

# WELCOME GUIDE for CSA CUSTOMERS

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## Welcome to Bakers' Acres!

Are you ready for a journey through the seasons unique to a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) customer? Box after box, we are excited to share the flavors, aromas, and experiences of fresh, certified organic food with you!

This guide will help you prepare for the experience and enjoy it to the fullest. If you are new to CSA, you may bring with you expectations and anticipations of what it will be like. With the information in this guide, weekly newsletters, and a visit to the farm, we aim to give you a realistic understanding of what CSA is and is not.

Begin by reading this guide and hanging your Delivery Calendar in a convenient place. Then do your part – be timely in picking up your box and reading the newsletters. Be confident that we are doing our part – growing, harvesting, washing, and delivering the best produce we possibly can, as well as welcoming you to participate in any way you wish – through cooking and eating, visiting, or helping out on the farm or in your delivery area.

This guide will be your go-to for answers such as:

- Pick-up locations, timeframes, and host contact info
- Tips for being a great CSA customer, and
- A printable calendar to have as easy access during the season to remind you of pick-up dates.



## Overview

You have ordered a CSA share, a weekly or every-other-week box filled with in-season certified organic produce, delivered to a pick-up location near you. Your CSA purchase helps to fund the seeds, materials, transportation costs, labor, and more for the farm.

The produce is grown according to an organic system plan. We avoid using synthetic pesticides, herbicides, and GMO seeds. The food is nutritious – whole vegetables, fruit, and herbs – the rainbow your plate needs for optimal vitamin and nutrient consumption. The produce is planted, harvested, washed, packed, and distributed according to a food safety plan.

Your CSA share provides a connection to the land. You share the risk and reward of old-fashioned agriculture hand-in-hand with your farmer, and you will feel nature's impact on the quality and quantity of produce you receive in your box. You will be eating with the seasons.

## Know Your Farmers

Your farmers are Lisa, her parents Tom and Janet, and several part-time employees from the community.

We grew up in Central Minnesota. Tom and Janet were conventional farm kids of dairy and row crop operations from Todd County and have been avid gardeners their entire lives, and within the last ten years they became aware of how our food system affects our environment and health. Lisa was a 4-H and FFA kid in Stearns County and spent 10 years working in the city before deciding to participate in life a bit more actively – by converting a conventionally farmed rye field into a small family farm.

Our recipes have been prepared and tested by our marketing interns from the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University. Many of our paid employees on the harvest crew are Bennies and Johnnies, too, and they help with seed starting in the greenhouse, transplanting, and harvest. You'll hear about their experiences throughout the season on our blog and in the newsletters.



## **When do I pick up my share?**

Deliveries are on Tuesday afternoons. Large shares are delivered weekly and small shares are delivered every other week.

On your order confirmation, invoice, or sales receipt emailed to you from the farm, you should see your pick-up day, location, and timeframe. Each pick-up location has volunteered their space and we aim to be respectful of their generosity. Please pick up your box on your designated day and time.

Around June 1<sup>st</sup>, we will assign Small Shares into a Group B and Group C. Watch your email for that notification.

We will email reminders on the day before or the day of delivery.

In order to help prevent confusion, we suggest you have a schedule of the pick-up days handy for a quick reference. At the end of this guide and on our farm's website, you'll find a delivery calendar you can print and hang on your fridge for quick reference.

## **At the pick-up location, what is the process?**

All CSA boxes are packed the same way, so you can take any box at the pick-up location. Please note that special orders will be labeled with a customer's name – they might have ordered a farm t-shirt, for example – and those boxes are typically stacked separately from the main stack of boxes.

We reuse boxes sometimes, so please disassemble them and return them to us if you can. You can either transfer your produce into your own bag and leave your box, or, you can bring your boxes back to the pick-up location periodically, and we'll pick them up next time we're there. Please be gentle when handling the boxes – they will tear.

When there are items too large to fit inside the boxes (e.g., pumpkins), there will be a bin for you to take from, or additional instructions. Check the weekly newsletter for details.

## **What if I cannot pick up my share?**

Let us know as far in advance as possible if you will be unable to pick up your share. We can usually make adjustments for vacations.

Or, you can make arrangements to have a friend or someone who might be interested in joining the CSA next season get the box for you that week. You do not need to contact us – just explain the process to them.

If you need to pick up your box after the pick-up timeframe, please contact our farm manager Lisa at (320) 309-0746 or the location host, and we can try to make alternative arrangements. Some pick-up locations close their business doors, while others are a residential porch and you'll not want to frighten the host family by walking on their porch after dark.

If you do not pick up your box during the designated timeframe and have not made arrangements in advance, your box will be donated to the host family or employee, or the food shelf. If you miss a week during the season, there is no credit given to make up for a missed share.

If you cannot finish out the season as a customer, for whatever reason, you are welcome to reassign your share to another household. Just let us know their name, address, email, phone number, and the week when they will be taking over your share.

## Tips for Being a Great CSA Customer

Whether you're a CSA veteran or a new foodie, here are a few ways you can make the most of your CSA box and build your relationship with the farm:

- Read the newsletters from the farm to stay up to date on what is going on at the farm as well as to try the yummy recipes we include.
- Please pick up your box on your designated day and time.
- Return your boxes and keep them clean.
- Give us feedback. Positive and negative, we want to serve you as best as we can, and we can only know how we're doing if you tell us, so please do!
- Participate in events at the farm, or come out to help harvest, or bring the kids out for a tour.
- Show your support via social media on the web – we love to see photos on our Facebook page from customers, or to learn about favorite recipes via Pinterest from customers using their produce, etc. The farm is also on Twitter and Instagram.
- Stretch your skills – learn new recipes, try blanching and freezing beans, make some refrigerator pickles, etc.
- Clean and store your produce properly as soon as you get your box home. Use the tips on our website and in the newsletters.
- Understand the produce is not necessarily table-ready and you will need to do some additional washing at home.
- Say thank you to your farmworkers. The beauty of CSA is that you have a relationship with your farmer and know where your food is coming from. All the employees at the farm work very hard to grow, harvest, and clean your food. Giving thanks to the team is always very appreciated!
- Remember how nature plays a key role in agriculture – each box will vary in weight and crop varieties depending on the season, and you are graciously sharing with your farmer the risks of organic growing methods such as poor weather, drought, disease, early frosts, pests, and crop failure. You also might reap bountiful crop growth of varieties that flourish during that particular season. The farm uses growing techniques that aim to protect the harvest, such as growing a wide variety of crops that thrive in different conditions, cover cropping, crop rotation, and irrigation.
- Take responsibility for reducing the risk of foodborne illness and follow safe food handling practices. Wash all produce before consumption and prevent cross-contamination.
- Pat yourself on the back for supporting an awareness of sustainably grown food, a more equitable food system, and a more environmentally sound, economically fair, and healthy society.

## Farm Tours & Events

Seeing the farm for yourself and sharing the harvest with your whole family and farmers is an experience that can shape anyone's view of food farming and quality food for the better. There's a sense of satisfaction and peace that comes from connecting with the dirt your food is grown in. We invite you to come out to the farm for one of our events, or contact us if you'd like to schedule a tour.

### Yoga On The Farm – May 24

Bring your yoga mat out to the farm for an outdoor practice led by Laura Lanigan from the College of St. Benedict. Check the farm's website for more details.

### Pea Pick – June 25

A family day on the farm gleaning the pea field! Check the farm's website for details.

### Pumpkin Pick – Tentatively set for September 23

CSA customers will be invited to bring the whole family and come pick a pumpkin from our pumpkin patch. Stay tuned to the newsletters and website for more details.

### Schedule a Tour or Volunteer

If you're coming through town on the way to the cabin or just want to bring the kids out to see where your food is grown, give us a call or send an email. We can usually accommodate a 30-minute tour. Or, you can come out for a longer visit and help work in the fields or harvest, too.

## Kitchen Resources

### Storage & Preservation Information

On the farm's website and in newsletters, we will provide storage tips to help you make the most of your box of produce. Some items like basil, for example, should not go into the fridge, as it will rot and turn brown quickly. It is best to keep basil in a plastic bag on the counter, above 50 degrees, but away from a heat source. Tomatoes are similar. Also, freezing or canning vegetables makes the following January a whole lot tastier. 😊

### Recipes and Cooking Tips

In newsletters and on our website, we provide recipes that help you use what's in your CSA box. If you have a favorite recipe you'd like to share with other CSA customers, please send it to us and we'll pass it along!



## How and why are we supporting agriculture as a community?

Here are some CSA benefits we care about:

- **Community health.** When you buy locally, your dollar stays in your community. By buying food from a farmer, your dollar goes from that farmer back into businesses in your community.
- **Food security.** When you buy locally, you're not relying on distribution channels from other states or countries.
- **Smart business sense.** Your CSA purchase helps your farmer pay for seeds, equipment, fuel, etc. up front at the beginning of the season – and know how much food to plant to supply the total number of shares. This lets your farmer avoid using loans to pay for the inputs up front and then repay them at the end of the season after the produce gets sold, and it ensures farmers don't over-plant for a speculative market. Translation: CSAs let farmers use the right amount of natural resources to supply a known market, avoiding over-production, dumping, and unnecessary use of fuel for plowing, disking, etc. for food that will never be consumed.
- **You make a political statement.** You are voting with your food dollar for policies that support sustainable agriculture. More importantly, your food dollar is not going to large corporations that source through unsustainable practices.
- **You support your farmer.** CSA farmers chose a lifestyle that is not easy and does not bring in excessive income. They typically choose this life to care for nature and provide an alternative source of food for their communities – an important responsibility and a way to take a stand and act on these ideals. Your support matters to their livelihood very much.

### Farm Swag!

Farm t-shirts and sweatshirts are available for folks to show their farm spirit.

Orders can be placed on our website at [www.bakersacresfarm.com/farm-apparel](http://www.bakersacresfarm.com/farm-apparel).





## The Farm's Oath

Our CSA customers are the lifeblood of the farm and are vital to the year-after-year success and growth of the farm. While we plan to produce ample produce for CSA customers each year, we also plan production for several wholesale accounts. Those wholesale accounts are gracious as well and understand nature's impact on agriculture. If in the unfortunate circumstance that our production is lower than expected, it is our farm's promise to fulfill our CSA customers' orders first, and forfeit the extra income that we would make from wholesale sales. We are first and foremost a CSA farm.

# Thank You

We want to take a moment to express our appreciation to you and for your support of the farm. We consider it a privilege to be able to grow vegetables for you and your family, and work hard to deliver delicious, nutritious, vibrant vegetables for you to enjoy. Every week we hope to connect with you through not only the vegetables and meals, but also through our newsletters, email, and social media. There is a lot happening on our farm every day, with a lot to learn and share. We'll do our best to keep in touch with you, but there is no substitute for seeing it yourself. One of the important components of Bakers' Acres is opening the farm to our customers so it becomes "your farm" too. Please consider taking a day to come and see the farm for yourself. We'd love to spend the day with you! We look forward to sharing the bounty of the growing season with you and hope you enjoy the delicious adventure of the Bakers' Acres CSA program. -Lisa, farm manager

## Connect with the Farm

Farm Manager: Lisa Baker

Phone: (320) 309-0746

Email: [lisa@bakersacresfarm.com](mailto:lisa@bakersacresfarm.com)



Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Bakers15acres](http://www.facebook.com/Bakers15acres)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/BakersAcresFarm](http://www.instagram.com/BakersAcresFarm)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/BakersAcresCSA](http://www.twitter.com/BakersAcresCSA)

Pinterest: [www.pinterest.com/Bakers15acres](http://www.pinterest.com/Bakers15acres)





# CSA Pick-Up Locations & Calendar – Tuesdays

Groups  
A & B

Groups  
A & C

**Avon, at the farm (2-8 p.m.)** – Lisa, (320) 309-0746  
36861 Co Rd 9, in the white walk-in cooler behind the barn

**St. Joseph (4:30-6:30 p.m.)** – Ask an employee, (320) 363-7733  
Minnesota Street Market, 27 W Minnesota St

**Sartell (4:30-6:30 p.m.)** – Valerie, (808) 753-3584  
725 21st Ave N, on the front porch

**St. Cloud (4:30-6:30 p.m.)** – Ask an employee, (320) 253-9290  
Good Earth Food Co-op

**Profile by Sanford, clients only (4-6 p.m.)** – (320) 497-7020  
384 3rd Street NE, Waite Park

**Sand Companies, employees only (4-5 p.m.)**

**Cold Spring (5-7 p.m.)** – Molly, (320) 492-8773 – 14728 Fireside Circle

**Sauk Centre CentraCare - employees only (5:15-6:15 p.m.)** – Alex Moore Room

**Albany (5:30-7:30 p.m.)** – 604 Concordia Lane

**Melrose CentraCare - employees only (5:15-6:15 p.m.)**  
Clinic entrance / Registration

**Melrose residential (5:30-7:30 p.m.)** – Lindberg (320) 429-1555 – 434 7th Street NE

JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
13 WEEK 1	4 WEEK 4	1 WEEK 8	5 WEEK 13	3 WEEK 17
20 WEEK 2	11 WEEK 5	8 WEEK 9	12 WEEK 14	10 WEEK 18
27 WEEK 3	18 WEEK 6	15 WEEK 10	19 WEEK 15	
	25 WEEK 7	22 WEEK 11	26 WEEK 16	
		29 WEEK 12		