



Mercy Regional Medical Center  
Centura Health.



## Roots of Health

### Employee Produce Share FAQs



#### What's a CSA?

“CSA” stands for Community Supported Agriculture. While there are plenty of ways to support community-based agriculture like shopping at farmers markets, farm stands, and more, CSAs are a weekly (or bi-weekly) box or bag of local, in-season produce packed fresh from the farm just for you. They are a quick and convenient way to get a variety of the freshest produce around while directly supporting local farmers. CSAs also provide farmers with a guarantee that regardless of how their harvests play out, their operations will be supported, and allow them to afford the many up-front costs of farming.



#### What are the benefits of being a CSA member?

CSAs boast tons of benefits. They're full of healthy food options that can improve and support overall health. The produce is locally grown using sustainable growing practices that support the environment and your body. It also means that the produce is fresher with fewer miles from the farm to your table (yay for clean air!), and it passes through fewer hands than store-bought options. CSAs are also convenient! When you have a bag of produce ready for you each week, you can spend less time in the grocery store, and more time chowing down on fresh seasonal veggies! CSAs also introduce variety in your diet and are a great way to explore new foods and recipes. Being a CSA member is like being a good neighbor—your share directly supports your local farmer. It's fast, fresh, and good for you *and* your local farmers. We could go on, but you get the point!



#### When and where do I pick up my share?

You will pick up your share on the day assigned to you in your Welcome Letter at the RV Parking Lot across the Main Hospital Entrance, near the Hospice House. Refer to the map in your Welcome Letter for more clarity.



#### How much food will I get in my share every week?

Share sizes will support two veggie-hungry folks or a household size of four with more average vegetable appetites.



#### How long will the vegetables last?

Every vegetable is different, but when you properly store your CSA produce, it should last you for quite some time! The veggies in your CSA were grown locally, which means they were picked more recently and traveled a shorter distance than your grocery-store options. Since they require less time and handling for transportation, you'll find your CSA veggies to be as fresh as can be.



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### **What if I am unable to pick up my share on my designated week day?**

Pickup days are firm and your purchase commitment is season-long regardless of whether your share is picked up. Similar to a traditional CSA, we ask that you pick up on the same day every week to help limit the overhead costs in our distribution process. This also help us continue to offer shares at a subsidized rate and ensure that you receive your share at peak freshness. If you're unable to pick up on your scheduled day due to vacation, sick leave, temporary schedule change etc., you may designate an alternate person to pick up in your place or your share that week will be automatically routed to a local food pantry if unclaimed by the end of the day.



### **Can I cancel my share if I need to?**

Major life changes happen. If you need to cancel your share, please contact us at [MMCRoots@centura.org](mailto:MMCRoots@centura.org) and we will do our best to find a workable solution for your situation. Our commitment to purchasing employee shares from farmers started in the Spring, so our solution will focus on keeping this farm fresh flowing to a table nearby.



### **Can someone enroll mid-season?**

Once again, life changes happen. If someone needs to cancel their share, we offer the remaining weeks of that share to wait-listed applicants in order of when each application was received. Please contact us at [MMCRoots@centura.org](mailto:MMCRoots@centura.org) if you would like to be added to the waitlist.



### **What will I find in my share?**

Whatever is fresh on the farm each week! You may tend to see more cooler-weather crops (leafy greens, root veggies, herbs, peas) in the early and later weeks, with more warm-season crops in the middle (tomatoes, peppers, squashes, green beans).



### **Where was this produce grown?**

Meet our 2022 season farmers: Old Fort Farm, Long Table Farm, and Beet Street Farm. See the attached "Farm Bios" to learn about your farmers!



### **Is the produce organic?**

This years' farms aren't USDA certified organic, but they do use regenerative/sustainable growing practices—which surprisingly not all organic growers do! Learn more about the farms participating this year visiting our SharePoint site. Many are surprised to learn both organic and conventional growing practices utilize pesticides and fertilizing agents. Certain types of both natural and synthetic agents can be associated with toxicity at high levels. Sometimes organic growers will use higher amounts than conventional growers typically use, and vice versa. Organic certifications are also surprisingly expensive and difficult to obtain/maintain, which can explain why fewer small independent farms may choose to certify—even when they often meet or exceed USDA organic certification standards in practice



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### **Hmmm... what do I do with *this* vegetable? What *is* this vegetable?**

We will send communications from each farm to you throughout the season that will guide you through your goodies. Additionally, we will provide weekly recipes featuring the seasonal produce that you might find in your shares- particularly those items which might be new and adventurous for you!



### **What do I do with vegetables I don't care for?**

Before you give up on something you haven't liked in the past, try a new cooking method! Check out our weekly newsletter ideas or search the endless recipes available elsewhere online. If it's still not for you but keeps turning up in your share, we will have a "swap box" on site where participants can exchange food items! You will also have the option to donate unwanted items at the share pickup site for us to distribute to a food bank or pantry to ensure no fresh goodness goes uneaten!



### **If I want/need to donate my share one week, what do I do?**

If your share is unclaimed by you or someone sent on your behalf by the end of your pickup day, we will automatically route your share to a local food pantry to ensure the produce makes it to a table nearby at while still at peak freshness!