

#### Today's webinar will start at 11am Pacific / 12pm Mountain

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#### Getting Started with CSA

Ariel Agenbroad Community Food Systems and Small Farms Area Extension Educator – Treasure Valley University of Idaho April 21, 2020



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Type in questions for speakers (or for help with viewing & sound) into question box



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#### **Today's Presenter**



#### Ariel Agenbroad Community Food Systems and Small Farms Area Extension Educator, Treasure Valley University of Idaho ariel@uidaho.edu



#### Colette DePhelps, moderator

Community Food Systems Area Extension Educator, Northern District University of Idaho cdephelps@uidaho.edu





#### Getting Started with CSA



#### Developed by Ariel Agenbroad, University of Idaho Extension









# Objectives

- Define <u>CSA</u>
- What brings us here today
- Explore common models of CSA
- Find out if CSA is right for you
- Determine your farm goals for CSA
- Planning tools you can use to begin planning your CSA







## What is CSA?

- <u>Community Supported Agriculture</u>
- "Subscription" farming
- The USDA defines CSA as a community of individuals pledging support to a farm operation
- Growers and consumers provide mutual support, sharing the risks and benefits of local food production







## How does CSA work?

- Members or shareholders of the farm pledge or pay in advance to cover anticipated costs of the farm operation
- In return, they receive shares in the farm's bounty throughout the growing season
- There is no single model of CSA

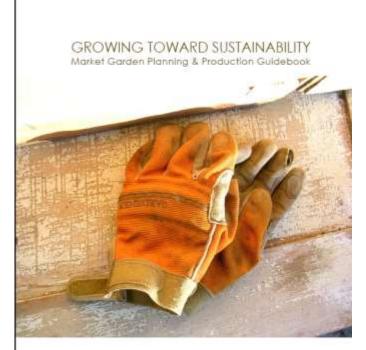






### My personal experience with CSA

- Ariel Agenbroad
  - Area Extension Educator,
     Community Food Systems and Small Farms
  - BS, Agriculture & Extension
     Education, 2005, UI
    - Former CSA farm manager, UI Student Organic Farm in Moscow



By Arel Agenbroad Soil Stewards Student Organic Form University of Idaho









### Soil Stewards Farm, circa 2006

- 3 acre campus farm (cert. organic '06)
- Managed entirely by students
- Produce marketed through CSA, farm to school, campus farmstand
- CSA season July-November
- 65 individuals in 2006 CSA
  - <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acre in production 2005-2006 season







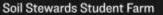




#### Prospective Students ·· Current Students ·· Parents ·· Alumni ·· Faculty & Staff ··

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Our People

CONTACT

Soil Stewards Farm

Department of Soil & Water Systems

Physical Address: 425 Farm Rd Moscow, ID 83843

Mailing Address: University of Idaho 875 Perimeter Drive MS 2340 Moscow, ID 83844-2340

Phone: 208-885-1165 Email: alicond@videho.edu Web: uidaho.edu/cals/solistewards-farm

Coogle map



♠ > COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND LIFE SCIENCES > SOIL STEWARDS FARM

#### Soil Stewards Student Farm

Soil Stewards Farm provides an opportunity for students to learn and practice the principles of sustainable, small-acreage market garden production. Our student farmers gain important hands-on experience and leadership skills through the operation of the farm. Students who work at the farm learn to apply scientific knowledge to management and receive the hands-on training to sustain the Soil Stewards Farm.

Soil Stewards Farm is dedicated to growing food for our Vandal community. We have starts going in the U of I greenhouse and will be starting to cultivate the fields shortly. Please check our <u>Facebook or Instagram</u> accounts to stay up to date on plant sales, produce sales and all other updates.



#### Soil Stewards Community Supported Agriculture 2020

Your weekly C.S.A. will contain a variety of seasonal vegetables from the Soil Stewards Farm\*

#### Produce selections change seasonally and availability is weather dependent

June - July: lettuce, kale, swiss chard, bok choi, radish, peas, cabbage, broccoli, carrots, beets, parsley, cilantro, tomatoes, summer squash, garlic scapes! August – Sept: cucumbers, basil, tomatoes, summer squash, winter squash, potatoes, onions, carrots, beets, kale, Swiss chard, lettuce, garlic, cilantro, radish, flowers!

> Cost: \$460/season (20 weeks) Pick up weekly at the Soil Stewards Farm

Email soilstewards@uidaho.edu or call 208-885-1165 to sign up!

\*Soil Stewards Farm is a student farm located just off campus near Winco and the UI Sheep Farm

## The CSA Model

- Many variations on the theme
- Fresh vegetables most common, but can also involve eggs, dairy, meat, value added, flowers
- Farmer or shareholder driven
- Can be certified organic, or not
- Can be seasonal or year long
- Can involve shareholder labor, or not\*
- Average \$300-\$600 per share or more







## **Benefits of CSA**

- Up front, early operating capital \$
- Unlike some direct marketing strategies, can be structured to fit the farm & farmer
- Lots of flexibility
- Can lead or supplement other marketing strategies







## Challenges

- Beginning and managing CSA can be complex, especially for new farmers
- Meeting shareholder demands requires careful planning, timing, etc.
- Must have a supportive customer base
- Requires a great deal of organization, communication and production skill







# Is CSA right for you?

- ✓ I have experience in producing high quality, consistent products
- ✓ My community is interested in CSA
- ✓ There may be other CSAs in my community, but the market is not saturated
- ✓ I have enough land, water, and labor resources available to start and "grow" a CSA to meet my income goals







- ✓ I enjoy working with people
- ✓I am a good communicator
- ✓ I am capable of planning for and attaining specific yield quantities
- I have a backup market for potential excess and a backup supply for unforeseen shortages
- ✓I have researched the legalities and liabilities of this type of enterprise







# Tips from the "pros"

- Talk to other growers
- Start small
- Diversify crops and products
- Explore additional marketing outlets
- Build relationships with other growers
- Collaborate when possible











### **Assessing resources & limitations**

- CSA size/profitability limited by:
  - Land
  - Labor and time
  - Water
  - Community interest
  - Production experience
  - Climate
  - Transportation







## Setting season length

- Typical CSAs in Idaho offered spring-fall
- Hoophouses or greenhouses may be able to extend their season several weeks or even months on either end
- Some fill in with extras like honey, eggs, cheese, etc.







# **Determining share options**

- Some growers choose to offer multiple sizes (whole/half, family/couple/single)
- How much food will you provide?
- Note: time and labor spent preparing different sizes can be equal

- Consider adjusting the smaller share price

- Will CSA be delivered or picked up?
- How will your shares be conveyed?







## Number of shares to offer

- Balance
  - how much food your
     land can produce
  - how much produce
     each individual
     shareholder will require
  - income goals for the season.









# **Determining your price**

- USDA estimates US households spend anywhere from \$6-\$21/week on fresh produce depending on multiple factors
- Most CSA shares ~\$10-\$40/week
- Share price may target a specific audience or reflect current markets
- What is the average market value of your weekly share?







## What does it cost your farm to produce a share? What are your goals?







## Do the math.

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- Enterprise budgets
  - Fixed and variable costs
- Production planning
  - Predicting need
  - Predicting yield
  - Scheduling planting/harvest
  - Record keeping
  - Making adjustments







# **Planning your production**

- How much do people eat?
- How much do I plant to meet my goals?
- How much food can I fit on my farm?







# **Excel planning spreadsheets**

- Originally developed as part of my graduate work, adapted over the years
- Predicts per capita vegetable needs from:
  - USDA vegetable consumption data from 1970s - present
  - Local, regional & national publications
  - Interviews with local growers who market through CSA







### Needs paired with yield averages

- Common sources of information on yields per acre or per 100 ft. row
- Keep in mind, most averages are compiled from commercial operations in varying climates
- Organic yields may be up to 30% lower during transitional years







How many CSA members do you expect?: What is your expected row length? (ft) How much % of a buffer do you want? You will need: 18 rows

10 (in whole numbers)

15

100

18 rows 100 ft long (for crops in this table)

Crops Calculated by Pounds of Yield Required Per Person									
Vegetable	Pounds per Person	Pounds per Foot of Row	Foot of Row Per Person	Pounds per 15 people	Feet of Row per 15 people	Feet of Row per 15 people WITH 10% BUFFER	Final Planned Feet of Row for 15 people (+ 10% buffer)	100 foot rows per 15 people (based on final)	
Arugula	1.00	1.00	1.00	15.00	15.00	16.50	16.50	0.17	
Basil	0.35	0.25	1.40	5.25	21.00	23.10	23.10	0.23	
Beans	3	1.50	2.00	45.00	30.00	33.00	33.00	0.33	
Beets	5	1.00	5.00	75.00	75.00	82.50	82.50	0.83	
Bok Choy	3	0.75	4.00	45.00	60.00	66.00	66.00	0.66	
Broccoli	3	0.50	6.00	45.00	90.00	99.00	99.00	0.99	

- Table automatically recalculates when you change number of CSA members, bed row length, or buffer %.
- Can adjust all need and yield columns
- Buffer % for security or to allow for extra product for additional market outlets









How many CSA members do you expect?: What is your expected row length? (ft) How much % of a buffer do you want? You will need: 430 rows

200 60 20 (in whole numbers)

430 rows 60 ft long (for crops in this table)

Crops Calculated by Pounds of Yield Required Per Person									
Vegetable	Pounds per Person	Pounds per Foot of Row	Foot of Row Per Person	Pounds per 200 people	Feet of Row per 200 people	Feet of Row per 200 people WITH 20% BUFFER	Final Planned Feet of Row for 200 people (+ 20% buffer)	60 foot rows per 200 people (based on final)	
Arugula	1.00	1.00	1.00	200.00	200.00	240.00	240.00	4.00	
Basil	0.35	0.25	1.40	70.00	280.00	336.00	336.00	5.60	
Beans	3	1.50	2.00	600.00	400.00	480.00	480.00	8.00	
Beets	5	1.00	5.00	1000.00	1000.00	1200.00	1200.00	20.00	
Bok Choy	3	0.75	4.00	600.00	800.00	960.00	960.00	16.00	
Broccoli	3	0.50	6.00	600.00	1200.00	1440.00	1440.00	24.00	



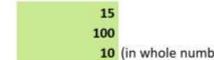






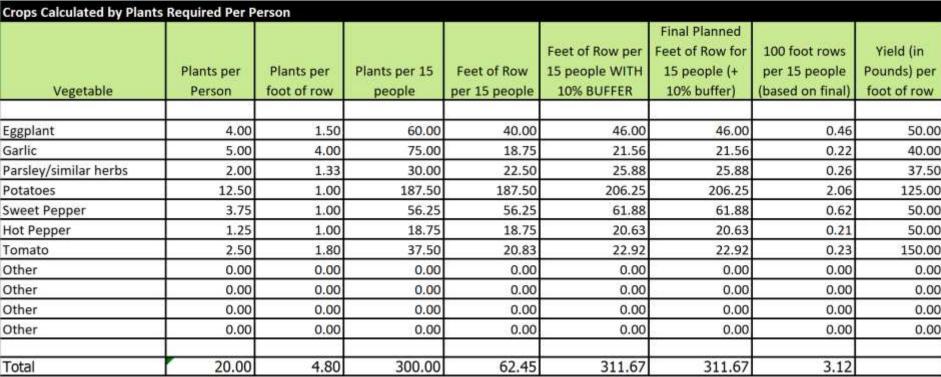
How many CSA members do you expect?: What is your expected row length? (ft) How much % of a buffer do you want? You will need:

ops Calculated by Plants Required Per Person	
- 24	



10 (in whole numbers)

3 rows 100 ft long (for crops in this table)











How many CSA members do you expect?: What is your expected row length? (ft) How much % of a buffer do you want? You will need: 76

20 (in whole numbers) 76 rows 60 ft long (for crops in this table)

200

60

Crops Calculated by Plants Required Per Person								
Vegetable	Plants per Person	Plants per foot of row	Plants per 200 people	Feet of Row per 200 people	Feet of Row per 200 people WITH 20% BUFFER	Final Planned Feet of Row for 200 people (+ 20% buffer)	60 foot rows per 200 people (based on final)	Yield (in Pounds) per foot of row
Eggplant	4.00	1.50	800.00	533.33	1600.00	1600.00	26.67	50.00
Garlic	5.00	4.00	1000.00	250.00		750.00	12.50	40.00
Parsley/similar herbs	2.00	1.33	400.00	300.00		900.00	15.00	37.50
Potatoes	12.50	1.00	2500.00	2500.00	3000.00	3000.00	50.00	125.00
Sweet Pepper	3.75	1.00	750.00	750.00	900.00	900.00	15.00	50.00
Hot Pepper	1.25	1.00	250.00	250.00	300.00	300.00	5.00	50.00
Tomato	2.50	1.80	500.00	277.78	333.33	333.33	5.56	150.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	20.00	4.80	4000.00	832.64	4533.33	4533.33	75.56	









## Additional tools developed

- Seed requirement calculation chart
- Production schedule templates
- Harvest and CSA record forms

## Email ariel@uidaho.edu to request!







## HARVEST CHART

WEEK OF

VEGETABLE	CULTIVAR	# POUNDS	# BUNCHES	NOTES
	I			

## COLLECTED BY

## VEGETABLE

BUNCHES/ BUSHEL PECK PECK BUSHEL

CSA RECORD SHEET WEEK OF

CULTIVAR

LBS/

BUNCHES/

LBS/







# Why keep records?

- Harvest records provide more accurate values of expected yield
- For example, our crops produced only 53% of expected yield on average
- We identified crops that crops met or exceeded predicted values
  - Summer Squash (80% of expected), Bok Choy (13% higher), Cucumber was also higher







325 300 275 250 225 200 175 150 125 100 75 50 25 E99plant Kale Collards Lettuce Sweet Pepper 0 Onions Leeve Squash Summer Squashwinter Broccoli Potatoes Cucumbers Bot Choy Parsnips HOLPERPET cabbage Tomato Pumpkin Vegetable

Soil Stewards 2006 Yield

Predicted Yield

Figure 4. 2006 vegetable yields compared with predicted yields in pounds of vegetable per 100 feet of row

## Low yields attributed to:

- Early, killing frost
   September 14
- Consistent night temperatures <55° F</li>
- Human error
  - Planting delays, inadequate soil cultivation, overwatering, underwatering, poor care during germination









## **Tracking share value**

- At least a few times per season, estimate the value of your shares
- Base values on local market equivalents
- Are you charging too much? Too little? Just right?







Table 13. Equivalent market value of Soil Stewards CSA shares, week 10: 9-18-2006

Peck Share (\$12/week): September 18, 2006 (Week 10)			
CROP	AVERAGE LBS. IN	EQUIVALENT MARKET	
CROP	SHARE	VALUE*	
Beets	0.8	\$1.20	
Bok Choy	0.64	\$1.91	
Carrots	1.58	\$2.37	
Cucumber	0.46	\$0.46	
Onions	0.9	\$2.06	
Baby Red Potatoes	2.64	\$5.25	
Summer Squash	0.64	\$1.91	
Winter Squash	0.74		
Tomatoes	0.22	\$0.66	

8.62

TOTAL

Our share price: \$12/week

\$17.30

Bushel Share (\$20/week): September 18, 2006 (Week 10)			
CROP	AVERAGE LBS. IN	EQUIVALENT MARKET	
CROP	SHARE	VALUE*	
Beets	0.86	\$1.29	
Bok Choy	0.68	\$2.03	
Carrots	2.38	\$3.57	
Cucumber	1.18	\$1.17	
Onions	1.64	\$3.76	
Baby Red Potatoes	3.04	\$6.05	
Summer Squash	1.9	\$5.68	
Winter Squash	1.2	\$2.39	
Tomatoes	0.62	\$1.85	
TOTAL	13.5	\$27.79	

Our share price: \$20/week

\* Average market values determined from organic produce prices at Moscow Food Coop Huckleberries Market and Safeway, summer 2006

Peck Share (\$12/week): Auc CROP	LBS. IN SHARE	AVG. MARKET VALUE
Broccoli	0.4	0.80
Cucumber	2.12	2.10
Salad Mix	0.28	1.68
Kale	0.26	2.99
Leek	0.36	1.08
Baby Red Potatoes	1.08	2.15
Parsley	0.06	0.99
Summer Squash	1.6	4.78
TOTAL	6.16	16.56

CROP	LBS. IN SHARE	AVG. MARKET VALUE
Broccoli	0.72	1.43
Cucumber	2.36	2.34
Salad Mix	0.34	2.04
Kale	0.34	2.99
Leek	0.5	1.50
Baby Red Potatoes	1.38	2.75
Parsley	0.1	1.25
Summer Squash	3.22	9.63
TOTAL	8.96	23.91

Peck Share (\$12/week): Septer CROP	LBS. IN SHARE	AVG. MARKET VALUE
Beets	0.8	1.20
Bok Choy	0.64	1.91
Carrots	1.58	2,37
Cucumber	0.46	0.46
Onions	0.9	2.06
Baby Red Potatoes	2.64	5.25
Summer Squash	0.64	1.91
Winter Squash	0.74	1.47
Tomatoes	0.22	0.66
TOTAL	8.62	17.30

CROP	LBS. IN SHARE	AVG. MARKET VALUE
Beets	0.86	1.29
Bok Choy	0.68	2.03
Carrots	2.38	3.57
Cucumber	1.18	1.17
Onions	1.64	3.76
Baby Red Potatoes	3.04	6.05
Summer Squash	1.9	5.68
Winter Squash	1.2	2.39
Tomatoes	0.62	1.85
TOTAL	13.5	27.79







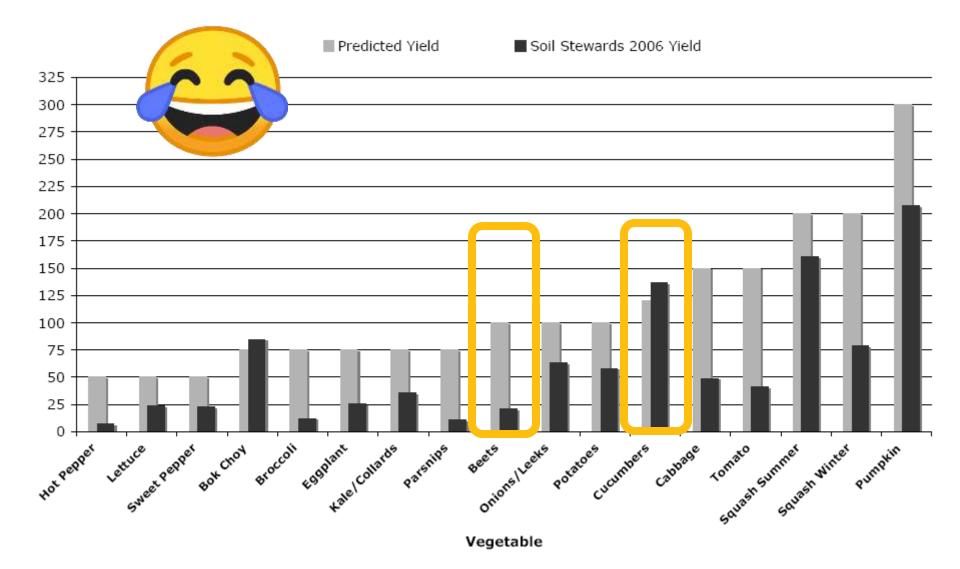
## **Communicating with CSA members**

- The most successful CSAs cultivate their customers as well as crops
- What should they expect from your CSA?
- Transparency
- Stories from the farm and farmers
- Recipes and suggestions
- Provide means for feedback from members









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## More resources for Idaho

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University of Idaho Extension

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA): A marketing strategy for small acreage producers in Idaho

by Ariel Agentoroad, Cinda Williams, Judia Cayton, and Robert Tripepi

As the line between urban and rural areas increasingly blurs, new and/or downsized farms of 1, 5, or 10 acres are common in many parts of idaho According to the 2007 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 49 percent of Idaho's farms and ranches comprise less. than 50 acres. New and experienced growers seek to make their setall. acreases profitable while caring for the land and preserving quality of lite. At the same time, many urban consumers' appetites and values are leading them to search for high quality heah, local, organic or sustainably grown food and products in their communities.

Cine increasingly viable marketing option for sustainable small farms is a Community Supported Agriculture, or CSA program. CSA can connect. formers to consumers in a mutually beneficial partnership through a produce subscription or shareholder program.

## WHAT IS CSA?

The USDA defines CSA as a community of individuals pledging support to a farm operation so that the land becomes "legally or spiritually, the community's farm, with the growers and consumers providing mutual support and sharing the risks and benefits of load production. Members or shareholders of the farm or garden pledge or pay in advance to cover anticipated costs of the farm operation and farmer's salary. In return, they receive shares in the farm's boarity throughout the growing season, as well as satisfaction gained from reconnecting to the land. Members also share In risks, including poor harvest due to unfavorable weather or pests."

## HISTORY AND GROWTH OF CSA

The CSA concept is believed to have originated in Japan in the 1970s in response to the growing industrialization of the Japanese lood production and supply tasterns. A group of women concerned about the increase in food imports and the corresponding decrease in the farming population organized a direct growing and purchasing relationship between their group and local farms. This alternative distribution system, independent of conventional

## small



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COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA) IN IDAHO:

## Seasonal eating week by week

ON HAT

by tydia Clayton, Cinda Williams, and Anel Agenbroad.

### WHAT IS CSA?

Community supported agriculture - C5A-is a collaborative, shared-risk approach to local food production that encourages consumers to purchase lood products directly from producers in a partnership of mutual commitment and benefit.

Consumers pay up-front early in the year for a subscription or 'share' of the form. As the name implies, 'Community Supported Agriculture' means that sustomers or shareholders support the farm by assuring some of the operating risk. They also share in its rewards with plentiful hish-from-the-lield. produce throughout the season

CSA originated in Europe and Japan in the 1960s by people concerned with the increase of imported loods, by 1985 the concept had arrived in the United States. CSAs have grown in popularity across North America, with current estimates suggesting more than 12,500 in operation throughout the United States. In 2012, Idaho had at least 60 farms offering CSA shares, everything from range-fed lambs or beef to a broad array of fruits and vegetables.

### WHY SUPPORT CSA?

There are plenty of reasons one might choose CSA. First of all, for good health! The USDA urges American consumers to eat more fruits and vogetables and to choose a healthier, more varied mix of these foods.

CSA also benefits local family farms and regional food systems. Many feet that CSA significantly contributes to a strong local economy. In addition to receiving farm heat products on a regular basis, members bequently receive the benefits of reconnecting with the land and participating directly in their local food system.

## WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM A CSA?

Most idaho CSAs provide farm fresh produce weekly throughout the local growing season. Many producers are diversifying their CSA options in also include fruit, flowers, eggs, meat, poultry, dairy products, honey, or other products. Some knowstive producers are creating CSAs of various sizes for different sized families or offering monthly or bi-monthly deliveries rather than weekly. Individual CSA structures are designed to meet the needs of both the producer and consumers.







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## Idaho CSA Directory

CSA (Community Supported Apriculture) are tarms which allow consumers to purchase local food products dentity from the producers by paying up-front early in the year for a subscription or "draw" of produce from the farm. A CSA can be a single farm, or a group of farms and other agriculture basinesses.

A subscription for shared usually provides an apportment of seasonal produce throughout the year which can also sary based on the CSA. Depending on the CSA. you may pick up the produce yourtest, or they may exert definer it to you.

Price for a produce CSA typically ranges from \$300 to \$600 per season and may very from 12 weeks to 11 months depending on the prowing waarm.

A CSA will by to sell all of their abunet before they begin production, so the best tive to subscribe or buy your shore of a CSA tends to be late winter or early spring.

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Community Supported Agriculture





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 Increasing the number and success of small farmers and ranchers in Idaho.
 Increasing the number and success of small farmers and ranchers in Idaho.
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The vision of the Cultivating Success<sup>™</sup> program is to increase producer and consumer understanding, value, and support of sustainable local farming systems in Idaho through educational and experiential opportunities. Partners in this program strive to create strong communities with infrastructures that provide the resources and skills needed to produce local and sustainable food and agricultural products for the residents of the Inland Northwest.



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## **Small Farm & Ranch Webinar Series**

Cultivating Success offers a **FREE** lunchtime webinar series designed to help you explore, strengthen or expand your small farm or ranch operation! **Mondays and Tuesdays at 11 am PST / 12 pm MST** 



Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> – Backyard Poultry Production Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> – Local Food System Businesses Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup> – Selling Your Products on Etsy

## https://www.cultivatingsuccess.org/webinar-series



# Please complete our post-webinar evaluation!

Our post-webinar evaluation is short and quick! And, your feedback is important!

Click on the link below or type it into your browser to complete the evaluation: <u>https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Getting</u> <u>Started\_CSA</u>

> To learn about upcoming programs and watch recorded webinars, please visit <u>www.cultivatingsuccess.org</u>



University of Idaho Extension





