

Community Supported Ag Getting the Right Fit

Bob Muth

Muth Family Farm



CSA

- Community Supported Agriculture
- Alternative Form of Marketing
- Sell a Share of the Upcoming Harvest



Marketing

- Most farms use CSA in their marketing mix
- Use **CSA** and **farmers markets** and **restaurant sales** and **wholesale**



CSA's Have:

- A great deal of flexibility
- You decide what will work with:
 - your farm
 - your management ability
 - your labor
 - your consumer base



Be Realistic

- Approach it with **good business sense**
- Failure rates are **very high**



CSA Can Fail For Many Reasons

- Need to know how to farm
- Not recommended for novices
- Unable to maintain a customer base
- Implement practices that lower turnover



Harvest Season

- Short or Long
- In NJ runs from 8-26 weeks
- Survey customer base to determine length



Distribution

- Pick up on the farm
 - Or
- Deliver to a drop point
 - Or
- Do Both



Share Size

- One size for all
- Or
- Multiple Share Size



Individual Shares

- Pre-box those shares
- Or
- Allow members to fill their own

Basic Characteristics of Successful CSA's

- Grow a wide variety of crops



Muth Family Farm Crop List

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amaranth (Vegetable) • Artichokes • Arugula • Beets - Red and Chiogga • Bok choy: Standard, Baby, Red leaf • Broccoli • Broccoli rabe • Brussels Sprouts • Cabbages: green, red, Savoy • Carrots • Cauliflower: white, orange, purple • Collards • Corn • Cucumbers: slicers and pickles • Endive • Eggplant 4 varieties • Escarole • Fennel • Green Beans • Herbs: Parsley, Basil, Dill, Cilantro, Thyme, Summer Savory, Tarragon, Oregano, Mint, Sage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kale: Dinosaur, Red Russian, Green • Kohlrabi • Leeks • Lettuce: Assorted baby leaf, butter crunch, red leaf • Melons: Cantaloupe, Canary, Galia, Crenshaw • Parsnips • Peppers (sweet bell): green, red, yellow, purple, orange, bluish • Peppers (hot): Jalapenos, Cherry Bombs, Chile, Cayenne, Krimson Lee • Purslane • Peppers (Fryer): Green and Red • Radishes: Red and Easter egg • Scallions: Red and Green • Spinach • Squash: Yellow, Zucchini, Pattypan • Squash Blossoms • Swiss Chard: Bright Lights and Red • Tomatillos • Tomatoes - Red, Yellow, Heirloom, Plum, Red Cherry, Sungold Cherry, Yellow Pear, Red Grape • Turnips • Watermelons: Yellow Doll, Red Seedless • Winter Squash: Butternut, Acorn, Delicata, Spaghetti, Kabocha |
|--|---|

Plant in Succession!!!!

Grow Organically



Above Average Grower

- Need to grow consistent high quality
- If you fail to deliver on your end expect high turnover of members
- CSA is not a grower subsidy

Design Plantings for Labor Efficiency

Publish a Farm Newsletter



Provide Weekly Recipes



Offer Convenient Pick Up Days and Times

- Tuesday: 11am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-2pm, 4-5pm, 5-6pm, 6-7pm
- Wednesday: 11am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-2pm, 4-5pm, 5-6pm
- Friday: 11am-12pm, 12-1pm, 1-2pm, 4-5pm, 5-6pm
- Saturday: 1-4pm



Try to Get
Shareholders Involved

- Assist with
preparation, set up
and clean up

Offer Opportunity
for Education and
Socialization

Any
Questions?