

1. Project name and contact information

Project Title: Seniors and CSA: Market Research for Innovation and Participation
FNE06-591

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2. Goals

The goals of the project were to carry out market research among senior citizens to investigate their interest in participating in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), and to determine what modifications could be made to the traditional CSA set-up to better serve Senior Citizens. We set out to develop and implement a Senior-friendly CSA model that would have benefits for both Hearty Roots Community Farm and local Senior Citizens, which could also serve as a model for other CSA farms.

3. Farm profile

Hearty Roots Community Farm has grown significantly since the project proposal was submitted in early 2006. Since 2005, the farm has increased the number of CSA shares offered from 75 to 310; the farm has increased the number of households served from 110 to 500; the farm has rented an additional 20 acres of land, and now cultivates about 10 of those acres per year; and annual sales have increased from \$50,000 to \$200,000 per year. The farm is still run by two co-owners, Benjamin Shute and Miriam Latzer. In 2008, there will be an additional 3 full-time employees during the season, and 2-3 part-time employees during the season.

Despite the significant growth in shares offered, the farm has sold out its CSA shares more quickly than ever for the 2008 season, and has seen unprecedented demand for CSA shares both on our farm and at other CSA farms. By April of 2008, all 310 shares had been sold, with no marketing effort besides word-of-mouth. This contrasts with seasons past, in which modest marketing efforts succeeded in selling all available shares no earlier than June.

4. Participants

The primary participants in organizing the project were Benjamin Shute (project leader and Hearty Roots Farm co-owner and manager), Lindsey Lusher (researcher and graduate student from Bard College) and Miriam Latzer (Hearty Roots Farm co-owner and manager). Also participating were the project advisor from the Bard College Center for Environmental Policy; the Senior Citizens who were surveyed by the researcher (40 Seniors filled out printed surveys); the Seniors who participated in focus groups with the researcher (13 Seniors participated); the participants in our trial Senior CSA site in Kingston, NY (9 participants); and staff at Ulster County Cornell Cooperative Extension office, who hosted the Senior CSA distribution site and helped with outreach.

5. Project activities

Project activities included four stages: preliminary research among existing Senior CSA programs in other areas (completed June 2006), outreach and research among Senior Citizens in our community (completed in August 2006), the trial Senior CSA program (August 31st-October 26th, 2006) and the evaluation and planning of next steps (2007).

Preliminary research was conducted by interviewing with two farmers with active CSA programs (Cheryl Rogowski from W. Rogowski Farm in Warwick, NY and Sam Hammer from Holcomb Farm in Granby,

Connecticut), and gathering information from two senior centers that host CSA distributions (the two senior centers are in Hartford, Connecticut, and are served by Holcomb Farm in partnership with the local non-profit Hartford Food System). This initial information gathering provided perspective for follow-up research and insight for the creation of the trial program.

Outreach and research among Senior Citizens in our community sought to gather information about Seniors' food preferences, buying habits, knowledge of CSA, preferred sources of fresh produce and potential willingness to participate in a CSA program. Focus group screening surveys were administered to 40 individuals at local senior centers, exercise classes and at a senior outdoor festival. Surveys were intended to screen potential focus group participants and understand seniors' level of familiarity with CSA. Questions to screen focus group members included general willingness to participate and dietary habits. Seniors who did not eat vegetables or cook at home were not asked to participate.

Participants in Red Hook, NY were recruited from two senior exercise classes sponsored by the Dutchess County Office of the Aging, in addition to the Friendship Center congregate meal program. The researcher attempted to also meet with the Red Hook Senior Citizen Club, but this group's regular meeting was not scheduled until after the trial share was set to begin. Participants in Kingston, NY were recruited primarily at a Senior Picnic held annually at the Rotary Park in Kingston, but also at the senior exercise class run by Kingston Parks and Recreation. The senior picnic proved an especially good recruiting event because was a gathering of many local senior groups. The most useful contact for the Kingston groups was Pat Johnson, the instructor for a weekly senior exercise class and director of other senior activities for Parks and Recreation.

At each activity, potential focus group members were given a screening survey to determine whether each person would be a likely CSA member. A 'likely member' was a person who reported cooking at home and preparing vegetables more than 1-2 times per week. The screening survey was completely voluntary and each participant was given a form explaining the purpose of the survey in accordance with the Internal Review Board (IRB) guidelines (approved by the Bard College IRB). From survey results, each senior was given a ranking (1-5; most-least likely to be interested in CSA). From these rankings, the most-likely farm share members were contacted and invited to participate in the focus group.

Although focus group participation was lower than we had hoped, the groups yielded very useful information for the formation of our trial CSA program. The Red Hook Focus group was held at the nearest Dutchess County Office of the Aging Friendship Center in the early afternoon. Four members attended the group: one from the Friendship Center meal program and three from the exercise program. In the Kingston area, despite lots of interest expressed by seniors, only four actually attended the group: one from the senior picnic and three from the exercise classes. A third focus group was held at Hearty Roots Farm during the regular CSA pick-up hours; five senior citizens who are currently members of Hearty Roots were invited to participate.

After focus groups were completed, the researcher met with farmers to plan the implementation of the trial Senior CSA program.

The trial Senior CSA program began at the end of August, 2006. The trial program was to last 9 weeks and was located in the city of Kingston, NY. To sign up members, the researcher did extensive outreach in the Kingston area to senior housing, AARP, government services, churches, senior citizen housing and exercise programs. Program directors at these outlets were given fliers advertising the senior CSA program and, when possible, the researcher also followed up with a contact at various locations to promote the program. Personal phone calls were also made to many of the screening survey participants and focus group participants, with whom the researcher had made personal connections. The pick-up location, at the Ulster County Cooperative Extension office, was selected for several reasons: a staff person at the office was enthusiastic about the project; and the location was adjacent to a senior housing facility and to public transportation, and also had parking for cars. The vegetable pick-up hours were scheduled on Wednesdays

between 4pm-5pm; members who were unable to make it to pick up their vegetables had bags packed up for them and left in the refrigerator at the Cooperative Extension office, where they could be picked up during business hours. Because the seniors in our group expressed strong preferences for certain vegetables, we offered more choice in the CSA share than we do at our standard CSA sites. Members were offered 5 to 6 vegetable items per week, to be selected from about 10 items (sometimes flowers were offered as a bonus item). This is in contrast to our standard CSA share, which consists of 8-12 items per week in larger quantities. The quantity/weight of each item (such as a bunch of carrots, or a head of lettuce) was intended to approximate a quantity that is available at most supermarkets or farmers' market. The cost for 9 pick-ups was \$80, or just under \$9 per week, about half of the cost of our standard CSA share. The lower price and smaller share size were offered at this site to address Seniors' smaller household sizes and concern with cost. Members were given the option of paying in full up front, or half up front and half after the program began. Members were asked to fill out a survey upon completion of the program.

The evaluation and planning began after the completion of the trial, when the Hearty Roots farmers and the researcher discussed the potential future for the project, evaluating the trial CSA and the experience of Seniors at the regular Hearty Roots CSA sites. They used the surveys from the Senior CSA trial site and from the standard CSA sites, as well as figuring out the economic viability of continuing a Senior CSA focused program. In the end, it was determined that due to the difficulty of recruiting Senior Citizen CSA members, despite many efforts being made to make CSA particularly attractive and accessible, it was not feasible for Hearty Roots Farm to continue a Senior-specific CSA program for the following season.

6. Results

Preliminary research

The interviews that were carried out with existing Senior CSA projects in other areas were instructive in guiding our trial Senior CSA project:

Holcomb Farm

Holcomb Farm works with many social organizations throughout Hartford, CT to improve local food security. In addition to working with low-income seniors Holcomb Farm also partners with social service organizations, health centers and food banks. According to Sam Hammer, director of Holcomb Farm, the farm attempts to provide programs to Hartford communities that provide both "meaning and value". Organizationally, Holcomb Farm works with these organizations by providing institutional CSA shares rather than typical individual CSA shares. An institutional share is approximately 150/lb for 20 weeks and 1/2 shares are also offered. The cost of the share to these shares to the farm is \$4000-4500/year, but the farm is able to charge only \$1200/year with the help of grants and donations. The largest funder of the program is the North Central Area Agency on Aging, the organization that helped Holcomb Farm originally develop the program.

Organizational shares have less diversity than individual CSA shares. Institutions are responsible for dividing shares for individuals at their location. Although the farm offers some selection at the outset of the season, they do reserve the right to control the contents of the share based on seasonal selection. The farm delivers about half of their organizational shares and about half are picked up at the farm.

The researcher visited two sites where Holcomb Farm distributes vegetables to low-income seniors. Sites included a busy senior center and a housing complex for senior citizens. Both organizations purchase yearly organizational shares and have volunteers or paid staff divide shares into smaller portions for seniors. At one center, the center's membership cost actually included the price of the share and at other location, seniors were charged \$20/year.

Holcomb farm presented each organization with a list of crops on a yearly basis and allows each to choose vegetables for the share. Ethnic background strongly influenced food selection at these sites. For example, the site with the large african american population had very high demand for collard greens, whereas the site with a large hispanic population indicated that they received too many greens each week. The opportunity to select vegetables was clearly very important to the success of this program. Seniors also visit the farm once a year to pick strawberries.

Senior CSA programs were incorporated into nutritional programming at both locations. Although not the program was currently not running, the senior housing facility said that the farm used to run highly successful and popular cooking classes at the housing complex. Because cooking classes were no longer running, the program coordinator said that many seniors "didn't know what to do with the vegetables". The lack of connection between the farm and the institutions was a concern of both the farmer and the institutions. Both felt that the program would be more successful if there was a stronger connection between the two.

Lastly, both institutions mentioned the success of the farmers' market coupon program. Each year, seniors at both centers are offered \$15 vouchers for local markets.

W. Rogowski Farm

The W. Rogowski farm developed their senior program out of personal connection with the local senior community. The Rogowski Farm operates in Warwick, New York that is the largest town in New York State. According to owner Cheryl Rogowski, many local supermarkets went out of businesses in a few short years and many seniors were left with few options to buy fresh produce. Because of community outcry as a result, Cheryl went to the Mayor of Warwick and asked permission to start a senior CSA program.

In the first year, the program ran for 24 weeks and charged \$100 per share (this has since been shortened to 20 weeks). Enrollment was 22 in the first year and the farm offered delivery with volunteers to home-bound seniors. The farm operated at a loss to make this program available and balanced the farm business with profit from the regular CSA program.

The Rogowski farm has created a non-profit to continue this work, Seniors Share in the Harvest. To fund the program, they have held benefit dinners and are seeking grant funding.

The only change in the program is that home delivery is no longer available. The program has been extremely popular. The farm has advertised in the local newspapers, through word of mouth, on local radio shows and at farmers' markets.

The farm recommends that senior shares are very light on green, leafy vegetables and heavy on beets, carrots and traditional standbys. Although Cheryl points out that younger seniors are more adventurous and willing to try new varieties and unfamiliar recipes. The farm does accommodate for special diets. In 2006, the Rogowski Farm had 25 senior members.

Outreach and research among Senior Citizens in our community

Senior survey takers were between the ages of 50 and 85, the average age being 76. The wide majority (85%) of seniors were female. 15% of survey takers reported that they had heard of CSA, but only one senior had joined a CSA in the past. All but one senior said that she or her spouse cooked at home. Seniors were also asked if they cooked at home and if they used vegetables in their cooking. From the surveys, (50%) 14 seniors reported that they cooked every meal, (7%) 2 seniors cooked 5-7x/week, (28%) 8 seniors

cooked 3-4x/week and (7%) 2 cooked 1-2x per week. (10%) 3 seniors ate veggies 1-2x week, (28%) 8 seniors 3-4 and (50%) 16 every meal.

Focus groups were conducted with CSA members and non-CSA members. Meetings with CSA members focused on the experiences of seniors within the Hearty Roots CSA. Meetings with non-CSA members focused on current food habits and local farming culture. The researcher then introduced the concept of CSA, discussed the Hearty Roots existing CSA and asked for reaction and feedback from participants. Seniors were specifically asked to help generate ideas for a new model to include seniors in CSA and address issues of cost, transportation and marketing.

Focus Groups

Economic constraints were a primary concern in all focus groups, especially among non-CSA members. One senior CSA-member described her own economic constraints and her appreciation that Hearty Roots had offered her a half-share at a subsidized rate. This same member described her membership at Hearty Roots "as the best bargain in town", but said that other seniors in her development did not agree.

Seniors were very concerned about the initial outlay of money, especially among seniors with fixed incomes. At the Red Hook focus group, participants indicated that the price of the Hearty Roots current CSA program was very expensive, although they were not able to compare this price with how much they were currently spending on vegetables. Seniors' food choices in this particular focus group were strongly influenced by price. Seniors reported that they regularly buy vegetables on sale and freeze them for later. Seniors also reported that they generally avoid expensive grocery items.

1. CSA Member Focus Group

a. Hearty Roots Farm

Five current members of Hearty Roots Farm participated in a focus group. All participants in this group were female and between the ages of 55-85. Almost all CSA members had joined Hearty Roots because of personal contact with one of the farmers. Seniors offered several reasons that they enjoyed the Hearty Roots CSA, including "supporting a local farm", supporting the farming "way of life", vegetable freshness and learning to cook new vegetables. Seniors also identified various barriers to more seniors joining the farm including transportation to the farm, accessibility at the farm site, fear of change and the initial outlay of money required by the CSA model. Suggestions to making CSAs more senior-friendly included removing these barriers, large-print newsletters, senior-accessible pick your own areas and education. Participants suggested that farms reach out to seniors through religious institutions, senior citizens meetings, AARP newsletters, Elder Hostel, local gyms that cater to seniors citizens and the Bard College Lifetime Learning program. Seniors stressed that seniors are a very wide age group and that needs and preferences would widely vary from younger members to oldest members. For example, a participant and her mother (both seniors) participated in the focus group. Whereas the mother remembered canning and preferred the plain taste of vegetables, her daughter said she preferred more gourmet and complicated recipes.

Seniors in this group had a very high level of awareness about the disappearance of local farms and each member identified joining the CSA as a way to support local agriculture. Seniors clearly enjoy local farm culture, rural landscapes and the taste of fresh, local vegetables.

2. Non-CSA Member Focus Groups

a. Kingston

All focus group participants in this group were all female and long-term residents of the Hudson Valley. There are not any CSA programs currently operating in Kingston, but there is a local farmers' market. All but

one senior reported purchasing the majority of vegetables at supermarkets, although all spoke positively about the farmers' market. Seniors described going directly to farms in earlier years and purchasing from farmers. Participants happily reminisced about these experiences, but agreed "those days are gone." Seniors described "the past" when fresh vegetables were widely accessible from local farms at reasonable prices. Seniors complained about the general lack of food access in urban Kingston and reported that the recently started farmers' market was their only access to farm fresh vegetables. Due to accessibility issues, most seniors food options were limited to two large supermarkets in a local mall.

In terms of barriers to CSA, seniors identified food storage, transportation and price. Participants suggested that farmers reach out to kitchens and food service at senior citizens' housing. Transportation was identified as a particular issue in Kingston where many seniors are dependent on public transportation, "I love the farmers' markets, but I just can't get there." Seniors emphasized that any program for seniors would need to be in highly accessible and centrally-located venue.

Seniors in this group also discussed the trend of farms being converted to housing. Participants listed six or seven family owned farms (by the family name) that were converted to housing or retail within their lifetimes. About half of the participants expressed that they considered land use and the viability of the farming industry when purchasing food.

b. Red Hook and Rhinebeck

Four seniors participated in this focus group, all of whom were women. Participants in this particular focus group all lived independently and cooked for themselves. Three of four of the seniors in this group found out about the focus group through the local senior exercise program. Seniors in this group indicated that their food choices were strongly influenced by "what's on sale." Seniors told the researcher that they often purchased frozen, not fresh vegetables. Seniors store choices were also influenced by transportation. One participant only shopped at the IGA because her daughter could drive her to the store.

Seniors recalled that they used to can, make jelly and juice from local farmers' fruits and vegetables when their children were young. These days, however, participants responded that they "just buy a can". Participants spent a good amount of time comparing their tomato sauce recipes from fresh tomatoes. Seniors said that supermarket vegetables "taste completely different" than farmers' vegetables. One participant remarked that farm fresh vegetables "have a flavor all their own." Another was upset that they couldn't purchase a New York State apple in the supermarket.

Participants generally agreed that organic vegetables and farmers' market vegetables were very expensive. Dietary restrictions were also a concern in the group. Given that 2 of the 4 women were single in the focus group, they were also concerned about share size.

Trial Senior CSA program

Overall, the seniors who participated in the CSA trial were satisfied with their experience. Only one of the nine participants stopped picking up his vegetables half-way through the trial, and did not make his second payment. We were unable to reach him to determine his reasons for dropping out. Our follow up surveys with the participants revealed the Seniors' feelings about the experience, and their preferences for specific types of vegetables. Seven of the nine original participants filled out surveys.

Although we situated the Trial CSA site on the same block as a large Senior Housing complex, we were successful in recruiting only one member from that site. Most members travelled more than 5 miles, by car, to participate in the CSA. When asked if they would be willing to travel further to participate in the CSA, such as to Woodstock, NY or Tivoli, NY (where Hearty Roots Farm has existing CSA sites), most members said that they would not.

Most members responded that the overall quantity of the share, and the quantity of each item in the share (such as the size of a bunch of carrots), were just right. All survey respondents found the quality of the vegetables to be better than average or excellent, and all found the value of the share to be average or better than average. Members found that there were adequate choices between vegetables at pick-up, and having many choices was important to most members.

When asked to rank their reasons for joining the CSA, respondents expressed the strongest interest in the freshness of the produce, the environmental concerns, and helping to preserve local farms. There was also strong interest in the fact that the food is grown organically, and in feeling a sense of being part of a community. There was less concern with feeling connected to a farm, price, and convenience. The relatively low ranking of "price" on the list of concerns contrasts with the findings of the focus groups, in which economic constraints were frequently cited by Seniors as guiding their food buying decisions.

When asked to rank their satisfaction with the program on a scale of 1 to 5 (Not Satisfied - Very Satisfied) all members chose 4 or 5, with a mean value of 4.3.

Members were also surveyed about their preference for different varieties of vegetables. When the findings were averaged, the list of vegetables from most preferred to least preferred is as follows: Melons, Broccoli, Onions, Red Tomatoes, Basil, Beets, Garlic, Lettuce, Bell Peppers, Tomatoes, Heirloom Tomatoes, Cabbage, Kale, Winter Squash, Arugula, Carrots, Spinach, Summer Squash, Zucchini, Chard, Eggplant, Mustard Greens, Collards, Bok Choi, Turnips, Parsley, Radishes.

7. Conditions

Because of the nature of this research, growing conditions on the farm (which were fairly normal) did not affect the results of the project.

8. Economic findings

When this project was initiated, it was expected that the small trial Senior CSA site would be unprofitable for the farm, as taking several hours out of the day and driving the delivery van 33 miles round trip to sell 10 CSA shares (for revenue of \$90 per trip, before harvest and production costs) is a guaranteed money-loser. However, it was hoped that this model could be scaled up to the point where it was profitable, or at least breaking even. However, this model would need to be scaled up to include twice as many members as a typical CSA site in order to be as profitable, since the Senior CSA shares are half of the size and price of a regular CSA share. If there had been strong interest among Seniors in this program, or we had located a social service organization willing to take on the outreach, this might have been possible. However, the most significant barrier that we faced was the difficulty of recruiting CSA members from the Senior community. We estimate that we would need at least 120 Senior members at a site for the trip to be profitable for the farm; we had enormous trouble finding just 10 members for our trial. Therefore, scaling up this Senior CSA model to a point of profitability appears impossible for Hearty Roots Farm.

It is instructive to examine how the two Senior CSA programs that we researched in our preliminary research have managed to make their projects economically feasible: at the Rogowski Farm, they have transitioned their Senior Share program to a non-profit organization, because they were losing money on its operation. At Holcomb Farm, which is a non-profit itself, they are able to use the resources of their partner social service organizations, and the efficiencies that come with their "institutional share" model, rather than the standard individual share model.

9. Assessment

We have determined that establishing a CSA program focused on serving Senior Citizens is not an appropriate goal for a typical CSA farm. We had great difficulty recruiting Senior members for our trial

Senior CSA site, despite the fact that these CSA shares were made much more attractive than a typical CSA share (they were priced lower, offered for a shorter period of time, and offered for pick up within walking distance from a senior housing site). It was a struggle to sign up even ten Senior participants, even though we undertook exhaustive recruitment efforts, and we had the unusual advantage of being able to pay a dedicated researcher who made personal connections with area Seniors and taught them at length about CSA. Although the Seniors who did participate were satisfied with their experience, the amount of effort expended in recruitment greatly outweighed the advantages of adding new members to our CSA, especially given that as of 2008 we have overwhelming demand for our CSA shares from the community at large without having to engage in any advertising whatsoever.

In our research, we did find examples of successful partnerships between CSA farms and Senior Citizen communities; however, most of these involved the participation of an existing social service agency that took care of outreach, distribution logistics, and sometimes subsidizing costs for produce. We would recommend pursuing a Senior Citizen specific CSA site only to a farm that had a strong connection with a dedicated social service organization; or a farm that exists as a non-profit, whose mission includes this goal and who has funding for staff people to take on these tasks.

10. Adoption

While we will continue to happily serve our Senior members who belong to our existing CSA sites, Hearty Roots Farm will not embark on any further Senior-specific CSA projects, unless approached by a support organization willing to take care of the logistical issues that make these projects impractical for us. In our effort to create a CSA share model that would be particularly palatable to Seniors, we compromised our standard model to the point that it was not economically feasible for our business; even under these circumstances, we had trouble finding Seniors who were interested in participating.

11. Outreach

At the outset of this project, we hoped to establish a model for a Senior Citizen specific CSA model that could be adapted by CSA farmers in many areas, benefitting Senior communities and the farms themselves. Because we were unable to establish a successful Senior Citizen specific CSA, we have not been able to pass a successful model along to other farmers. We have posted the results of our research on our web site, <http://www.heartyroots.com/seniorcsa.html>, where it is available to other farmers who might attempt a project similar to ours. However, further outreach such as presentations at conferences, or the publication of a written Senior Citizen CSA manual, are not appropriate due to the unsuccessful results of our project.

12. Summary

Hearty Roots Community Farm set out to investigate the interest of Senior Citizens in participating in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), to determine what modifications could be made to the traditional CSA set-up to better serve Senior Citizens, and to test out these findings in a pilot CSA project. Other farms' Senior Citizen focused CSA programs were researched; Seniors in our local area were interviewed in focus groups to determine their preferences and needs; and a trial Senior-focused CSA distribution was established near a Senior Center in Kingston, NY in 2006. Although the nine Seniors who participated were mostly satisfied with the trial CSA program, this trial was deemed unsuitable for the farm itself. The outreach process to find Senior members was overwhelming for the farm; the modifications that made the CSA system acceptable to these trial members were not sustainable for the farm in the long term; and the appeal of doing extra work to cater to Senior members was unappealing to the farm, given the extremely high demand for regular CSA shares from the community at large. Therefore, the farm will not be replicating this model in the future, nor does it recommend establishing a Senior Citizen focused CSA site to other farms, unless they have strong connections to existing social service organization, or non-profit resources, to help make this project workable and sustainable.

13. Attachments

Attached to the report please find:

1. Project Budget (proposed and actual)
2. Organizational interview guide
3. Focus group screening survey
4. Senior Citizen outreach flyer
5. Trial participant follow-up survey
6. Trial participant follow-up survey results

Benjamin Shute
April 29, 2008

Organizational interviews:

Research Question	Interview Question
<p>What are the current programs connecting seniors and local agriculture?</p>	<p>Please describe the program that you are involved with.</p> <p>What is the selection of product offered to seniors?</p> <p>What is the price to seniors?</p> <p>Are there any subsidies involved?</p> <p>How many seniors are served by these programs</p> <p>How has this program evolved over time in terms of offerings and cost?</p> <p>Would you describe any program as being ‘most successful?’</p>
<p>How does a farm evolve to include senior citizens in its farm plan and share program?</p>	<p>How did your organization initially become interested in local agriculture?</p> <p>How did you choose Holcomb Farm?</p> <p>Who drove the demand for local produce? Seniors or the Organization?</p>
<p>How can farms engage the senior community?</p>	<p>Who initially made contact? The senior/NGO community or Holcomb Farm?</p> <p>Along those lines, what strategies might you suggest to a farm who would like to engage the senior community?</p>
<p>Challenges and Benefits of including seniors in CSA</p>	<p>What do you see as the main benefits of including seniors in local agriculture?</p> <p>Have senior programs helped keep your farm profitable?</p> <p>What challenges have you faced through the inclusion of senior citizens in your CSA program?</p>

	<p>Transportation?</p> <p>Pricing challenges with individuals on a fixed income?</p> <p>Other issues?</p>
<p>What should a senior CSA program look like?</p>	<p>For the farmer, how would you suggest she create a similar program for seniors in other areas?</p> <p>In terms of the program you are offering, what elements would you keep and which elements would you change in a new senior CSA program?</p>

Seniors Share in the Harvest

What is this?

The following is a short survey that is intended to gather general information from local seniors about food preferences, knowledge and/or participation in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) groups.

Results from the survey will be used to help in the selection of four small focus groups of local seniors. The purpose of focus groups is to generate new ideas about how CSA programs could be better designed for individuals over 60.

Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. Individual information and responses will be kept confidential.

If I am selected for the focus group, what do I have to do?

Focus group members will be asked to attend an hour-long meeting to discuss CSA. Focus group members will be given a small bundle of vegetables from the farm as small thank-you. There is no financial or other obligation involved. Our only request is honest, thoughtful ideas about how seniors and local farms might be better connected.

Can I change my mind?

Of course, the focus group and this survey is completely voluntary.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

Please contact Lindsey Lusher at 845-943-8699.

Seniors Share in the Harvest

- 1) Have you heard of Community Supported Agriculture (sometimes called Farm Share)? *Please circle one.*

Yes

No

I don't know

- a. If **Yes**, please define Community Supported Agriculture:

- 2) Have you ever participated in Community Supported Agriculture? *Please circle one.*

Yes

No

I don't know

- a. If **Yes**, what CSA did you join?

- 3) Do you or does your spouse cook at home? *Please circle one.*

Yes

No

Other

- a. If **Yes**, how often do you cook at home?

- 1-2 times a week
- 3-4 times a week
- Every meal
- Other (please explain below)

- 4) On average, how many times a week will you prepare vegetables? *Please check one.*

- Never
- 1-2 times a week
- 3-4 times a week
- Every meal
- Other (please explain below)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Age _____

Are you willing to participate in a focus group with other seniors to discuss how farms might better serve the senior community?

- YES**
- NO**

When is the best time to reach you by phone? _____

THANK YOU!

Help keep Ulster County seniors and local farms healthy!

How

can I help?

To connect farms and seniors, we are asking local seniors to participate in small focus groups. These meetings will serve as an opportunity for seniors to exchange ideas about how farms can effectively serve their community.

After focus group sessions, Hearty Roots Community Farm will immediately put senior's ideas to action through a trial farm program open to seniors this August.

This summer, Hearty Roots Community Farm with Northeast SARE, is asking Ulster County seniors how local farms can serve them best. Our aim is to develop an innovative model to connect farms and people, specifically seniors, that will keep seniors healthy with economical, quality produce and keep the local farm economy strong.

We need your help!

If you are over 60, enjoy fresh vegetables and would like to help with this project, please contact Lindsey Lusher at 845-943-8699



Hearty Roots Community Farm 2006 Membership Survey

How far do you travel to pick up the Farm Share vegetables? _____

Where would you be willing to travel to pick up your vegetables?
(circle yes or no, **and** put a check mark by your first choice)

Kingston	Yes	No
Hearty Roots Farm (Tivoli, NY)	Yes	No
Woodstock	Yes	No

My household splits the share with someone else. (circle one)

Yes **No**

Was the total share size each week: (circle one)

Too much **Too little** **Just right**

Was the quantity of each vegetable (such as the size of a bunch of carrots): (circle one)

Too much **Too little** **Just right**

Please address the following on a scale from 1 to 5 (circle a number)

Produce quality *poor* 1 2 3 4 5 *excellent*

Share Value *overpriced* 1 2 3 4 5 *great value*

How important to you are the following reasons for being a member of Hearty Roots?

	<i>not important</i>			<i>very important</i>	
Freshness and taste	1	2	3	4	5
Organic food	1	2	3	4	5
Environmental concerns	1	2	3	4	5
Price	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping local farmland in production	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of community	1	2	3	4	5
Convenience	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting/connecting with a farm	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

At each pick-up, were there: *(circle one)*

More than enough choices Enough choices Too few choices

How important is it to you to have many vegetables to choose from?

not important 1 2 3 4 5 *very important*

The best thing about being a member of Hearty Roots was...

If I could change one thing about being a member of Hearty Roots it would be...

How satisfied were you, overall, with the Farm Share program?

not satisfied 1 2 3 4 5 *very satisfied*

[Respondant number]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Results	
How far do you travel to pick up the Farm Share vegetables?	1.5 miles	5 miles	1.5 miles work/10 miles home	5 miles		12-15 miles	.5 miles	Mean = 5.8 miles	
Where would you be willing to travel to pick up your vegetables?									
Kingston	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	6 Yes / 0 No / 1 No Answer	
Hearty Roots Farm (Tivoli, NY)	No		No	No			Yes	1 Yes, 3 No, 3 No answer	
Woodstock	No		Maybe	No		Yes	Yes	2 Yes, 2 No, 1 Maybe, 2 No Answer	
My household splits the share with someone else	Yes	Yes	Yes	No		No	Yes	4 Yes, 2 No, 1 No answer	
Was the total share size each week: (Too little (1), Just Right(2), Too much (3))		2	1	2	2		2	Mean = 1.8	
Was the quantity of each vegetable (such as the size of a bunch of carrots) (Too little (1), Just Right (2), Too much (3))		1.5	2	2	2		2	Mean = 1.9	
Produce Quality (Scale of 1-5 from Poor - Excellent)		4	5	5	5		5	4	Mean = 4.7 / 5
Share value (Scale of 1-5 from Overpriced - Great Value)		4	3	4	4		3	4	Mean = 3.7 / 5
How important to you are the following reasons for being a member of Hearty Roots? (Scale of 1-5 from Not important - Very important)									
Freshness and taste		5	5	4	5	5	5	5	Mean = 4.9, Rank = 1 / 8 (tied)
Organic Food		5	3	4	4	5	5	4	Mean = 4.3, Rank = 4 / 8 (tied)

Environmental concerns	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	Mean = 4.9, Rank = 1 / 8 (tied)
Price	4	3	3	4	5	5	3	Mean = 3.9, Rank = 6 / 8
Keeping local farmland in production	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	Mean = 4.7, Rank = 3 / 8
Sense of community	4	5	3	5	5	5	3	Mean = 4.3, Rank = 4 / 8 (tied)
Convenience	4	5	3	4	3	5	2	Mean = 3.7, Rank = 7 / 8
Visiting/connecting with a farm	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	Mean = 3, Rank = 8 / 8
Other							4	
At each pick-up, were there (Too few choices (1), Enough choices (2), More than enough choices (3))								
How important is it to you to have many vegetables to choose from?	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Mean = 2
How satisfied were you, overall, with the Farm Share program? (Scale of 1-5 from Not satisfied to Very satisfied)	4	5	3	5	3	4	4	Mean = 4
	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	Mean = 4.3
Do you prefer to eat this item (Never (1), Sometimes (2), Often (3))								
Arugula	3	1	2	3	1	3	3	Rank = 14
Basil	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	Rank = 5
Beets	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	Rank = 6
Bok Choi	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	Rank = 23
Broccoli	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	Rank = 2
Cabbage	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	Rank = 11
Carrots	3	3	2	2	3	1	2	Rank = 15

Chard	2	1	3	3	3	2.5	1	Rank = 19
Collards	2	3	2	3	1	2.5	1	Rank = 22
Eggplant	2	2	1	2	3	3	2	Rank = 20
Garlic	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	Rank = 7
Kale	2	3	3	3	2	3	1	Rank = 12
Lettuce	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	Rank = 8
Melons	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Rank = 1
Mustard Greens	2	2	2	3	1	3	2	Rank = 21
Onions	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	Rank = 3
Parsley	3	2	2	2	2		1	Rank = 25
Peppers (bell)	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	Rank = 9
Radishes	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	Rank = 26
Spinach	3	2	1	3	3	3	1	Rank = 16
Squash, Summer	3	1	1	3	3	3	2	Rank = 17
Squash, Winter	3	1	2	3	2	3	3	Rank = 13
Tomatoes	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	Rank = 4
Tomatoes, Heirloom	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	Rank = 10
Turnips	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	Rank = 24
Zucchini	3	2	1	3	3	2	2	Rank = 18