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Find Your Farm Share During CSA Month

ASAP will host a CSA Fair March 10 and connect consumers with digital tools for finding CSA farms

ASHEVILLE, NC (Feb. 2, 2023)—Joining a CSA (or Community Supported Agriculture) program connects you directly with local farms in your community. Members buy a “share” of a farm’s harvest upfront and receive a weekly box of fresh produce or other farm goods. The best time to sign up for a CSA is in February and early March. This year, ASAP is expanding on a national “CSA Week” in late February to promote “CSA Month” from Feb. 15 to March 15. CSA Month will include a social media campaign with CSA education and farmer features; digital tools for finding CSA programs; and an in-person CSA Fair at the YWCA of Asheville on March 10 from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The CSA Fair on March 10 will highlight farms with a CSA pickup location in Buncombe County. In addition to traditional produce CSAs, the fair will include farms with specialty CSA products, such as meat or flowers. The fair is a relaxed setting where attendees chat with farmers about their products, growing practices, payment structure, and more. Attendees can sign up for a CSA during the fair or follow up with farmers later. The fair will also feature local food tastings and activities for kids, as well as produce and food products available for purchase. The event is free and open to the public. The YWCA is located at 185 S. French Broad Ave. in Asheville. Participating farms will be announced in late February.

For farmers, the CSA Fair is a chance to build relationships, even if attendees decide not to purchase a share. “[The customers we meet at the CSA Fair] tend to really want to know the farmer and the food, meaning they are a bit more adventurous when it comes to trying new things,” says K.P. Whaley of Tiny Bridge Farm in Hendersonville. “They are interested in knowing how and what we are growing, and really want us to be successful as a farm operation. We may get some customers from the fair and that’s great. But we also start building relationships with future customers.”

For those unable to attend the fair or who are looking for a CSA outside of Buncombe County, online tools at asapconnections.org/csa help customers compare CSAs throughout the Appalachian Grown region, making it easier to choose a program that fits individual needs. The Appalachian Grown region includes Western North Carolina as well as bordering counties in South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia. Things customers could consider when choosing a CSA include convenient pickup times and locations; the farm’s growing practices; and appropriate share size (i.e., how much food). Some farms offer variations on the traditional CSA model, such as online selection, shorter commitment, or a market share (members pay upfront, but select their own produce at the farmers market each week).

[Press photos available at [this link](#). Contact Sarah Hart at sarah@asapconnections.org for more options.]

ABOUT ASAP (APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT)

ASAP’s mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food. To learn more, visit asapconnections.org.

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