. This means that the member pays the share price up front and accepts that the season's harvests may not meet expectations due to weather, disease, pests or other problems. Does this aspect of the CSA model make you any less likely to join a CSA? (82)**

- 1) Yes, much less likely – **3.7%**
- 2) Yes, somewhat less likely - **26.8%**
- 3) No – **54.9%**
- 4) Not sure – **14.6%**

**Background Information. The final set of questions are general background questions about you and your household.**

**12) Do you grow your own vegetable garden? (82)**

- 1) Yes - **58.5%**
- 2) No – **41.5%**

**13) Did you grow up on a farm or with a family vegetable garden? (82)**

- 1) Yes – **80.5%**
- 2) No- **19.5%**

**14 -1) How many people (not including you) reside in your household? (82)**

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 0 – <b>14.6%</b> | 4 – <b>11.0%</b> |
| 1 – <b>45.1%</b> | 5 – <b>6.1%</b>  |
| 2 – <b>13.4%</b> | 6 – <b>2.4%</b>  |
| 3 – <b>6.1%</b>  | 8 – <b>2.4%</b>  |

**14-2) Are you a vegetarian? (82)**

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Yes - <b>2.4%</b> | No - <b>97.6%</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------|

**14-3) How many people (not including you) in your household are vegetarian? (70)**

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 0 – <b>97.1%</b> | 1 – <b>2.9%</b> |
|------------------|-----------------|

**15) What is the highest level of education you have completed? (82)**

- 1) Less than high school diploma – **2.4%**
- 2) Completed high school – **35.4%**
- 3) Some college or technical school – **29.3%**
- 4) Undergraduate degree – **17.1%**
- 5) Graduate/Professional degree – **13.4%**
- 0) No Response - **2.4%**

**16) What is your gross household income? (82)**

- 1) Under \$25,000 – **19.5%**
- 2) \$25,000 - \$49,000 – **22.0%**
- 3) \$50,000 - \$74,000 – **22.0%**
- 4) \$75,000 - \$99,000 – **3.7%**
- 5) \$100,000 - \$124,500 – **7.3%**
- 6) \$125,000 – **2.4%**
- 0) No Response - **23.2%**

**17) What age group are you in? (82)**

- 1) less than 18 – **0%**
- 2) 19- 29 - **6.1%**
- 3) 30-39 – **7.3%**
- 4) 40-49 – **18.3%**
- 5) 50-59 – **26.8%**
- 6) 60 and above - **37.8%**
- 0) No Response – **3.7%**

**What is your gender? (82)**

- 1) Male - **25.6%**
- 2) Female – **72.0%**
- 0) No Response – **2.4%**

**Are you interested in getting more information regarding CSAs?**

- 1) Yes - **42%**
- 2) No – **58%**

**Final comments: Would you like to share any other comments?**

- Lack of a regular schedule makes it difficult to belong to a CSA, however, I do buy from local co-op.
- Hope CSAs are successful. I'd like to see it happen
- I think it's a good idea. Some of the ideas of it go along with why I'm a co-op member. A community working together and a share in it. Especially if it worked something like the co op.
- I think it is great idea.
- I think it is a great program
- I think it is a terrific idea.
- I think this is a great program. It would benefit to get more information out to other people that could benefit from the program. Suggests that information be put at the social services office to increase awareness.
- I think this would be great. We're members of the co-op and try to go there often.
- I am glad you are doing this - completing the survey and supporting local people. When I am unable to have my own garden I would be interested in joining a CSA.
- It's going to be a good thing, but it's got to go more towards the farmers and the businessman, which isn't the reality at present.
- It is a nice program.
- It's a good idea and there would be a lot of people interested in the CSA program, I'm just not one of them.
- It's a great idea to bring back the small farm idea and would support the idea of a CSA, but has own garden and would have no use for a CSA membership.
- It is a great idea and would be very beneficial to the community. Has own garden and so does son so would not need to join a CSA, but is very attracted to the concept.
- Anything improving the environment is great.



**Appendix C:**  
**Interview Guide for CSA Farmers**

General farm and CSA

Tell me about the history of your farm.

What do you enjoy the most about farming? Dislike the most?

Why did you establish a CSA (prompts: motivations, social and environmental concerns, economic gain, quality of life, marketing...)?

CSA operations

How long have you operated a CSA?

What do you produce for your CSA customers?

Number of CSA members in 2005? 2006?

What percentage of members renew from year to year?

How do you recruit members (prompts: advertising, word-of-mouth, media exposure, non-profits)?

How did you get the product to your customers?

What do you provide to you members besides food products (prompts: tours, working opportunities, newsletters, gardening advice, recipes...)?

Do you cooperate with other farms to provide members with food or other products? If yes, explain the arrangements.

How do you handle significant crop failure?

From a farm management perspective, what do you most like or enjoy about a CSA?

What aspects of CSA operations are most difficult to manage?

Will you offer a CSA next year? If no, why not?

Farm/CSA Economics

What share options and prices did you offer this past season?

What type of payment options do you offer (prompts: payment plans, lower income rates...)?

In your experience, how many full-share memberships are necessary to make a CSA profitable?

What is the ideal number of full-share memberships you would like to have?

Total annual farm sales? Average over last three years?

What percentage of your sales come from your CSA?

Is your overall farm operation profitable, i.e, revenues cover costs?

Is your CSA operation profitable, i.e., revenues cover costs?

Does anyone in your household work off the farm?

What percentage of your HH income comes from farming?

In general, does CSA help you make a living as a farmer?

What has been successful about your CSA and what has not?

Support and CSA Development

What can Garden Share or other groups do to help support your CSA and enhance your success?

Would you like to see more farms in this area operating CSAs? What can Garden Share and other groups do to encourage the establishment of new CSAs?