

Tollgate Farm and Education Center

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MSUE.TollgateCSA@campusad.msu.edu

2021 CSA Registration

To reserve your share, please purchase a share on our Online Farm Store at https://commerce.cashnet.com/msu_3568 or pay via a check payable to *Michigan State University*. Mail to ATTN: CSA 28115 Meadowbrook Rd. Novi, MI 48377

Full shares are \$700 for 20 weeks of produce. Half shares will be \$375 for 20 weeks. CSA shares are available on a first come, first serve basis. Please contact the CSA coordinator if you need to pay in installments.

Member Agreement: As a partner in small-scale sustainable agriculture, I agree to become a member of the Tollgate Farm and Education Center CSA for the 2021 growing season. By investing in this CSA, I agree to share both the risk and the reward inherent to agriculture, and will accept the outcomes of the 2021 growing season, recognizing that the Tollgate CSA farmers will do their best to ensure a bountiful harvest. I agree to pick up my produce on the date and time specified or help the farm to make arrangements otherwise.

2021 CSA Information

Please read through all of the provided material. Purchasing a share indicates your agreement and understanding of the contract below!

Key Details

Shares can be picked up curbside and as contactless as possible in front of the pavilion on the farm from **4:00-6:30pm on Wednesdays**. The **first planned distribution for the year is May 26th** and the **last planned distribution is October 6th**, for a total length of 20 weeks. Newsletters are sent out on Monday, detailing the planned makeup of the share. Please notify us in advance if you will miss a pick-up week so that we may make alternative arrangements. You are welcome to have someone else pick-up your share for you, however we are unable to hold shares over for the next week or 'double-up' a share. **We will not be able to hold onto shares that are not picked up by the end of distribution and have not had alternate arrangements made.** For members who regularly use cooler pickup but did not purchase that option, we may ask you to please pay for that option.

Cooler Pickup: You can opt to pick up your share in the cooler every week at your convenience! **Cooler shares are available to half and full share members for an additional \$40. Shares will be available for pickup starting at 6:30pm on Wednesday until 8pm on Sunday.** Shares will be removed from the cooler on Monday, so please do not wait to pick up. If you opt for cooler pickup, we will not be able to entertain requests for certain varieties- it will be even more of an adventure for you!

Due to COVID-19 we will be hosting curbside distributions outside the pavilion for the foreseeable future. Members will remain in their cars and all shares will be prepacked for a quick and minimal contact pickup. The CSA Team will be wearing masks when packing and distributing shares and will sanitize frequently. Members are encouraged to wear masks during any interactions with the CSA Team.

What is a CSA?

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture, a system where members purchase a subscription, or share, of the farm's bounty at the beginning of the season. CSA members share both the risk and the reward of the growing season by investing in their farm. This arrangement is mutually beneficial for the farmer and CSA member by providing the farmer with necessary capital for seeds and supplies to ensure a successful growing season, and by providing the CSA member with an abundant supply of fresh local vegetables and fruits. CSA members may also have the opportunity to participate in CSA member-only events such as tours, potlucks and other educational (and fun!) events. Every CSA season is a different adventure for both the farmer and the member, with different crops, new varieties and lots of shared experiences!

Part of this connection to the farm through your CSA subscription includes recognizing the inherent risks of agriculture due to unpredictable weather or other environmental circumstances. Our farmers are dedicated to producing an abundance of healthy and nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables using growing techniques that minimize risk and maximize production, but as a member you are agreeing to accept the consequences of crop loss or damage due to environmental conditions, learning opportunities or other unforeseen factors.

Emphasis on Education

As part of MSU Extension, Tollgate Farm and Education Center is dedicated to education. While we certainly enjoy raising vegetables, the CSA is the platform for educational programming and not a commercial enterprise for creating profit. While many different programs make use of the CSA fields, the central program is our **Apprentice Training Program**, which focuses on giving new farmers hands-on experience while making a living wage. We also host a number of volunteers, classes, field trips and conferences that utilize the fields as a learning environment. **Please be patient as our various students learn how to grow, harvest and process vegetables for your enjoyment!**

What's in a Share?

Each full share is designed to provide a week's worth of vegetables for a family of four to five, or two serious veggie lovers, while a half share is better suited to two people and a young child, or a single serious veggie lover. There will be fewer items during the first part of summer and more items towards the end of the growing season. We grow over 40 different crops and 100 varieties, meaning each share will be diverse and delicious!

Half shares are simply full shares, cut in half in terms of quantity. For example, instead of receiving half a pound of salad mix and 4 leeks, a half share will receive a quarter pound of salad mix and 2 leeks that week (among other items!). For items that are difficult to divide in half, half-share members may only receive them every-other week. While we do our best to make sure that half shares are precisely that, due to the odd quantities that can arise from growing dynamic and hard to predict natural organisms, sometimes we have to mix and match, **but we always make sure that over the course of the season the shares receive equal relative value.**

Emphasis on Health

CSA members enjoy the added satisfaction of a deeper connection to the land that sustains them by supporting local agriculture with their purchasing power. Our CSA farmers have a background in organic agriculture, and while we are not certified organic, we farm using organic principles and practices with an emphasis on soil health. We believe that healthy soil leads to healthy plants and healthy people. **A note:** Due to some outrageous thistle populations that have eluded all of our best organic efforts, we have used small amounts of herbicide to target those populations. The herbicide never came into contact with crop plants or the produce. If you would like to know more about why and how, please use the contact information below.

Aggregated CSA Model

We are working with The Farm at St. Joes in Ann Arbor and Jae Gerhart of MSU Extension to bring you local, organically grown produce from other farmers in addition to our own. Why are we aggregating? Working with other farms allows us to reduce the number of crops we grow, which lets us do more of the crops that we do best, while letting other farms grow crops they do well. It also helps us keep a diverse and interesting share for you when some of our crops don't do well, and allows us to bring in certain crops that we don't grow. **All farms we work with are certified organic or grow using organic methods.** We are familiar with the operations that we will be aggregating from and vouch for their quality and growing methods. It also spreads the love and allows you to support not just MSU Tollgate but a vibrant local food system! **The majority of the produce will still be coming from the Tollgate operation.** We will identify in the newsletter where your produce is coming from.

We deeply appreciate the support our CSA members give us! They are valued members of our community who are supporting that community in significant and important ways. We would love it if you joined us on next year's adventure!

For more information please e-mail at MSUE.TollgateCSA@campusad.msu.edu or (248) 347-0269 x208