



# A PATH TO WELLNESS

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## Community Supported Agriculture By Amy Unterberger



### What is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)?

Community Supported agriculture is a relationship of mutual support and commitment between local farmers and community members who pay the farmer an annual membership fee to cover the production costs of the farm. In turn, members receive a weekly share of the harvest during the local growing season. The arrangement guarantees the farmer financial support and enables many small to moderate scale organic family farms to remain in business.

The goals of Community Supported Agriculture support a sustainable agriculture system which: provides farmers with direct outlets for farm products and ensures fair compensation; encourages proper land stewardship by supporting farmers in transition toward low or no chemical inputs and utilization of energy saving technologies; strengthens local economies by keeping feed dollars local; directly links producers with consumers allowing people to have a personal connection with their food and the land on which it was produced; and make nutritious, affordable, wholesome foods accessible and widely available to community members. Other perks to members include:

**Better flavor:** Organic vegetables have a rich and full flavor. Since organic farming nourishes the soil, the food nourishes our palates. Better tasting means you'll eat more veggies and eat some that you may not have liked before.

**Selection:** Farmers grow more vegetable varieties than found at the grocery store. You'll enjoy and discover more vegetable varieties than you might otherwise buy.

**Farmer to Family Connection:** A CSA is a relationship between a rural farmer and an urban family. The farm helps bring families to the land. It serves as a rural gathering place for urban families to share together events on the farm.

**Fun:** Experience fun on the farm with harvest festivals, dinners, celebrations, field days, family events and more.

**Education:** Your family will learn about how and where your food is grown.

Minimal Carbon Footprint: Organic food produced within local communities is not the same as organic food transported over long distances. When members obtain food from local farmers, environmental costs associated with the transport, processing and distribution of organic food and the consumption of fossil fuels are significantly reduced. Considering that the organic food available to members was produced locally rather than transported over long distances, the cost to the environment is significantly less.

What does CSA membership involve?

Membership arrangements vary among farms. For instance, some CSA operations deliver their food to the neighborhoods where members live, while others arrange for members to come to the farm and help make deliveries. Some CSA farms expect members to work on the farm at least once during the season while others only expect members to support the farm with their membership. Many farms offer their shareholders the opportunity to work in the fields or distribute produce in exchange for a discounted share price. Others offer sliding scales to accommodate lower income consumers.

Although each CSA farm makes its own arrangements with its members and has its own expectations of them, being involved with a CSA operation always means sharing the rewards as well as the risks of farming. The rewards include enjoying the freshest produce available, often harvested the same day you receive it; knowing where, how and by whom your food is being produced; having a direct connection with the people who produce your food; and supporting the kind of stewardship that is good for the land as well as its people.

The risks include weather and pests. Though formidable for small, self sustaining farmers, these risks are bearable when shared by a group of subscribers. By linking together through CSA operations, farmers and consumer alike can benefit from an agriculture that provides beautiful and bountiful food while preserving the ecological and social basis necessary for coming generations to be so blessed.

What is a share?

A “share” is usually enough to feed a family of four or a couple on a vegetarian diet. Sometimes “half shares” are available. The price of a share for a season varies widely, depending on each farm’s costs of operation, total months of distribution, variety of crops available and productivity of the soil. Most full shares fall within the range of \$300 to \$700. Actual cost of produce to the member varies, but is generally comparable to prices in the supermarket.

Selecting a CSA

While membership in any CSA includes a weekly share of fresh produce, other factors may vary from farm to farm. Things to consider, when choosing your farm:

- Location: You should keep in mind the driving distance when considering your level of involvement and the involvement expectations of the farm.
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- Pick up site/delivery day: CSA farms have various delivery or pick-up dates. Some farms will deliver your share to your door or to a common pick-up site, while others require you to pick up your share at the farm or help with share deliveries.
- Length of season/number of deliveries: The length of season and number of deliveries vary among the farms. Most begin in May or June and run through September or October. Some farms have an optional winter delivery for an additional cost.
- Types of produce and other food items: All of the CSA farmers offer a variety of seasonal vegetables. Some farms offer unusual varieties while others may add extras to their standard shares. Some farms may give members the option to buy honey, fruit, flowers, eggs, wood/yarn, meat or other specialties at an additional cost.
- Opportunities for Involvement: Community building is an important part of the CSA approach; all farms encourage you to become involved. Most farms plan several farm events while others encourage their member to just “drop by”. Some farms expect involvement in the farm as part of their membership.

To find a CSA near you check out these web links:

[www.localharvest.org/csa](http://www.localharvest.org/csa) or [www.landstewardshipproject.org/csa](http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/csa)

## Hour by Car by Andrew Kiel



A Path metro family has been green and continues to go green by not owning a car. They take the bus or use an increasingly popular service called hour car. HOURCAR insures, and maintains a fleet of member shared cars. HOURCAR takes on all the responsibilities of owning the vehicles, including paying for fuel. HOURCARs are parked near our foster parent's home. They make reservations online for days and times they need the car and then they pick it up and use it. So it might sound too good to be true but this is how much it costs. See the chart below. So the principal is the same even if you don't have access to metro hour cars. Maybe you might think about sharing the cost of a car or maybe you want to split usage of a car between friends. HOURCAR is smart because it helps people focus on other models for transportation rather than owning your car and driving it to your place of employment and then leaving it there all day, not being used. It looks to a community to share costs and transportation needs. Look into it.

Only pay for what you use:

	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Thrifty</u>
Monthly:	\$5	\$20	\$10
Car Usage:			
Fee per hour:	\$6.95	\$4.95	\$7.95
Fee per mile:	\$0.45	\$0.39	\$0.09
Annual Fee:	\$0	\$0	\$0

## TOP 5 GLOBAL WARMING ACTIONS By Sue Roegge



- Install compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Weatherproof your home
- Keep up proper car maintenance including checking your tire pressure
- Eat locally, buy local grocery products as much as possible (local Farmers Markets make this much easier in summer and fall)
- Install aerators on water faucets.

*Watch for the next five actions in the next newsletter.*

## The Value of Vacation

As we move into full summer we need to recognize the value of vacation time away from work. A uniquely American custom called "vacation deprivation" accounts for 31% of us not using all of our vacation days because of perceived or real job pressures. Katherine Hall, CEO of the Stress Institute says "taking time for vacation and leisure is not a luxury, it is a necessity. The chronic stress of work can lead to emotional and physical illness." So take your vacation and enjoy time away from the stress of work. It's good for you and will make you a more relaxed and productive worker when you return.

# Carbon Footprint

By Ken Hanna



In my attempt to describe the term **carbon Footprint**, I thought it might be helpful to first document a very simplistic version of the carbon life cycle. Information for this article was compiled from definitions according to Wikipedia.

Carbon dioxide is produced by all animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms during respiration and is used by plants during photosynthesis. It is therefore, a major component of the carbon cycle. The cycle is usually thought of as four major reservoirs of carbon interconnected by pathways for exchange. The reservoirs are: the **atmosphere**, a layer of gases surrounding the planet Earth and retained by the Earth's gravity. This mixture of gases, nitrogen, argon carbon dioxide, trace amounts of other gases and a variable amount of water, vapor, commonly known as **air**. The atmosphere protects life on Earth by absorbing ultraviolet solar radiation and reducing temperature extremes between day and night; the **biosphere** is the global ecological system integrating all living beings and their relationships. The biosphere is the part of the Earth, including air, land, surface rocks, and water within which life occurs and which biotic processes in turn alter or transform; **geosphere** refers to the solid parts of the Earth. In that context, some geologists prefer "lithosphere" over geosphere but these can be used interchangeably; **hydrosphere** describes the collective mass of water found on, under, and over the surface of the planet.

Carbon dioxide is generated as a byproduct of the combustion of **fossil fuels** or vegetable matter among other chemical processes. Fossil fuels are non-renewable resources because they take millions of years to form, and reserves are being depleted much faster than new ones are being formed. According to the biogenic theory, **petroleum** is formed from the preserved remains of prehistoric zooplankton and algae which have settled to the sea (or lake) bottom in large quantities. Over geological time this organic matter mixed with mud is buried under heavy layers of sediment. The resulting high levels of heat and pressure cause the organic matter to chemically change, first into a waxy material known as kerogen which is found in various oil shales around the world, and then with more heat into liquid and gaseous hydrocarbons. Terrestrial plants on the other hand, tend to form coal. Many of the coal fields date to the carboniferous period.

An alternative definition of the **carbon footprint** is the total amount of **carbon dioxide** attributable to the actions of an individual (mainly through their energy use) over a period of one year. The term owes its origins to the idea that a footprint is what has been left behind as a result of the individual's activities. Carbon footprints can either consider only direct emissions (typically from energy used in the home and in transport, including travel by cars, airplanes, rail and other public transport), or can also include **indirect** emissions (including CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as a result of goods and services consumed). Bottom-up calculations sum attribute CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from individual actions; top-down calculations take total emissions from a country (or other high-level entity) and divide these emissions among the residents (or other participants in that entity).

## Fast Food Makeover: Eating Healthy on the Go

Whether you're on the road or just time crunched, it's hard to avoid the lure of fast food. Below are tips from dietitians on what they do in such situations.

**Pizza Hut Cut:** Choose the Thin 'N Crispy crust. It's a simple way to cut the fat nearly in half. Load on the veggies. When you do, a slice of pizza is pretty hefty in volume but not necessarily in calories.

**Wendy's Wisdom:** Order a plain baked potato topped with a small order of chili. Baked potatoes are a great source of potassium and always eat the skin. Chili beans pack a healthy punch, loaded with fiber, protein, foliate and magnesium. With chili, the tater is big on flavor, not fat. (a small chili has only 220 calories, 6 grams of fat, and 25 grams of saturated fat)

**KFC DIY:** Undress your chicken! Order a side of green beans, mashed potatoes (no gravy), and one original recipe chicken breast. Removing the skin is a must! An original recipe chicken breast has 360 calories and 21 grams of fat. Lose the skin and it drops to 140 calories with 2 grams of fat.

**Taco Bell Turnabout:** Ask for your meals fresco style, which means they come with salsa instead of cheese and sauces. You get flavor without the extra fat and calories. Order the soft shell chicken taco with beans on the side for a fiber and protein boost.

**McDonalds McDo-over:** Order a Egg McMuffin with a few tweaks. Ask for it with no Canadian bacon and no liquid margarine. The egg provides a good source of protein and by skipping the bacon you curb your sodium intake which is important to people trying to maintain a healthy blood pressure.

## RECIPE CORNER

### Spiced Chickpea Salad

2 (15oz.) cans chickpeas (garbanzos) drained and rinsed  
1 red sweet pepper, chopped  
4 green onions with tops, chopped  
½ cup chopped fresh cilantro  
2 T. fresh lemon juice  
2 T. white vinegar  
1 clove garlic, minced  
2 tsp. peeled and minced fresh ginger root  
½ tsp ground cumin  
1/8 tsp salt  
2 tsp dried pepper flakes  
2 T. olive oil

Mix chickpeas, pepper, green onions and cilantro in a large bowl. In a small bowl, combine the lemon juice, vinegar, garlic, ginger, cumin, salt, pepper flakes and olive oil. Pour the liquid dressing over the vegetables and toss to coat. Cover the salad and refrigerate overnight. Serves 8.



## A Path to Wellness Office Checklist

- Utilize "Green" cleaning products
- Recycle cell phones
- Recycle batteries
- Purchase recycled office supplies
- Recycle printer cartridges
- Recycle any old or non-functioning office equipment
- Use non-confidential paper as scratch paper
- Print on both sides of paper
- Bring silverware and Tupperware from home and wash
- Bring water bottles or jugs from home
- DO NOT USE STYROFOAM products
- Use florescent bulbs when possible
- Recycle paper from shredders
- Clearly label recycling bins
- Use biodegradable eating utensils
- Ride share when possible