



# Easy Pickin's Orchard

"Farm Fun for the Whole Family"

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## 2020 CSA Season Review

**2020: Season 11.** Our 20-week season began in mid-June, and wrapped up at the end of October; Saturday pick-up folks went 1 week into November to make up for no share pick-up on July 4th. The 2 major factors affecting CSA for 2020 were weather / climate and the COVID-19 pandemic. Weather & climate issues have a significant impact on every season; the pandemic was an unexpected challenge. Here's a brief overview of how the season went.

When COVID-19 first became a serious concern for the state & region, we were fortunate early-on to have farms & farm-related work (including farmers' markets) declared as "essential," so we could begin in early spring to develop ways of doing business that would be safe & convenient for our customers. Folks buying late-winter & spring produce at the farm last year helped us to smooth out our sales & pick-up operations; some of our new CSA members for 2020 "discovered" us during that timeframe, and stayed on for CSA. In addition, concerns over the supply & safety of essential goods – like groceries – led to an increased interest in buying local. So we had a higher-than-usual number of sign-ups for CSA, making 2020 our biggest season ever: 86 full & 149 half shares (divided among the 3 weekly pick-up days), with a good mix of first-year folks and long-timers. The one downside of the pandemic for CSA participation last year was that with most businesses operating on a work-from-home basis, we couldn't offer the "satellite CSA" pick-ups we've had for several years with LEGO, Brooks Brothers and others.

Given the significantly-larger overall CSA membership in 2020, and the logistics required to pack & hand out the shares in a "COVID-safe" manner (social distancing & lots of hand-washing & "dishwashing"), share pick-up days were busy. Here we owe a shout-out of thanks to our CSA members who showed up promptly, waited their turn courteously, and got right into the swing of bringing reusable containers, repacking their shares for take-home, and making space for each other at the CSA tent & tables. The atmosphere was friendly & congenial; not so many long conversations at pick-up time because we needed to "keep things moving," but plenty of shouted greetings. We knew how much our members appreciated the work they could see our crew doing to crank out the shares with care as well as efficiency. We're likely looking forward to some months more of the same operating conditions for 2021; we feel confident that we've got this down – and that we can count on our members' cooperation & support.

As for weather & climate, the cold, damp, windy springtime made for poor pollination and thus a smaller-than-usual harvest of apples. Yet somehow we got lucky and had peaches by late summer -- a treat we can't always count on. A lack of rain, especially the first half of the summer, was tough on the vegetable crops and made us very grateful for our irrigation. (The rain we did get sometimes arrived just when we needed to pick berries, or it doused our members as they hustled to pick up their shares). Still, conditions were good enough to produce very tasty strawberries, broccoli both early & late in the season, summer & fall carrots, and cauliflower & Brussels sprouts in the fall – all of which showed up in CSA shares !



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Each week's share included several kinds of seasonal vegetables, plus fruit, & occasionally herbs. We try to offer a mix of items that make for varied meals & flexible menus. An email at the beginning of the week describes the share contents, to help with menu planning & grocery shopping; we also include hints on cooking & storage, & recipes.

For many members, CSA familiarizes them with produce they've seldom if ever had, and perhaps never cooked with, before (e.g., Asian veggies like bok choy, tatsoi, Napa, daikon). It's also an opportunity to find new ways to prepare old standbys. Being open to expanding your culinary horizons, and working with what's in season locally, is all part of the adventure of CSA !

When possible, we offer "*a la carte*" add-ons to augment the weekly share. When any of our veggies or fruit are plentiful, folks who want more than is included a given week can order extra amounts for purchase, and pay for / pick them up with their weekly share.

For a full list of each week's share offerings, click the link on our **CSA** page:

**[2020 CSA Weekly Share Contents](#)**