



Jobs

Most CSAs employ one or more people to grow produce and manage the farm. Larger CSAs may also employ other staff to do admin, deliveries, or to organise educational activities and support volunteers.

The majority of CSAs have a model where the farmer(s) does the majority of the work but they also provide opportunities for voluntary work by members or other volunteers. But there are some community-led CSAs where all the work is done on a voluntary basis by the members and there are no paid employees (see Volunteers section).

Growing for or running a CSA requires social skills as well as agricultural skills and so you need to ensure that any staff you take on are able to work with your CSA members. Research as part of the Making Local Food Work programme found that CSA employees frequently report high levels of job satisfaction thanks to a supportive work environment and regular contact with the community that the initiative supplies.

Recruiting a farmer or grower

If you need to recruit any staff, first of all post the job advert on your own website, Facebook and Twitter. If you are a member of the CSA Network UK you can advertise for free on our website, and social media. You could also place an advert in the farming press, or Environment Jobs website, depending on who you are trying to recruit.

Contact other CSAs or organic producers, or professional grower networks such as the Organic Growers Alliance and Future Growers at the Soil Association. They may be able to put you in touch

with suitable candidates who have trained with them and they can advertise job opportunities or placements on their websites. During the height of the growing season you might also need to recruit additional workers on short-term basis.

Qualities to look for in a CSA employee include:

- ▶ Do they have experience of organic or biodynamic farming methods?
- ▶ Do they work well with other people both individually and in large groups?
- ▶ Are they willing to, and capable of, passing on their skills?
- ▶ Do they have experience of, or an interest in, volunteer management?
- ▶ Are they interested in working in community-led enterprise?
- ▶ Are they flexible and good humoured?

For ideas of what to include in a job description and person specification, do an internet search for “job description” and “community farm” to find examples from other CSAs e.g. fiveacrefarm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/main-grower_jd.pdf and simshillsharedharvest.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/assistant-grower-job-description.pdf

Rates of pay in agriculture are generally quite low but most CSAs aim to pay at least the Living Wage which is currently £8.45 an hour or £9.75 in London. Some may offer more to a well-qualified or highly-experienced candidate.



Apprentices and trainees

There is a growing demand for horticultural traineeships/apprenticeships/ internships. CSA farms can have an important role in fulfilling that need while inspiring the next generation of CSA producers. Many projects benefit from taking on trainees and having an additional pair of hands is an attractive proposition. However, remember that the main beneficiary of these is supposed to be the trainee, not the farmer! If you take on trainees as growers you will be expected to put in considerable time and effort into their development and provide a structured programme. This can be highly rewarding on both sides, but as with most things in life, you get out what you put in.

There are many people who would like the opportunity to embark on a more sustainable and satisfying lifestyle. CSA is an opportunity for new entrants to farming to gain access to land and have the support of an informed community. CSA initiatives provide an opportunity to gain valuable experience in practical growing and farming in a community environment.

Trainees and apprentices are a feature of a lot of CSAs and there is a lot of demand for placements. If you are running a formal apprenticeship scheme you will need to pay apprentices the national minimum wage at least. However most CSAs have more informal traineeships and provide a basic stipend, food and accommodation. For more in depth information about traineeships and some case studies from CSAs go to: communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/FutureFarmers2.pdf

Volunteers

Most CSAs rely to some extent on voluntary help. This can be very beneficial for both the farm and the volunteers, who may learn new skills, meet new friends, learn more about food and farming, improve their mental health and get fit! Your volunteers may include a combination of some or all of the following:

- ▶ members - who may be required to volunteer for a certain number of hours, or else just choose to help out on a regular or occasional basis
- ▶ work shares - who are members who commit to working on the CSA, maybe one day a week, in exchange for their share of the produce
- ▶ other local people - if you advertise your volunteer workdays widely other people might come along. You can also work with other community groups or businesses to get volunteer teams to help out
- ▶ Woofers or other overseas volunteers - who may come to stay for a few weeks or months but will need somewhere to stay and food.

See Volunteer section for more information.

Payroll

A good accounts package can handle pay roll (which is now real time with HMRC) although a payroll company might be easier for you (an accountant might do this as part of the service they offer). If you pay growers as self-employed you are responsible for ensuring that they are genuinely self-employed (they should be registered) and this generally means they don't have regular hours or pay, they use their own equipment and/or obtain income from more than one source otherwise you might have a hefty fine/NI bill if the books are inspected.

Pensions

From 2016 you need to automatically enrol anyone eligible on a pension scheme (basically those over 25 earning more than £10,000 per year through the payroll). You also need to offer the pension to others earning below this who will have the right to opt in. The company will have to match contributions for eligible persons but not necessarily those who elect to opt in and this will rise from 1% to 5% of salary over the coming years (for both employee and employer).

What does
CSA mean
to you?



Giving farmers
a more secure
and predictable
income

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OTHER USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

- ▶ See the job section on our website for any CSA vacancies and let us know if you want your jobs advertised here communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk/news-events/jobs/
- ▶ Moss Brook Growers also have a very useful section on recruitment and labour in their farm manual http://www.mossbrookgrowers.co.uk/?page_id=499