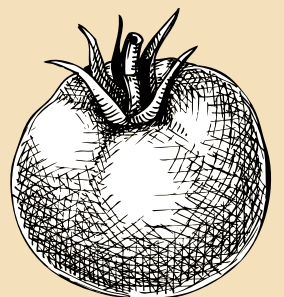




2024 CSA Member Handbook





2022 Farm Crew

Welcome to our farm family! We're super excited to offer you our CSA share program this year and we're so grateful that you've decided to partner with us. As we endeavor in the next leg of our farming journey, we look forward to the opportunity to feed you and your family this summer! We will also be teaching you all about garden fresh organic veggies, eating with the seasons, and all sorts of ways of preparing and preserving the bounty this land has blessed our kitchens with. Our hope is that you gain a wealth of knowledge; enjoy nutritionally dense, certified organically grown, fresh veggies & herbs; all the while gaining a new appreciation and connection to the land and community from which we're all a part of.

This is our CSA Handbook. We created it as a kind of "user manual" to help you understand how our CSA runs. Please read this document to understand the Community Guidelines we abide by to keep this operation running smoothly!

-Brittany & Ansel

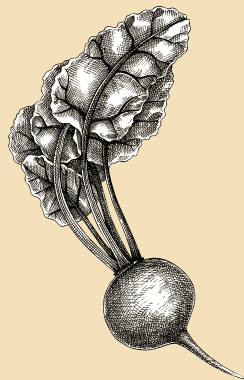


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BECOMING A MEMBER OF PATRIOT FARMS CSA

Thank you all so much for becoming a part of our CSA for the 2024 season and sharing in our farm journey. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a beautiful partnership in which members pledge to help cover the anticipated costs of the farm's production for a growing season, and in return receive a portion of the farm's crops over the period of time specified in the agreement. Rather than simply purchasing food at a store or market, as a member of Patriot Farms, you receive so many benefits!

- a portion (or a "share") of the farm's harvest
- the chance to invest in your local agricultural economy
- the knowledge of how and where your food is grown
- a strong relationship with your farmers
- a chance to connect and learn from other CSA members
- lots of education on how to eat with the seasons and enjoy our produce
- the opportunity to come visit our farm and connect with the land

Thank you for the effort to commit to this relationship with us. We're tremendously grateful to be a part of your family's summer. Our CSA runs for 15 weeks from June through the first week in September. Members are responsible for showing up at their pick-up site on Saturdays and Sundays each week to pick up their share of freshly harvested produce.



OUR GROWING PRACTICES

We are Patriot Farms, a small-scale market garden based in Lenhartsville, Berks County, Pennsylvania. We grow and raise everything beyond organic standards, utilizing permaculture inspired methods and focusing on building a healthy living soil structure through regenerative and sustainable methods.

At Patriot Farms, we see ourselves first and foremost as stewards of the soil. As such we're intentional about practicing farming methods that increase organic matter and beneficial microbials that create a healthy living soil.

You'll find us utilizing crop rotations, cover crops, minimal tillage, and deep mulch composting. We buy in local mushroom compost from Hawk Valley Farms, which is organic approved by PCO (Pennsylvania Certified Organic), to amend our soil naturally and increase our organic matter. We layer the compost 4 to 6 inches thick on top of the bed and plant directly into this mulch layer. This in turn not only boosts the fertility of the plants, but also acts as a natural weed blocking mulch, in turn eliminating most of our weed pressure. We also attract beneficial insects and pollinators through the use of pollinator plant strips throughout our fields.



Smile for the camera, Farmer Brittany!

ARE WE ORGANIC?

Our farm has been USDA certified organic since 2021. Our organic veggies & herbs are grown without the use of synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers. Organic standards strictly prohibit the use of GMOs. We employ extensive buffer zones between our growing fields and the neighboring conventional farms, as well as communicate with neighboring farmers to eliminate any potential for non-organic contamination. We believe that when we grow a healthy living soil, we're able to grow healthy plants with greater disease resistance and higher nutritional value for our consumers.

If you have any questions about how we grow our food, we invite you to contact us. We're happy to give you a tour and talk transparently about how we grow your food.

DO WE EVER BUY IN PRODUCTS FROM OTHER FARMS?

We will NOT “buy-in” products from other farms on a regular basis, however we reserve the option, in case of severe crop failure, to “buy-in” produce from other local certified organic farms. If this happens, we will communicate with you as thoroughly as possible. This option will only be used as an absolute last resort. Thank you for understanding the risks of farming.

UNDERSTANDING THE RISK OF CSA

As a member, you share in the abundance of our harvest, as well as in the risks that come with farming. We cannot stress this part enough! Although we have learned how to avoid or manage around most problems, it's likely that EVERY year, Mother Nature will throw us a curve-ball, and we may lose a crop to drought, flooding, disease, bugs, hail, or the little Gnome people. This may mean that you will not receive that particular affected crop for that season.

If this occurs, we'll do our best to make up for the value of the share by substituting something else in its place or buying in a produce from one of our organic partners. Another option is to make up the value of your share on the back end of the season as we attempt to quickly plant “quick-turn” crops to recoup our losses. We'll communicate regularly to keep you informed of our Plan B, and we ask that you be patient with us as we do our best to mitigate the consequences.

WHEN DO WE START?

We plan to start in June of 2024. First pick-up dates are: **Farm Store: June 1st 9am-10am, and Emmaus Farmers' Market: June 2nd 10am-1pm.** You will receive a weekly box from us for 15 weeks consecutively thereafter. **There MAY be one week that we'll "pause" box delivery so that we can go away on vacation. Box delivery will simply continue the week after we return until we have provided 15 weeks. If we choose to exercise this option, we will let you know 2 weeks in advance.**

SHARE SIZES

We offer two different share sizes:

Full Share, which is 7-11 items per share. This ideal for two or more people (or one person if you LOVE veggies!)

\$525.00 (note that there is an additional 3.5% service charge on all credit card purchases).

OR

Partial Share, which is 5-8 items per share. This is ideal for a single person.

\$375.00 (note that there is an additional 3.5% service charge on all credit card purchases).

ADD-ONS

Add a 1/2lb of mushrooms to your share each week from our neighbors at Primordia Farm.

Different types of mushrooms include: Portobello, enoki, oyster, lion's mane, shiitake, cremini, trumpet, piopinos, and more. \$9.00/ week (\$135.00/15 weeks)

15 weeks. \$135.00

ONLY AVAILABLE AT THE FARM STAND PICK-UP LOCATION



A nice array of summer veggies

WHAT'S IN YOUR BOX?

In order to provide you with weekly quality produce, while still maintaining seasonality & diversity, our shares are based heavily on staple crops such as leafy greens (salad mixes, microgreens, & cooking greens) and root crops (carrots, beets, radishes, etc.). Throughout our 15-week CSA we do our best to add variety to each box as different veggies become available with the changing seasons. We continue to try and expand our operation to include more annual crops that do well in eastern Pennsylvania.

We spend a lot of time before the planting season even begins mapping out your box content plan for each of the 15 weeks. Our goal is to provide you with 7-11 items a week in your Full Share, or 5-8 items in your Partial Share, however, during the first 4 weeks of the CSA, due to the start of the season, expect about 6-8 items per full share, or 5-6 items for the partial share. Patriot Farms is a “traditional” CSA, meaning, your farmers decide what goes in your share (not the member). Notice that items switch from week to week based on what’s in season. The items we choose are a mix of predominantly “popular” staples, but we also try to include one unusual variety to push you to try new things. Keep in mind that weather, pests, and other events will affect actual production. We cannot guarantee the quality or quantity of any particular item.

The early CSA boxes will not be quite as bountiful. In fact, you might look inside, calculate the math, and think, “This isn’t the \$\$ value I should be getting per week.” This is how it is every year in the early weeks, and there’s a good reason for it: There just aren’t as many veggies that will grow in the early months of the season. We do our best to provide as much variety as we can in the early weeks. However, I assure you, the back end value of the season more than makes up for the smaller volume boxes early on.



Here's a list of the vegetables & herbs we plan to grow in 2024.

Also, be sure to check out our A to Z Vegetable storage guide (available in the CSA Member Hub on our website) for tips on how to properly store your produce.

SALAD GREENS

Arugula
Baby Kale Mix
Lettuce Mix
Mesclun Mix
Spinach

SEASONAL VEGGIES

Cucumbers
String Beans
Eggplant
Peppers (Sweet & Hot)
Summer Squash
Tomatoes

ROOT CROPS

Beets
Carrots
Leeks(Storage)
Onions (Fresh & Storage)
Potatoes (New & Storage)
Radishes

MICRO-GREENS & SHOOTS

Pea Shoots
Radish Micro-greens
Broccoli Micro-greens

SPECIALTY CROPS

Bok Choy\Pak Choi
Celery
Fennel
Ginger
Peas
Winter Squash

Scallions(Green Onions)

Turnips

BRAISING GREENS

Collards
Kale (Dino & Curly)
Rainbow Swiss Chard

HERBS

Basil
Cilantro
Dill
Parsley



OUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Record our cell phone numbers now in case you need to text us at the drop-off site to let us know you are not going to make it.

Brittany's (Owner) Cell Phone: 732-759-5251

Ansel's (Owner) Cell Phone: 484-542-4553

OUR PICK-UP SITES

You will be able to choose from 2 pick-up locations. Once you choose your site, we ask you not to switch it from week to week. You are allowed ONE pick-up switch per season. Our pick-up locations are at Patriot Farms' Farm Store, Berks Co, and at the Emmaus Farmers' Market in Lehigh Co. If you need to change it prior to season start, you may do so by emailing PatriotFarmsOnline@gmail.com

Patriot Farms' Farm Store: Saturday, 9:00-10:00 AM Our farm is located at 130 Mountain Rd, Lenhartsville, PA 19534. Please park completely off the road as near to the farm stand as possible. If there is no parking available near the farm stand, additional parking is available at the top of our driveway by our house and horse barn. We will be distributing CSA shares from our market van next to the farm stand. This is a "market style" CSA Pick-Up, the shares will be the same as the prepacked boxes, with the exception that you'll have pick of choice for each variety of vegetable you take home. Please bring your own bags or containers over to our van, and provide us with your name. We will gladly help load your bag.

The Emmaus Farmers Market, Emmaus, Lehigh County: Sundays, 10am-1pm. This is a prepackaged CSA Share. We will be distributing boxes from our market van, so please stand on line where you see the "CSA Pick-up" sign (don't stand on our regular market line unless you'd like to buy more additional veggies). Please bring your own bags or containers over to our van and provide us with your name. We will help load your bags from our share totes which will stay with us each week.

CAN I SWITCH MY PICK UP SITE?

With 50 members in our CSA, it would be very difficult for us to manage pick-up site change requests on a regular basis. However, we know that life can throw you a curve ball so we try to be a little flexible. If you need to make a one-time adjustment due to vacation or a work difficulty, please let us know 7 days before your desired change so we can make adjustments to our packing numbers. To do so, you must email us at PatriotFarmsOnline@gmail.com or text Brittany at 732-759-5251. Our administrative system is not able to handle repetitive requests for pick-up site changes.

HOW TO PICK UP YOUR SHARE

When you arrive at your site,

1. Check in with the staff member at the check-in table. They will be holding a clipboard. Give them your customer name. The staff person will help load your bags from our share totes which will stay with us each week. (Farm Store pick-up, customers will load your bags from the "market style" tables).
2. Visit the swap box table. If there's something you don't want from your main box, simply place it in the SWAP box and take something else out that looks good to you. Please be mindful of others behind you.
3. When you get home, unpack your share ASAP and get product into proper storage to promote shelf life!

CAN I SEND SOMEONE IN MY PLACE TO PICK UP?

Yes! If you cannot pick up your share yourself, simply send a substitute! All they have to do is give us your name. Tell them to bring some bags or boxes to transfer the produce into. Please inform them of all pick-up instructions. Provide them with our contact info, and if at all possible please let us know ahead of time whom we should expect to pick up your share.

WHAT HAPPENS ON PICK-UP DAY IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER?

We define "inclement weather" as severe thunderstorm, hail, tornado warning, scary lightning storms – anything that would prevent us from safely standing outside. If you're in your basement seeking shelter, then we're probably not passing out our shares. If it's dangerous to leave your house, do not leave to pick up your veggies!

Check your email or our Facebook group to find out what to do next. If we had to leave the site for safety reasons, then we will schedule a second drop off time the following day to redeliver the boxes.



Radish micros growing in our propagation house



WHAT IF I GO ON VACATION? WHAT HAPPENS TO MY BOX?

We do not hold your box for you or credit your account or double-up on boxes later. But you have three options:

1. Send a substitute in your place. Find a friend to take your share for you and either store it until you return OR eat it themselves! It's a great way to expose others to our CSA.
2. Let it flow to someone in need. If you do not show up in time, your box will automatically be donated to someone in need.
3. Switch your pick up site. ONE time each season, you are allowed to switch your pick-up site. So if your box can be picked up later in the week somewhere else (after you return), you may request a change in pick-up. Request must be via email or text at least 7 days in advance so we can make adjustments to our delivery.
4. Have us hold your box at the farm for 2 days. Only allowable TWICE per season. Call us to set up a pickup time within 2 days from your regularly scheduled pickup. Request must be via email or text at least 2 days in advance so we can make adjustments to our delivery.

MISSED BOXES

I was late to my pick-up site and I missed my box. Can I get it later?

If you do not arrive to pick up your share and you do not notify us in time, your box will be donated to someone in need. But there is still a chance you can redeem a share. Here's what to do:

CALL US on our cell phone. If we hear from you before we donate the boxes, we can save it, bring it back to the farm for up to 2 days, and you can come pick it up at the farm at a scheduled time. We always bring back a couple of extra boxes just in case – so call us to see. If there is a pick-up site later that week, we can throw it on our truck and you can grab it from that other pick-up site. Please note: if all the boxes are gone, we will not be able to pack you a new share. Each packed box represents a cost to us in product and labor, so we cannot make a practice of duplicating boxes of product for missed pick-ups.

COMMUNICATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you need to reach us, please email us at PatriotFarmsOnline@gmail.com. If you need to let us know that you are missing your box or are late, please try using our cell phones.

Brittany's (Owner) Cell Phone: 732-759-5251

Ansel's (Owner) Cell Phone: 484-542-4553

HOW WILL I KNOW WHAT'S IN MY BOX EACH WEEK?

Each week, we'll email you the contents of your box for that week. We'll also post it inside our Facebook group. This list is usually about 75% accurate, but there are sometimes changes, since Mother Nature is fickle and we may not always have exactly enough of the same crop for everyone. This causes us to sometimes make adjustments based on site. We do our best to keep things fair and give you a premium item later to make up for it.



HOW WE STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOU:

Via EMAIL: We do all our primary communication via email – usually on Fridays. If you do not check email, we fear you will be “out of the loop,” and may not have as positive a CSA experience. Please be sure to “whitelist” our emails so we don’t end up in your SPAM folder. (For Gmail, drag one of our emails into your primary tab. For other email providers, just add our address to your address book).

Via Facebook Private Member Group: We provide weekly veggie content in our private Facebook group which is for members only. A lot of group interaction occurs here between members as they share advice and tips for making the most of your box. Request free access at www.facebook.com/groups/patriotfarmscsa/

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Facebook: Follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/patriotfarmsllc>

Private Facebook page: For CSA members only. Request access at www.facebook.com/groups/patriotfarmscsa/

Instagram: @PatriotFarmsPA

WHAT IS THE CSA MEMBER HUB? (Bookmark it)

We've created a page on our website that serves as a kind of "hub" or membership portal to help you access all the important links. The password for the CSA Hub will be emailed to you, after you sign up for the CSA.

Find it at <https://www.patriotfarmspa.com/csa-member-hub>. Here you'll see links to our various resources like:

- The link to our PDF, Tips and Tricks for CSA Success
- The link to our PDF, A to Z Vegetable Storage Guide
- Past & Present CSA Newsletters
- The link to our private Facebook Group



Farmer Sam hiding behind some bunches of kale





Spring enjoying a chamomile patch

PAYMENT POLICIES

How do I pay for my CSA share?

We ask you to pay a non-refundable 50% deposit within two weeks of signing up. The remaining balance must be sent to us before May 25th. You may send both checks together, post-dating the final payment for when you would like us to cash it. You may also pay via cash.

Where to Send Your CSA Balance Payment

Full payment is due by May 25th. Mail your check (payable to Patriot Farms, LLC) to:

Patriot Farms, LLC

ATTN: CSA Membership

162 Mountain Road, Lenhartsville, PA 19534

Do you take credit card payments?

Yes, we accept credit card payments, but there is an additional 3.5% service charge on all purchases. You will have to set up a time with Brittany to pay either at the farm, or at the Emmaus Farmers' Market.

What happens if I don't pay my membership fee on time?

Membership fees must be paid by May 25th. No shares will be distributed until full payment is received. If payment has not been made in full by June 15th, we will consider this agreement null and void, your membership will be cancelled, and your deposit will be forfeited. To retain your membership in good standing, the full season must be paid for, even if paid late.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

If you purchase a subscription and wish to cancel, you may do so until April 30, 2024. We will send you a refund minus the initial 50% deposit. For the 2024 CSA season we will not be able to offer any refunds after April 30, 2024. However, if you still wish to cancel, membership can be transferred to someone else. If you already have someone in mind, contact us to work out payment. We are still a start-up CSA and offering a refund after April 30th would not be economically feasible. Thank you for your understanding and supporting local farmers!



EDUCATION/ COOKING TIPS

How do I know what to do with the veggies you give me?

Each week in our private Facebook page, we'll be sharing some recipes that feature produce from that week's box, and we also have our A to Z Storage Guide that will help with figuring out how to store each item properly. Also, be sure to check out our Tips & Trips for CSA Success for more information.

Storing Your Produce

Keeping your vegetables fresh for an entire week takes effort. Part of that is our responsibility. We are very careful about when we harvest your produce, to ensure that we pick it at its peak of ripeness, in ideal harvesting weather conditions to keep it lasting as long as possible. After you receive your share each week it is your responsibility as well.

If you want to extend the life of your produce, it is imperative that you get your vegetables into a cool location ASAP. Leaving your box in your hot car is a very bad idea, and your produce will spoil very fast.

Here are some suggestions for how to protect the life of your produce from the Pick-Up site to your kitchen.

1. We encourage you to bring a cooler or insulated bag with ice packs to pick up your produce. You can then transfer your items into your bag and get them home in a cool container. This will extend the life of your produce. We will be selling bags with our logo on them.
2. Cut the tops off your carrots and beets right away when you get home, or you'll get floppy carrots.
3. Wash what you need, and store your greens right away.
4. You can download our A to Z Vegetable Storage Guide which spells out exactly where everything should be stored. It also includes a picture of every item we might grow on our farm. Use this to help you identify and master each vegetable.



Tomatoes in progress

ON-FARM EVENTS OR VISITS

Can I come out to help you on the farm sometime?

Volunteering is not required as part of your CSA membership.

We offer our customers the opportunity to come to our farm and help with various farm work from time to time. Give us a call or email Brittany (PatriotFarmsOnline@gmail.com) to setup a time for you to volunteer. We ask any volunteers to sign a liability waiver when you volunteer. Remember, volunteering is completely optional, but we greatly welcome your help! It makes the time go so much faster, and it gives you a chance to see how our operation works and develop a sense of family with our farm.

Do you offer farm events?

Yes! We have a variety of free events. You can access the most recent list on our Website & Facebook.

We will promote these events in our newsletters a few weeks in advance. These events vary from year to year. RSVP for these events by emailing Brittany at PatriotFarmsOnline@gmail.com.

