

Ideas to Promote Employee Success with CSA

When marketing the program:

- Offer payroll deduction; begin taking money out of employee paychecks when the food deliveries start. (With this option, you need to front the farm the money in early spring.) Or, start the deductions in January so that you have collected enough funds to cover the farm memberships by late spring.
- Offer incentives via your wellness or sustainability program(s) such as a free CSA cookbook for signing up. Some companies print special bags for employees to take the produce home.
- Offer a monetary amount toward the cost of a share (\$50 off the share price for example).
- Offer a drawing for a chance to win "\$100 off " the share price.
- Feature CSA at your Employee Wellness Fair, Earth Day celebration, Lunch 'n' Learn, etc.
- Blog re: your search for a farm and/or your experiences with offering CSA at work; offer guest blogging options to your employees once the share deliveries start.
- Buy an "institutional share" and hold a drawing each week; split the share between two or three non-members to entice more employees to sign up for CSA the following year.
- Offer "CSA Member for a Week!" – when deliveries start, keep a list of employees who want to try a week's worth of veggies. When an employee is on vacation and wants to donate their share, give it away to someone on the list.
- Serve as a matchmaker/facilitator – Keep a list of single employees who want to split a share. Match 'em up! You can do the matchmaking or offer space on your Intranet for employees to find each other.

To help employees learn to use their shares:

- Offer to sell at a discount or give to your employees the cookbooks, "From Asparagus to Zucchini" or "Farm-Fresh and Fast" when they sign up (can also be used as a marketing tactic).
- FairShare offers free "How to Make the Most of Your Share" presentations.
- Amy Mach from the Goodman Community Center in Madison offers free "Intro to Food Preservation" presentations. If you are outside of Madison, invite a Master Food Preserver to discuss food preservation techniques. Contact your local Extension office.
- Offer a CSA cooking demo; FairShare can supply a list of local cooking teachers. If you are outside of Madison, invite a chef known for specializing in seasonal, local food.
- Hire a chef and offer a CSA kickoff /educational demo at the start of the growing season, a "Tour de Box," to teach your employees how to strategize their shares to prevent veggie guilt and to celebrate the start of the season.
- Offer a CSA menu planning session for spring, summer and fall boxes.
- Offer an "Ask Your Farmer" feature on your intranet site.

- Find out who are experienced CSA members among your employees and ask if they would be willing to serve as a resource for employees new to CSA; help make those connections.
- Encourage your employees to visit their farm's Facebook page and website, and to read the farm's weekly newsletter.
- Hold a cooking contest: i.e. who makes the best green beans dish?
- Facilitate a potluck meal at work, with employees making dishes from their share; invite non-CSA members to the meal.
- At the pick-up site at your company, make it fun and convenient for employees. Put up info showing how to break down the CSA box; the farm's weekly newsletter; a Swap Box for people to trade veggies; plastic bags for people who forget theirs; recipes/cookbooks featuring veggies.

To create camaraderie:

- Utilize social media (i.e. set up a fun Facebook group or a group on your Intranet site where employees can share recipes, photos, tips and ideas relating to your farm and the shares)
- "Share Bites" - Cook a dish once a month with the veggies available in the CSA box and offer "bites" to ALL employees – a good TGIF activity
- Volunteer at the farm together; if your company offers paid time off to volunteer, consider allowing employees to "count" time volunteered at the farm
- Hold an employee potluck on the farm or a Saturday morning farm tour and breakfast picnic; invite family members

The following suggestions connect employees with the work of the FairShare CSA Coalition and the larger local food movement:

- Employees could create a fund-raising project to benefit [Partner Shares](#) so that a low-income family can join a CSA farm. A donation of \$300 means an entire family can eat healthy for 20-26 weeks during the growing season!
- Promote [Bike the Barns](#) to your employees and offer a discount on the registration fee; biking 60+ miles, training over the summer = healthier employees! If you sponsor the ride, you receive free rider passes, which our CSA workplace partners have offered in drawings.
- Employees can learn about the local food movement at FairShare's website, www.csacoalition.org, where they can also sign up for FairShare's electronic newsletter which lists local, state, and regional local food events.