SPRING CREEK FARM

CSA

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

SUPPORTING

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION AND FAQS

springcreekfarm@alaskapacific.edu

PRODUCTION

Providing fresh vegetables for shareholders, charities and other customers

EDUCATION

Gathering and sharing information on agriculture and food systems in Alaska

ENGAGEMENT

Offering opportunities for on-farm participation and community building

WHAT IS A CSA?

CSA stands for community supported agriculture, a concept conceived in order to support small farms that wish to market their products locally and directly to customers in their communities. Customers purchase CSA shares at the beginning of the season and receive a distribution of vegetables each week throughout the farm season.

By paying up front, CSA members support small farms by sharing in the risk of growing vegetables. The idea has helped support local food production around the country and the world and encourages customers to get to know their farmers directly, shortening the food chain and giving people access to information about how their food is grown.

WHAT'S IN A CSA SHARE?

Spring Creek Farm produces a wide range of vegetables including lettuce, mixed salad greens, carrots, beets, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, herbs, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, napa cabbage, bok choy, kale, swiss chard, peas, turnips, radishes, zucchini and more.

In June and early July, your share will include more leafy greens and salad items. In July and early August we will add some root vegetables like carrots and beets in addition to larger items like cauliflower, broccoli, tomatoes, cucumbers and zucchini. In the fall, we will keep distributing many of those vegetables while adding the heartier fall crops: potatoes, Brussels sprouts, and more root vegetables.

WHY CHOOSE SPRING CREEK FARM?

Spring Creek Farm's CSA program is unique because it is affiliated with Alaska Pacific University. As a non-profit, our efforts on the farm go beyond commercial production of vegetables. We like to think of ourselves as not only a Community Support*ed* farm, but also a Community Support*ing farm*. By supporting us, you help us support APU Kellogg Campus' Mission of serving as "a center for sustainable and socially responsible living through collaborative processes of project-based learning about resilient foods systems and renewable, innovative design." We do this through three strategic initiatives:

PRODUCTION

We provide fresh, healthy, local, and naturally grown food for members of the APU, ANTHC, and greater Palmer and Anchorage communities. We also grow vegetables for the Alaska TILTH program, which helps low-income individuals access locally grown vegetables. As we continue to grow, we plan on offering subsidized shares and volunteer-for-veggie share options to help even more people access nutritious, local food.

EDUCATION

Our farm is a living classroom that conducts research and offers educational opportunities promoting local, sustainable, inclusive food systems adapted to Northern Climates.

Last year we began a project studying cover cropping species and methods for small scale Alaskan farmers, and this year we are building a prototype root-washer and are sharing plans with other local farmers.

ENGAGEMENT

At Spring Creek Farm, we believe that small, locally supported farms can play an active role in cultivating inclusive, supportive and resilient communities. By purchasing a CSA share with us, you are helping us to build local partnerships and increase educational programming for local and indigenous foods.

As a CSA member, you can take part in our community farm days, and you might even meet a new friend at our farm stand during pick up!

IS SPRING CREEK FARM ORGANIC?

While Spring Creek Farm does not pay to be Certified Organic through the USDA, we use practices that match or exceed those standards. We have never used chemical fertilizers or pesticides on our fields, and manage soil and plant health through cover cropping, the addition of compost and organic fertilizers, crop rotation, and natural pest management techniques. If you have any other questions about our growing practices, please contact us!

HOW BIG IS A CSA SHARE?

We offer two share sizes. A **full-share** contains enough fresh vegetables to feed a typical couple or small family each week. A **half-share** is designed to meet the vegetable needs of an individual or couple. A full-share will range from 7-15 items and weigh approximately 6-15 lbs a week. A half-share will range from 5-10 items a week, and weigh approximately 4-8 lbs.

WHEN DOES THE CSA START?

The CSA begins the second or third week of June, depending on the weather.

HOW LONG DOES THE CSA LAST

The CSA program runs for 18 weeks.

WHO WILL BE GROWING MY FOOD?

Ben Swimm, the farm manager at Spring Creek, has been farming for nearly ten years in Alaska, Vermont, and upstate New York. He returned to APU as the Kellogg Farm Manager in 2019 after having been the Assistant Production Manager during the 2010 and 2011 seasons. In between, Ben managed St. Lawrence University's Sustainability Semester farm, a unique off-campus semester program for students looking for an immersive experience in Sustainability Studies, and co-managed Brown Dog Farm, which produces naturally grown flowers in Palmer, AK, with his partner, Mimi. Ben works with groups of students, interns, and volunteers to grow the vegetables at Spring Creek Farm.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Complete the CSA sign-up form and mail it to the farm (address on form) with your payment by check or email your form to us and pay by credit card to the APU accounting department via phone (number on form). Your spot is not guaranteed until we receive your payment. Registration opens in January and lasts until the end of March or our program fills to capacity.

WHAT IS ALASKA TILTH?

Alaska Tilth is a partnership between Spring Creek Farm, APU, UAF, the Matanuska Experiment Farm and Cooperative Extension that produces and distributes healthy food to people in the Mat-Su Valley. Tilth donates produce to local SNAP and Family Nutrition Educators, who use the produce as a means to give cooking demonstrations to low income community members. Please consider adding a donation to your CSA membership fee to help us fund this program!

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

MORE VARIETY

Each year is a little different, and we continue to try to improve our vegetable offerings based on feedback and previous successes. This year, we will definitely be adding tomatoes, cucumbers, and hot peppers to the CSA menu, as well as tweaking some amounts of other items like salad greens, radishes, and winter squash.

HIGH TUNNELS

We have secured funding for three seasonal high tunnel structures to be constructed on the farm in the spring of 2021. We will use these structures to grow warm-weather crops like tomatoes and cucumbers in order to further add to the variety of veggies you receive in your shares.

COMMUNITY DAYS

In 2020 we wanted to begin hosting Community Farm Days on one weekend each month throughout the growing season. Unfortunately we couldn't due to COVID-19 precautions, but we hope to get these events started this year. Each community day will begin with a group work project, and will end with a potluck and farm tour.

FOR QUESTIONS OR ENROLLMENT FORMS PLEASE CONTACT US AT: SPRINGCREEKFARM@ALASKAPACIFIC.EDU