



# BACK HOME FARMS

## What is a Meat CSA?



**CSA stands for “Community Supported Agriculture,” and is just one of the many ways shareholders who believe in “real, transparent food” can support a farmer.**

**But it’s not the only way.**

**What’s the difference between supporting a farmer through a CSA versus a roadside stand?**

**Or a farmer’s market?**

**WHY WOULD A PERSON CONSIDER SIGNING UP FOR A MEAT CSA INSTEAD?**

**These are great questions. And everyone who considers joining a Meat CSA should be asking them.**

**The reality is that a Meat CSA is not a good fit for everyone, and you shouldn’t feel bad if it’s not a match for you.**

**The Meat CSA shareholders who come back year after year are a “certain kind” of customer. Not a “better customer” — just a certain kind — the kind that matches the unique format of a Meat CSA model.**

**It’s best to go into the decision with your eyes wide open, and see if your expectations match the experience that a Meat CSA will give you.**

**To help you decide if a Meat CSA is right for you and before you sign up for this seasonal commitment to a specific farmer, ask yourself these five questions....**

**So here we go.**

**Ready?**



## **Q1: Is the relationship to the actual farmer important to you? (Do you want to support a farmer?)**

Effective CSAs focus on the farmer-shareholder relationship as much as the product.

In fact, surveys have shown that the number one reason for joining a CSA was to support a local farmer. CSA shareholders want to be able shake the hand that feeds them.

There's something rewarding about knowing you are doing your part to support a local farmer. Call it satisfying your "food conscience."

CSA is a mechanism you can put into your monthly routine that allows you to access great-tasting food, knowing there's a real farm family's livelihood depending on it.

This means that you are committed to staying with a specific farmer through an entire season, come thick or thin. Inherent in this arrangement is the understanding that there is a risk. Mother Nature may send too much sun or rain to inhibit crop or hay growth, and disease or sickness is another challenge we can face.

On the flip side, there may be a bumper crop of steers or hogs and you'll be enjoying extra steaks on the grill!

Meat CSA shareholders live with and embrace this reality every day.

Their motivation for supporting the farm is just as much about having the back of the farmer as it is about getting the full financial value of their share.

Make sure you read that last sentence again... it's kinda huge.

But this relationship goes both ways.

When you join a Meat CSA, your farmer will make an attempt to cultivate a connection with you too.

This means

- They learn your names and work hard to make the you fee like part of their small family.
- They might plan events to get you engaging with the farm.
- They try to add value to your life, by teaching you about their food's story, or how to prepare it.
- They do things to help you succeed at eating their food.

This doesn't mean you have to take advantage of these connecting points. But when you do, your Meat CSA experience becomes more rich for both you and the farmer.

This relationship experience is part of what you are paying for in a CSA arrangement.



## Q2: Do you value having quality meat products that actually "taste"?

We are often told our eggs sell so well because they "have taste" and that store bought eggs don't. Pork chops with no flavor. Blah.

If you're a Meat CSA prospect, you know this frustration well.

Taste matters for foodies. Because you know that putting together a terrific meal in your kitchen isn't just about your skill.

It starts with the ingredients.



The second most important quality of Meat CSA shareholder is to love food. Real food. Food that tastes like it should, because it's grown and raised in a quality environment.

In fact, Meat CSAs often create food snobs, because customers finally experience how a bone in beef roast should really taste, and they cannot go back to the grocery store meat they used to buy.

If you really love cooking and you really value taste, then you will LOVE being in a Meat CSA. Because Meat CSAs are all about providing high-quality, niche meats that make your home dining experience feel like an event.

You're paying for that taste experience when you join a Meat CSA. If you're just looking for a basic burger or chicken at the cheapest price so you can make a Sunday dinner — this is not your gig.



### Q3: Are you willing to try new foods? (Really?)

Meat CSAs will push you to try new foods and explore variety in your kitchen.

Read between the lines here: You may discover meats you love, and you may discover new meats you hate.

Part of the Meat CSA experience means getting exposed to a wide variety of meats. Maybe you've never cooked pork steaks before but wait until you discover the goodness!!

It's all part of the great goal in a Meat CSA of developing food diversity and teaching our communities (and our kids) how to eat seasonally again. Check out the farmers market for fresh veggies and mushrooms that you can pair with the meats in the Meat CSA. If you want to grow in the kitchen, you have to push yourself to try new ingredients.

## Q4: Do you need control in your menu planning?

Remember the saying: “You get what you get and you don’t throw a fit?”

Meat CSA shareholders have to learn to be flexible with their menu and make things work in the kitchen, because you often don’t know what you will get in your box .

Some people love this spontaneity. Others will be stressed by it. Think hard on this:

Are you willing to give up some control over what goes in your box? Or do you need to live by your plan?

If you’re someone that wants to have grilled burgers on Wednesday, and your box doesn’t have ground beef that week, will you be upset that you have to go elsewhere to supplement your CSA box contents? This is where you think outside the box.... what about ground pork burgers???

If so, then you may be better off buying from the grocery store or farmer’s market retail stands.

This is the number one reason non-renewing shareholders give for leaving a Meat CSA: “I didn’t get enough of the things I wanted, and I got too much of the things I didn’t.”

CSA works best for shareholders who see their kitchen as a creative space, and our meats as the “paint” for their canvas. Our website will help you with recipe ideas!

They can handle the spontaneity required and are willing to experiment with new ingredients to make old meal templates come alive in new ways. .



This is a really hard reality for some to face.

Either you don't get home to make dinner in time because your life is hectic or you end up eating take-out several times a week because you're playing chauffeur to your 3 kids. Best thing about a Meat CSA is that meat will keep in your freezer until you are ready!

If you are committed to learning how to meal plan around what is in your box, you can do it! It may be a shift from what you normally do but once you get it down you will thank yourself!



## **Q5: Are you looking for a “deal”? Are you comparing Meat CSA prices to the grocery store?**

People who fully embrace the Meat CSA model don't look for their membership to be a “deal” or a bargain.

And they don't compare the Meat CSA experience to the grocery store price table.

Read that again. This is a really key point.

It is absolutely understandable to ask, “How much does it cost?” And to then weigh the pros and cons.





Supporting a Meat CSA financially however is not just about doing a cost analysis of each cut of meat you receive in your box and comparing it to what you'd pay at Kroger or Costco.

Our farm fresh meats have added value because every one of our meats is telling a story.

Not just the story of how the food was raised, how it was harvested, or what struggles it faced to come to your plate.

Not just the story of the farmer and how you help them live out their calling to the land.

### **EVERY CUT OF MEAT IS ALSO TELLING YOUR UNFOLDING STORY.**

Our meats become a means to an end: they showcase your journey with food. They are the starring attraction in your quest to master your kitchen space and prepare a delicious meal to rival any restaurant fare — a meal you can be proud of.

This is not something any grocery store can give you.

Meat CSA shareholders appreciate this added value of our product, and are willing to pay a premium for it.

So if you're saying to yourself, "Well that's more than we'd pay at \_\_\_\_\_" ~ you may want to hit the pause button.



## **How did you do?**

Did you pass the quiz?

Remember, Meat CSA is just one model out there for getting fresh farmer food onto your table.

For those who value the story, the journey, and the farmer relationship behind the food, it can be a great option that can change the way you eat forever.

But there's no shame in passing on the Meat CSA and instead buying weekly from a farmer's market.

And that may in fact be a better fit to your style or needs. We do both, so we just want you to be in the right fit.

**Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food!**

As in all things, expectations determine how you experience the product. To set you up for Meat CSA success, make sure your expectations align with the philosophy of the Meat CSA before you commit.

**If you think you're ready, here are your next steps:**

1. Head over to the Sign Up Link on our website.
2. Choose your pick up site. (We've got 2 to choose from).
3. Watch for your confirmation email.
4. We begin sending you a series of emails to onboard you into our program.



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