



# Welcome to Chestnut Hill Farm!



## A Property of the Trustees

This handbook will act as a guide to your CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) share and will help answer most questions you will have as a shareholder. By joining the Chestnut Hill Farm CSA, members agree to follow the procedures and policies outlined here, as well as to respect the farm property and all Chestnut Hill Farm employees. CSA shareholders are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the procedures and policies herein.

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## **Why:**

Thank you for choosing to be a shareholder here at Chestnut Hill Farm and joining the rest of the community that supports local agriculture! We are so happy to have you here with us, and we hope that your time with our share and farm not only gives you a weekly taste of fresh, healthy food, but also give you a valuable opportunity to build your relationship with the land and our planet. And that connection all starts with the food you eat!

- **Why “Community Supported Agriculture”?**
  - Plenty of people wonder what the point of a CSA is, and why it’s so important to our food system. CSAs, in which shareholders pay for food upfront, actually allow farmers to best make a living, and plan their farm according to the people that have purchased shares, rather than being entirely at the mercy of flexing purchases.
  - Part of the reason CSAs are so critical to our food system is that they are mostly made up of relatively small, local farms. Not only do these farms usually use more environmentally friendly means to produce food, but they also support local economy and community. It’s even in the name – we are supported by the community, and in turn we support the community!
- **Why local?**
  - In a place like the US, where so much of our food system is at a national or even international scale, local food systems like CSAs actually help the whole system from breaking down. If a huge, industrial farm growing tomatoes fails due to a pest infestation, it can send serious ripples through the whole food system. But, if that happens to a small, local farm, we can work with the other farms in our area to make sure that our shareholders (you!) still get access to as much of the local bounty as possible. And we do so safely and responsibly for our customers and the land.

## When:

- **The farm store and CSA pick-up hours are as follows:**
  - **Tuesdays 1:30pm-6:3pm**
  - **Thursdays 1:30pm-6:30pm**
  - **Saturdays 9am-3pm**
- **You must sign up for the day that you will pick up our share for the duration of the season.**
  - By committing to pick up your share on a specific day each week, **we are able to plan how much to harvest each day, assuring that your shares are as fresh as possible each and every week!**
  - During COVID-19, these assigned days also help us ensure safe, socially distanced pick-ups.
  - If at any point during the season you have concerns about your pick-up day, please email Molly Callahan at [farmers@thetrustees.org](mailto:farmers@thetrustees.org).
- You will get confirmation of your pick-up day no later than 1 week before the first week of the CSA.
- **If you know in advance that you will not be able to pick up your share on your pick-up day during a given week, you may arrange for a friend/family member to pick up your share in your place.** If possible, give us a heads up that a guest will be picking up your share!
- You may not pick up more than one share per week, even if you miss picking up the previous week's share.

## Where:

- The CSA and farm stand has its own parking area off Chestnut Hill Rd. Continue heading North on Chestnut Hill Rd past the barn by the road and turn right into the designated parking area. Please note that the CSA parking area is separate from the trailhead parking lot. Please do not park in the trailhead parking lot for CSA pick-up. If you have mobility issues, please contact Jeff and arrange for special parking.
  - Chestnut Hill Road is a 2-lane road up to the trailhead parking area and is one way afterwards, however it is narrow and, if at all possible, we recommend turning right out of the parking areas when you leave and following the road around to Johnson Rd which will take you back to Rt. 30 if needed.
  - **Please do not park in the residential parking area to the South of the red barn. This is for private residents and tractor parking only.**
- **Note that parking is very limited, so whenever possible limit your pick-up to 1 car per share, including carpooling with any share partners.**

## How:

- **Becoming a Member:** Thank you for signing up for a CSA share! All CSA members are required to hold a Trustees membership. To sign up or renew your Trustees membership, please contact the membership team at [membership@thetrustees.org](mailto:membership@thetrustees.org).
- **COVID-19 Protocols**
  - We are following the Trustees guidelines for the whole organization. **As conditions change, we may adjust these guidelines to best keep our employees and all shareholders safe while also making progress back to "normal life". Please read your weekly newsletter for any COVID-19 protocol updates.**
  - All members will sanitize/wash hands, wear masks, and socially distance while picking up shares.
  - There will be a cap on the number of people in the barn, which will be monitored by our staff.
  - Shareholders should bring a reusable bag to put your produce in. If you do not bring a bag, we will provide biodegradable bags inside crates to pick up produce, and all crates will be sanitized in between uses.
  - Before going into the pick-your-own (PYO) fields, shareholders must wash hands at the provided handwashing station.
  - Shareholders should bring your own scissors to use for PYO.
- **Picking up your share**
  - Our share is set up "market style", which means shareholders get to choose from the produce available. Shareholders will either fill their own reusable bag, or a provided crate (small and large crates are provided depending on what size share you have).
  - The CSA and farm stand will be managed during pick-up times by a CSA crew member, who will display the produce, give directions for PYO, and answer other questions you have.
  - Most shareholders require at least 15 minutes to "shop" for their share. Please allow yourself adequate time to gather your share items before the end of the CSA hours. Barn doors will close, and vegetables put away promptly at closing time to allow our sleepy farmers to get home!
- **Pick-Your-Own (PYO)**
  - Once a week, shareholders may harvest Pick-Your Own (PYO) crops in addition to their regular share. Shareholders who have purchased a half share can pick their PYO crops on the week they are assigned to pick up their share. PYO are listed on a per-share basis, so if you split your share with anyone, you must also split your PYO.
  - PYO is only open during regular share pick-up hours, so allow enough time to complete your PYO before the share room closes. Be sure to note quantity limits and instructions in the barn before you go to the field to pick.
  - Please remember that PYO is for all shareholders, and in order to have enough of each crop for all members, we often wait for enough to fully mature and carefully choose the limits each week.
  - We do not allow picking during rainstorms to help keep plants free of disease and keep you safe from potential lightning in the field. **If a storm is brewing, you may be asked to leave the PYO field, and you can come finish your PYO on a share day later in the week.**
  - If you are planning to visit the Chestnut Hill livestock, please do so AFTER entering the PYO field to avoid any contamination of the vegetable fields.

- For those of you with children, they may come into the PYO fields, but please closely watch them and make sure they do not damage the plants or fields.
- **Please be respectful of the other shareholders, and do not pick more than the limits OR when items are not listed for picking!**
- **Proper picking techniques**
  - **Peas and snap beans** – hold the stem of the plant with one hand and snap the pod off with the other.
  - **Plum and cherry tomatoes** – grasp the tomato and pull gently off the plant.
  - **Tomatillos** – pull off once the fruit has filled its husk. Check the ground for ripe fruits that have fallen.
  - **Flowers** – cut stems with scissors. Do not tear flowers, as that may pull the entire plant from the ground. There will be a diagram available to help you encourage the plant to keep blooming.
  - **Herbs** – cut outer leaves/branches with scissors. Please do not cut into the woody section of the plant, as this will inhibit future growth.
  - **Strawberries** – look for fruits that are fully red and pull without squeezing. Take care to avoid stepping on the plants.
  - **Chili peppers** – different varieties of peppers are ready at different stages/colors, so please consult our CSA staff before picking.
- **Some tips on how to keep your produce fresh:**
  - **Beans and peas** – refrigerate in a plastic bag without washing.
  - **Melons** – eat as soon as possible because we pick them when they are ripe.
  - **Cucumbers, eggplants, peppers, summer squash** – wipe off until dry and store in the fridge.
  - **Leafy greens and green vegetables** – re-rinse these as soon as you bring them home, dry them in a salad spinner, and store in a Tupperware in the fridge. Another option is to put them in a plastic bag with a paper towel to absorb the moisture.
  - **Herbs** – shake out excess water and refrigerate in a plastic bag or place stems in a glass of water.
  - **Onions, potatoes, tomatoes, winter squash** – place in a paper bag in a dark, dry place that is not too hot and will not freeze.
  - **Root crops (carrots, beets, turnips, etc.)** - let dry and then refrigerate in plastic. If they are unwashed, leave them unwashed as they store best with dirt left on.
- **Kids and animals on the farm:**
  - Children are always welcome on the farm, but please note that this is a working farm, and it can be dangerous. **For the safety of your children, we must ask parents to closely supervise their children at all times.**
  - Keep an eye on them while they play inside or outside, and do not allow them to climb on any tractors or equipment unless signs indicate that it is allowed.
  - Stay on proper paths when picking in the fields, and make sure your children understand electric fencing and how to behave around any farm animals.
  - All farm animals should be approached with caution, and always assume that all fences are electric and ON.
  - Remain on the outside of fences and do not touch/feed animals unless you are with a farm crew member.
  - **Dogs and other pets (except for service animals) are not permitted at Chestnut Hill Farm** to protect livestock, ground nesting wild birds and crop fields as part of our commitment to the Town of Southborough's wishes as stated in the Conservation Restriction that they hold at the farm.

- Dogs are welcome across Rt.30 at the Sudbury Valley Trail and on the trails of the Beals Preserve.
- **What to bring... and what NOT to bring:**
  - **Bags** – due to COVID-19, we have plastic bags for your shares. For shopping in our store, you can bring your own reusable bags.
  - **PYO materials** – due to COVID-19, bring your own scissors for cutting flowers and herbs, a water container to keep them fresh on hot days, and a basket/bucket for other PYO crops
  - **Bathrooms** – a porta-potty located adjacent to the barn and is available during pick-up hours.
  - **Picnic** – feel free to bring a picnic and friends, and spend time relaxing at the farm.
  - **Pets** – please leave all pets at home. They are not allowed anywhere on the property and should not be left in a hot car.
  - **Service dogs** – if you have a licensed service dog, they are of course welcome to accompany you anywhere on the farm. They must be under strict voice and/or least control for their own safety, particularly around electric fencing.

## Who:

- **CSA Manager/Vegetable Grower**

- Jeff Hoodlet (he/him) is the CSA Manager/Vegetable Grower at Chestnut Hill Farm. Jeff grew up in Massachusetts and started farming as a Trustees volunteer after college. He later became an apprentice at Powisset Farm and branched out into various vegetable and livestock roles as he moved into management. When he's not farming, Jeff enjoys all outdoor activities with his fiancée, Jenna, and dog, Basil.



- **Agriculture Team Logistics Coordinator**

- Molly Callahan (she/her) is the Agriculture Team Logistics Coordinator for The Trustees. Molly is from Massachusetts and grew up exploring Trustees properties all her life! Before joining the team this Spring, Molly worked as a field hand and farm stand manager at Barrett's Mill Farm in Concord, MA. When she's not on the farm, Molly loves to put her music performance degree to use singing and playing the trumpet!



- If you have any questions about the CSA or agriculture in general with The Trustees, please email us at [farmers@thetrustees.org](mailto:farmers@thetrustees.org), and we will get back to you as soon as possible!

## Trustees



**The Trustees manage Chestnut Hill Farm and its Community Supported Agriculture program. The Trustees are committed to upholding the vision of Phillip and Elaine Beals to maintain a vibrant, working part of the Southborough community in perpetuity.**

**Trustees members include more than 100,000 people like you from every corner of Massachusetts. We love the outdoors. We love the distinctive charms of New England. And we believe in celebrating and protecting them – for ourselves, for our children, and for generations to come.**

**As a CSA shareholder and Trustees member we hope you will take advantage of your membership to participate in a wealth of programs around the state. Take a guided hike, bring family or friends to a seasonal festival, join a cooking class, or take a walk through some of the most beautiful landscapes, historic houses and breathtaking farms in the world.**

**Community Supported Agriculture is just one of the many happenings at Chestnut Hill Farm. You can look up what else is happening at the farm and download a map at [thetrustees.org/place/chestnut-hill-farm/](http://thetrustees.org/place/chestnut-hill-farm/).**

**Please enjoy many visits here. This is your community farm.**

**Thank you!**

### **To contact us:**

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[www.thetrustees.org](http://www.thetrustees.org)