



WELL FED

Newsletter for Wellspring Farm CSA

March 2006

Volume 4 Number 2

FARMER REPORT

Town Meeting Day, March 7, 2006

The farm juices are starting to bubble, just like the maple sap that boils in sugar shacks around Vermont this time of year. I've just come in from touring the fields. Raised beds of winter-killed oats are emerging from the thin snow cover. The dark river will soon flow serenely once again along muddy banks. The greenhouse is hot and humid, ready for trays of perfect green seedlings. The apprentice cabin near the woods stands waiting for a resident other than country mice. Our garlic, planted last fall, remains tucked under a thick mat of golden straw and begins to have thoughts of emergence.

And the farmer? This weather just gets me feeling all kinds of excitement about the coming season. I feel ready to get my hands in the earth, turn the key of the tractor, load up bins with the abundant shapes, colors and sizes of melons, corn, lettuce, carrots, tomatoes. Roll up my sleeves. Welcome everyone back to the farm. Start the circus! This time of year there is an irrepressible energy that buds in us all: soil, animals, water, plants. And I feel addicted.

Of course, I know that you may be reading this during a freak spring snowstorm. Or you may be moaning mudseason. But we know that it won't be long before all that is behind us.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for making an important difference. Your CSA membership does more than give you access to the freshest, healthiest and tastiest food around. **You preserve active farmland in your community. You keep your food dollars in your community. You reduce fossil fuels used in cross-country shipping and excess packaging. You build com-**

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New Montpelier Pick Up Site

This year we are adding a pick up on Thursdays from 4:00 to 6:00 PM at the Two Rivers Center for Sustainability, located near the junction of Rt. 2 and the Barre-Montpelier Road next door to Agway. There is ample parking at this site. The site is limited to 30 shareholders on a first-come, first-served basis. Shareholders who sign up for the Two Rivers site are welcome to come to the farm for pick-your-own crops but must **pick up their share in Montpelier each week**. Similarly, members who sign up for the farm pick-up site must pick up their share at the farm each week. This rule is necessary due to efficiencies of harvest and planning on the farm. Pick-your-own crops can be harvested at the farm by all members on Mondays and Thursdays, 4:00 to 6:00 PM.

Wellspring Farm is
the proud recipient of the
2005 Conservation Farm of the Year Award
given by the
Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District

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munity by continuing the connection between eater and grower. You preserve the environment by supporting sustainable farming practices. You help local schools, senior meal sites and the Vermont Foodbank access healthy local produce by supporting our farm. Yes, you. Every single member makes a difference.

This season we are excited to expand our CSA membership both at the farm and at our new pick-up site in Montpelier. In order to make this farm sustainable, we need to increase our numbers. As you can imagine, it is very difficult to make a living in small-scale farming (I'm not even talking about health insurance or a decent wage for apprentices). For generations, Wellspring Farm was a dairy farm, but with dairy industry consolidation and increased control by corporations, we have turned to organic produce to keep this farm alive. Yet making a vegetable farm economically viable is no picnic. Costs have increased, particularly fuel and organic supplies. Efficiency needs to be improved by making the leap to hiring more help and to paying a more livable wage. We also need to continually invest in improving our land's health for future generations through tile drainage.

These costs are very real. To be sustainable, **we need your help! Please bring us members! We ask that every 2005 shareholder brings us just one more member.** We cannot do it without you. Word-of-mouth is by far the best way to spread the word. Your help can make the difference between meeting or missing our goal.

Please spread the word at work, with friends, in your neighborhood, at school. There is no better place to put your money than in our community. The ripple effects are felt throughout our local economy, because our farm spends its money here. We can only stay afloat if you bring us members and so I ask for your help. Together we keep farms healthy and active.

Lastly, I want to share the inspiration I felt recently at a women-in-farming conference where I learned about Kenya's Green Belt Movement. This grassroots organization focuses on environmental conservation and community development through tree planting. The Green Belt Movement has chosen as one of its mottos, "As for me, I've made a choice." Thank *you* for your choice: to support the environmental health and vibrancy of our rural community.

Act Local



"It is evident that many wars are fought over resources which are now becoming increasingly scarce. If we conserved our resources better, fighting over them would not then occur...so, protecting the global environment is directly related to securing peace...those of us who understand the complex concept of the environment have the burden to act. We must not tire, we must not give up, we must persist."

— Green Belt Movement founder Wangari Maathai, on receiving the news of being awarded the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize

BYOB*

*Bring your own bag

In fact, bring us lots of bags! We want us all to do our part to reduce consumption of bags. **Help us reuse & reduce by bringing your clean full-sized bags with handles to the farm.** We will keep them for your and other's use. Our goal is to offer only re-used bags and you can help by bringing your bags each week to collect your share.

This is an environmental imperative! Look at some of the shocking facts (from www.reusablebags.com):

- Each year, an estimated 500 billion to 1 trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide. That comes out to over **one million per minute**. Billions end up as litter each year.
- According to the American Forest and Paper Association, in 1999 the U.S. alone used 10 billion paper grocery bags, **requiring 14 million trees to be cut down.**
- Hundreds of thousands of sea turtles, whales and other marine mammals die every year from eating discarded plastic bags mistaken for food.

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2006 Wellspring CSA Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

Town, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Select Share:

_____	Full Share	\$545
_____	Small Share	\$360
_____	Winter Share (mixed storage crops)	\$ 60
_____	Montpelier Site Delivery Fee	\$ 25
_____	Donation to support low-income member (enclose a separate check payable to NOFA-VT for donation amount)	\$_____

Total Due \$_____

Call or see website share size recommendations,
subsidized shares & working membership information

Payment Options:

_____ In full. Appreciated to cover our early expenses.
 _____ Payment Plan. \$150 deposit by May 15. Remainder
 due June 15. If this is a financial hardship, please
 call to arrange an alternative plan.

I prefer to pick up my produce:

_____ At the farm on Mondays, 4-6 PM
 _____ At the farm on Thursdays, 4-6 PM
 _____ In Montpelier on Thursdays, 4-6 PM (at Rt 2 &
 302 junction, near Agway)

Mail form and payment to:

Wellspring CSA, 182 Lafria Place Marshfield, VT 05658

Questions?

Call us at 426-3361 or email: mimi@wellspringcsa.com

For office use only:

_____ date rec _____ check # _____ QB _____ receipt

_____ amt rec _____ amt due _____ roster _____ PIF



Working Member Opportunity

Thursday Harvest Worker



Join our field team to harvest, wash and pack produce for CSA shareholders. **Thursdays, June 22-October 12, 8 AM – 12 PM.** Must have vehicle. Position requires a full season commitment. Join us for healthy, hard physical labor while gaining insight into the inner workings of our farm. You must be prepared to work come rain, wind, sun & bugs (& they will *all* come!), & you are responsible for arranging a replacement if you cannot fulfill your commitment. This position receives a barter of one full-sized share. If you're interested, contact Mimi.

(BYOB, con't from page 2)

- Plastic bags don't biodegrade, they photodegrade—breaking down into smaller and smaller toxic bits contaminating soil and waterways and entering the food web when animals accidentally ingest.
- According to David Barnes, a marine scientist with the British Antarctic Survey, plastic bags have gone "from being rare in the late 80s and early 90s to **being almost everywhere** from Spitsbergen 78° North to Falklands 51° South.
- Irish consumers have recently used one billion fewer bags, which has **saved 18 million litres of oil.**

What can we do? Use reusable canvas bags and reuse paper and plastic bags! Add to Wellspring's collection of used bags!

Supported Share Program



We want to make our CSA available to all members of our community, regardless of their ability to pay. To that end, **we raise funds for “supported,” or subsidized, shares through our CSA shareholders.** In 2005, 3 families received shares with our members’ support. You may be eligible for a partially subsidized share. We ask that each subsidized participant contribute 50% of the cost of the share. If this is not possible, we can look into other arrangements. See our website for further information.

If you would like to help a member in need, please contribute! Every cent donated goes directly toward the cost of a share, and any size donation helps. For donations that are tax deductible, make checks payable to NOFA-VT, and in the memo write “Wellspring Farm.” Donations may be mailed directly to Wellspring Farm with your membership form. NOFA-VT will funnel the donation back to our farm.



For membership info, photos, harvest calendar & more
www.wellspringcsa.com

"I went to the store. I bought a wastebasket. The cashier put it in a bag. I brought it home. I took it out of the bag. I crumpled up the bag and tossed it in the wastebasket."

— Lily Tomlin

(See our article, *BYOB*, on page 2 for more...)



WELLSPRING FARM CSA

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