



Easy Pickin's Orchard

"Farm Fun for the Whole Family"

CSA Program A Review of Our 2014 Season

2014: our 5th year of CSA. Our 20-week season runs from mid-June, when we first have enough different vegetables plus berries to make up a share with good variety & quantity, through late October. This year we had over 70 full shares & almost 70 half-shares; once again, full shares included families splitting a share across 2 generations, and groups of friends & neighbors "sharing-a-share" -- both great ideas.

This year we also had a "satellite" drop-off at the University of Hartford, for faculty & staff members there. We had great help from UHa staff coordinating the pick-up at their end! It was worth our while to provide delivery, to make it convenient for a good number of folks to have access to our CSA program. We'll be repeating the UHa arrangement again this year, and we're open to pursuing other such "collective" partnerships with workplaces, organizations, faith communities, etc...

As always, each week's share included several varieties of seasonal vegetables, fruit, & occasionally herbs. For a few glorious weeks in early fall, we were able to include apples, Asian pears *&* raspberries in each week's share.

Each week we try to offer a "menu-convenient" mix of items: vegetables that go well together in recipes or complement each other in a meal. A weekly e-mail describes the share contents, to allow for menu planning & grocery shopping; we add hints on cooking & storage, and sometimes recipes -- which often come from our CSA members!

The weekly shares reflect whatever is abundant in a given season; we're also learning that some veggies we thought folks might need a bit of encouragement to try actually have a strong fan base (beets!).

We also offered "a la carte" add-ons to our CSA shares -- and this has become a very popular option. When any of our veggies or fruit were plentiful, *and* folks might want more than was included a given week (e.g., strawberries, plums, broccoli, squashes), they could order extra amounts and pay for / pick these up with their weekly share.