



Community Supported Agriculture

What is a CSA?

A CSA – or Community Supported Agriculture – is a subscription-based farm share. Farms ask their members to subscribe and pay up front for a season of food from that farm. Often members pick up their shares weekly or maybe have them delivered.

Common Styles of CSA

- **Traditional:** Farmers only grow for the CSA members and share divided out.
- **Seasonal:** CSAs may be open only during a certain season, often summer. Winter CSAs are becoming more common due to greenhouses and other farming methods to lengthen seasons.
- **Multiple Farms:** More than one farm may partner to offer a wider variety of products.
- **Entire Meal:** A farm may offer foods from multiple food groups, including proteins and grains.
- **Set Dollar:** Pay a dollar amount and buy down to \$0 over the season.
- **Non-Food:** Subscriptions for non-food farm items, such as wildflowers may be available.

Ways to Use CSA Foods

- **Add to typical recipes:** Foods from a CSA share often include fruits and vegetables. Use them just like foods bought in a grocery store.
- **Use timely:** Learn which foods are likely to spoil first – such as strawberries and tomatoes – and which will last a while – such as potatoes and onions.
- **Store well:** Learn what foods store best at room temperature – such as potatoes and tomatoes – or in the refrigerator – such as strawberries.
- **Preserve extra:** The National Center for Home Food Preservation is a research-based source for home preserving information and recipes. Can, freeze, or dry extras from a CSA share before they spoil.
- **Try new foods and recipes:** Some CSAs grow unfamiliar foods. For example, maybe kohlrabi is unfamiliar. Your farmer may include recipes with CSA shares. Or check for recipes from your local Extension offices.



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Seasonal Availability

Foods available in a CSA share will vary by the farm and the season. Participating in a CSA is a great learning experience about how foods grow, how weather impacts crop success, and other ups and downs of growing produce on a farm.

Sautéed Kohlrabi with Bell Pepper

(Serves 4)

2 tsp vegetable oil
2 kohlrabies, peeled and diced
1 green bell pepper, diced
1/4 tsp ground turmeric
1/4 tsp mustard seeds*
1/4 tsp salt
1 Tbsp lemon juice

1. Add oil to a skillet over medium heat. Tilt skillet to coat with oil.
2. When skillet is warm, add kohlrabi, bell pepper, turmeric, mustard seeds, and salt. Stir to combine.
3. Cook, stirring continuously, for 3-5 minutes. Vegetables will be heated through, but still crisp.
4. Add lemon juice and stir to combine. Serve hot.

*Black mustard seeds were used in this recipe. Yellow mustard seeds can be use too or left out.

Recipe by Chandani Kothari, former SNAP-Ed Program Coordinator

Nutritional analysis per serving: 45 calories, 2.5g fat, 160mg sodium, 6g carbohydrate, 3g fiber, 1g protein



Resources

- [Community Supported Agriculture \(CSA\) Resource Guide for Farmers](#), NC State Extension, 2020
- [Community Supported Agriculture \(CSA\)](#), Penn State Extension, 2014
- [Community Supported Agriculture: New Models for Changing Markets](#), Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, 2017
- [CSA Models](#), CSA Solutions Hub, N/D
- [Food Preservation Resources](#), University of Illinois Extension
- [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#), University of Georgia Extension
- [Watch Your Garden Grow](#), University of Illinois Extension
- [What's Cooking? with Mary Liz](#), University of Illinois Extension, YouTube

Created by:

Caitlin Mellendorf, MS, RD
Serving DeWitt, Macon, and Piatt Counties
April 2021

When Should I Plant?

Central Illinois Planting Dates

Adjustments for northern and southern Illinois

For southern Illinois March-June plantings can be made approximately 2 weeks earlier and July-September plantings 2 weeks later than for central Illinois. For northern Illinois March-June plantings should be about 2 weeks later and July-September plantings about 2 weeks earlier than for central Illinois.

ILLINOIS EXTENSION
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Asparagus	Mar 15-Apr 15	New Zealand spinach	Apr 25-June 15
Bean, bush, lima	May 10-June 15	Okra	May 10-June 15
Bean, bush, snap	Apr 25-July 15	Onion, from seed	Mar 25-April 15
Beet	Apr 10-July 15	Onion, from plants or sets	Mar 25-May 1
Broccoli	Apr 10-May 1 July 1-15	Parsley	Apr 10-May 1
Cabbage	Apr 10-July 15	Peas	Apr 10-May 1
Carrot	Apr 10-July 15	Pepper	May 10-June 1
Cauliflower	July 10-20	Potato	Apr 1-15 June 1-10
Chard	Apr 10-June 1	Pumpkin	May 20-June 10
Corn, sweet	May 1-July 9	Radish, spring	Apr 5-June 1 Aug 20-30
Cucumber	May 10-June 15	Radish, winter	Aug 1-15
Eggplant	May 10-June 15	Rhubarb	Mar 25-May 15
Endive	Apr 1-May 1 July 1-Aug 15	Rutabaga	May 1-July 1
Garlic, from cloves	Mar 25-Apr 15	Spinach	Mar 25-Apr 15 Aug 15-30
Kale	Apr 1-30 July 1-Aug 1	Squash, summer	May 10-June 15
Kohlrabi	Mar 25-Apr 5 Aug 1-10	Squash, winter	May 20-June 1
Lettuce, leaf	Mar 25-May 15 Aug 15-Sept 15	Sweet Potato	May 10-June 1
Muskmelon	May 10-June 15	Tomato	May 10-June 1
Mustard	Apr 1-May 10 Aug 15-Sept 15	Turnips	Mar 25-Apr 15 Aug 1-15
		Watermelons	May 10-June 1