



Bittersweet Farms Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program Covid-19 Proactive & Preventative Measures

Dear CSA Members:

As we plan for the upcoming 2021 CSA season, we wanted to update you on the continued measures we are taking at Bittersweet Farms to ensure the safety of our participants and staff and you, our loyal CSA members. We have remained vigilant in monitoring updates from public health authorities at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure compliance with the highest level of health and safety procedures.

Continued Safety Measures:

- **Reduced staff and participants on the premises:** We continue to operate with a reduced number of staff on the Farm during the pandemic, and unfortunately our Day Program remains suspended until further notice. The majority of our team continues to work remotely, however when staff do arrive to work, they are screened prior to entering the facility. Their temperatures are taken, they are required to use hand sanitizer and wear a surgical mask, and finally they complete a thorough questionnaire to evaluate COVID-19 related risks.
- **Increased frequency of sanitization:** We continue to strengthen and uphold our sanitization protocols for all surfaces throughout the Farm, especially all frequently touched areas such as door handles, prep tables, sinks and food storage areas. We continue to review standard operating procedures regarding the frequency of sanitization, to ensure local, state and federal guidelines are being met. Finally, staff are still required to complete and sign cleaning logs throughout the day.
- **Strengthening handwashing efforts among our staff and participants:** Handwashing has always been a priority on the Farm, and we continue to place a heightened focus on frequent and thorough handwashing in light of the pandemic. Staff are encouraged to frequently wash and sanitize their hands, and to remind our participants to do the same. To achieve this, we have installed additional hand sanitizing stations in multiple locations throughout the facility. In Gardens, in addition to increased handwashing, we continue to require that anyone handling or packaging produce wear gloves and change them often.
- **Using sanitizable boxes and recyclable/compostable paper bags for CSA shares:** Echoing our efforts last season, all 2021 CSA shares, depending on their size, will be

packaged in either a recyclable paper bag, or a box/crate that can be sanitized between uses. As always, Medium and Large shares should return boxes when picking up your share each week. All boxes and crates returned to the Farm will be isolated for a 24-48 hour period and sanitized prior to reuse. Small shares will be packaged in recyclable/compostable paper bags. These bags are single use only and should not be returned. Small shares will be packaged in a fresh paper bag each week.

- **Digital CSA newsletter:** For the 2021 season, we will continue providing a digital newsletter sent via email to all CSA members. This will allow us to safely relay information about the produce included in your share each week, as well as photos of our participants who assisted with harvesting and packaging the CSA boxes.
- **Proactive monitoring and planning:** We recognize that this is a fluid situation, and we are prepared to adapt as new information becomes available. Current information from public health authorities indicates that COVID-19 is not transmittable via food. We will continue to monitor and implement food safety and packaging practices recommended by local, state and federal officials. Our top priority is keeping our staff, participants, and CSA members safe, healthy, and nourished with the best local and nutrient dense produce available!
- **Continued focus on our mission:** Even in this uncertain time, Bittersweet's mission remains the same—to positively impact the lives of individuals with autism and those whose lives they touch. Your continued support of Bittersweet Farms as a CSA member makes our mission possible. Thank you!

Should you have any questions about our CSA program or about these safety measures, please contact our Retail Coordinator, Lindsay Nagy, at LNagy@bittersweetfarms.org.