

# Workplace CSA

## Supporting a healthy lifestyle



### What is a workplace CSA?

CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture. It connects you, the consumer, directly with a local farm by purchasing weekly “shares” of a farm’s harvest upfront at the beginning of a season. With that commitment early on, the farmer is able to focus more fully on growing the best possible food. In a workplace CSA, employees sign on as a group, and the farmer is able to deliver boxes directly to your place of business for convenient pick up. Employers can offer incentives or educational opportunities to encourage employees to participate. Forming a relationship with a CSA farm helps you to eat healthy while also supporting the local economy. A workplace CSA can be marketed as a benefit for employees.

### Is my workplace a good fit for a workplace CSA?

Hospitals have come to the forefront of workplace CSAs, but other health-minded businesses (gyms, yoga studios, etc.) or agencies (local government offices, nonprofits, etc.) make strong candidates as well. Because a small percentage of employees will choose to participate, larger employers tend to have more success with workplace CSAs. Do you have a CSA champion on staff who will handle farmer relationship-building, logistics, and inter-company marketing? It’s best if this person is involved with human resources or in a leadership role to ensure employer buy-in will continue even if there are staffing changes.

### What is the business’s role in workplace CSA?

Usually one or two people at the business/agency will coordinate logistics with the farmer. The CSA champion’s job is to choose a farm, find a good pickup location inside your facility, and market the program to employees. You will need to secure administrative and facilities approval before beginning. A survey of employees can also be useful to gauge enthusiasm and preferences. Note that final participation is usually lower than the number of people initially expressing interest.

For an online version of this publication, with live links, visit the resources section at [asapconnections.org](http://asapconnections.org).

**January 2019**

Written and compiled by ASAP staff. For more resources visit the resources section at [asapconnections.org](http://asapconnections.org).

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## How do employees sign up?

Employees usually sign up directly with the farm. However, if a business is offering payroll deduction, employees would sign up through work, and the company would pay the farm directly in the spring. The cost of the shares would then be deducted from employee paychecks when deliveries begin.

## What can employers do to improve participation?

Some employers offer financial help for their employees via payroll deduction or a small stipend toward the shares. Some health insurers or wellness programs may offer rebates for CSA membership. Employers can also offer non-financial incentives, such as a free CSA cookbook with sign-up, team-building CSA potluck lunches, cooking or food preservation demos, or farm visits.

## How ASAP can help:

- Connect you with farms offering CSAs who would be interested in partnering and who are a good fit for your workplace's needs.
- Provide materials and/or educational programs to explain CSAs to employees.
- Offers two CSA Fairs in March, giving you the opportunity to connect with and receive materials from many farmers at one time.
- Supply survey templates for end-of-season evaluation.

## Things to consider:

- What products and shares options would be best?
- Are employees interested in add-ons, such as eggs, meat, or fresh flowers?
- What time will boxes be delivered? Is there cold storage if employees need to leave their boxes overnight?
- What happens to the products when people forget a pick up or need to miss a date due to travel or other conflict?
- Are employees interested in visiting the farm? Does the farm offer on farm experiences for members?



### Planning Timeline:

#### January & February

Research farm offerings and options for your location; figure out where deliveries will come in and where your employees will pick up their boxes; survey employees to gauge interest.

#### March

Attend a CSA fair? Select a farm. Invite the farmer to give a presentation about their farm and what customers can expect with their shares. Advertise the program to your employees.

#### April-October

Shares begin arriving. Plan any team-building or incentive activities, such as potlucks, farm visits, etc.

#### November

Survey your employees at the end of the season and tweak your program as needed.