



CSA Charter

The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Network UK charter sets out the defining values of principles of community supported agriculture schemes in the UK.

It is not laying down rules but stating what we are striving to achieve.

Each CSA farm is on their own journey within that context. The charter is also the binding document which enables CSA farms to form the CSA Network UK under a clear statement of our common values and working principles.

It is intended to be inclusive of all types of CSA farms while maintaining a clear understanding of what a CSA farm is.

CSA in the UK – models for social, nutritional and environmental equity

CSA has been defined in the UK as meaning any food, fuel or fibre producing initiative where the community shares the responsibilities, risks and rewards of production in a spirit of mutual trust and openness. This may be through ownership, investment, sharing the costs of production, or provision of labour.

This partnership between producer and consumer supports three pillars which represent our core values:

People Care

A fair and steady income for the producer and a relationship based on trust with the consumers/members. Access to healthy food at affordable prices.

Earth Care

A chance for the land and biodiversity to flourish due to ecological farming methods and shared interest in these methods of production.

Fair Share

A share in the harvest of healthy (mostly organic or biodynamic), local and low carbon produce; a connection with the producer, the land and each other. This includes a commitment to support the farmer through both good and poor harvests.

Common practices

The CSA model is quite diverse in the UK, ranging from the purist model, where the farm is self-

sufficient and receives regular support from members with farm work and administration, to models where the bulk of the work and organisation is by the farmer, with some supplementary produce bought in, during the hungry gap for instance. It is up to the farm and community to build a model which suits them best.

However the CSA is structured, certain common working practices are demonstrated by all CSA farms (although a farm may demonstrate all or only some of these characteristics).

These include:

Direct distribution

Members have a relationship with the producer and the production. CSA farms are not food hubs or shops; although they may buy some produce or supplementary items in to bulk up their share. CSA may make up only part of the whole farm enterprise.

Shared risk

Producer and consumer share the risks of production through a pre-arranged agreement between members and the farm for instance on the crops to be grown and fair price to be paid or through investment in the farm (whether financial or through time commitment).

Connection to the farm

Members have the opportunity to understand the extraordinary commitment a farmer demonstrates to produce our food, and an opportunity to be connected to the working life of a farm and what's produced there.

Membership of the CSA Network UK

By becoming member of the CSA Network UK, CSA farms are agreeing to manage their projects based on the common values identified in this charter.

If a CSA farm decides to depart from these common values entirely, they forfeit their membership of the CSA Network UK.

This charter is written based on the feedback of many people involved in the UK CSA movement, including many types and geographically diverse CSA farms.